

Mahābharata -

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Mahābhārata

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Mahābhārata

INTRODUCTION TO THE MAHĀBHĀRATA

The word 'Bhārata' refers to the battle of the *Bharatas*. The *Bharatas* were the *Kauravas* and the *Pāṇḍavas*, the descendants of King *Bharata*. The *Mahābhārata* thus means the great battle of the *Bharatas*.

The epic *Mahābhārata* is one of the largest poems in the world and is divided into eighteen sections, *parvas*. It is looked upon as the *pañcama-veda*, the fifth *Veda*, as it contains all that is said in the *Veda*. While the life of *Rāma* in the *Rāmāyaṇa* exemplifies *dharma-sāstra*, the *Mahābhārata* unfolds both *dharma-sāstra* and *mokṣa-sāstra*, as it contains *Bhagavad Gītā*.

The text weaves a complex story of power, love, hate, greed, jealousy and honour stemming from the struggle between the *Pāṇḍavas*, the heroes and their devious cousins, the *Kauravas*. This struggle within the royal family of *Hastināpura* influences social and political history.

Because the story unfolds over six generations, the reader can follow changes in the society that are reflected in the evolving interpretation of *dharma*. For example, although *Bhīṣma* and *Vidura* exemplify dharmic living in their prime of life, they come into conflict with the changing interpretation of *dharma* in later years. Every character in the story teaches us about the role of *dharma*. How the characters resolve conflicts and which paths they choose at the cross-roads of their lives offer opportunities for us to interpret *dharma* and question whether the characters' actions are appropriate. Understanding the characters and the roles they play gives us insight into the assimilated living of *dharma*.

The life of *Kṛṣṇa* beautifully shows how one can gracefully come to terms with changes in society and in one's life, without compromising one's commitment to *dharma*. The *Kṛṣṇāvatāra* reveals the life of an *ānanda-puruṣa* and offers us the Upanishadic teaching through the *Bhagavad Gītā*.

The great war of the *Mahābhārata* shows us that the free will of the human being was subject to abuse even then, as it is today. It also conveys that, in the end, *dharma* alone is victorious. Every episode highlights important ethical values, and the entire epic is an illustration as well as an interaction of those values.

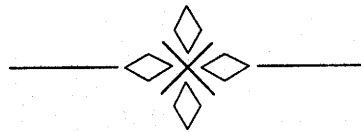
Once a number of sages assembled in the *Naimiśāranya* forest for a sacrifice known as *Brahma-satra*. The sacrifice was to last for one thousand years. The sages spent their free time listening to the glories of the Lord from Sage *Sūta*, also known as *Romaharṣaṇa*.

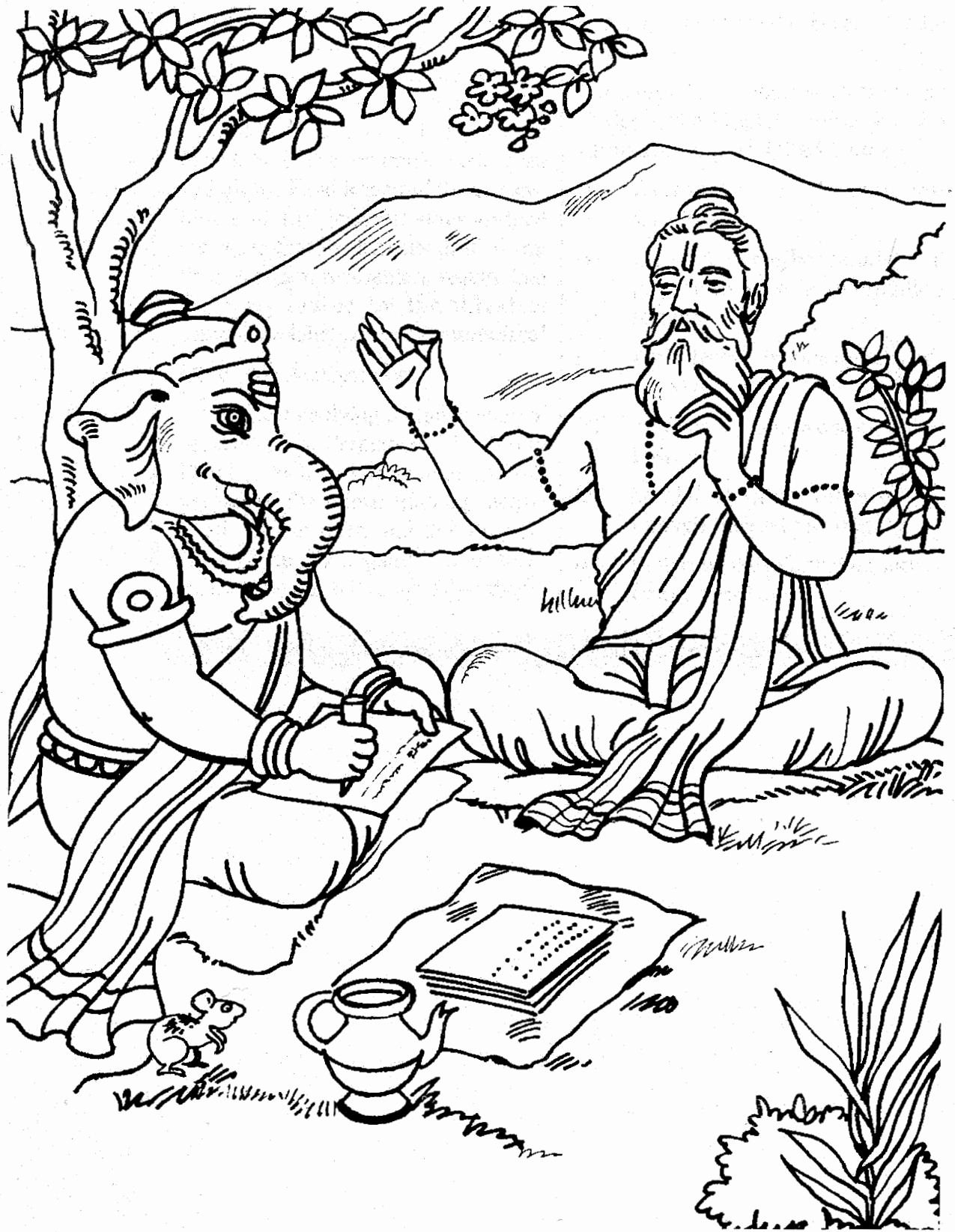
Sūta was a disciple of Sage *Vyāsa*. He had a son named *Ugraśravas* who also used to narrate stories of the Lord. He told them that the epic contained all knowledge and teachings that an individual needs in order to live a complete life. Seeing the eagerness of the sages to hear the epic, *Ugraśravas* then began to narrate the story.

Once *Vyāsa* was sitting in his *āśrama* and contemplating upon how to teach the voluminous *Mahābhārata* to his disciples and make it known in the world. He had just then conceived *Mahābhārata* in his mind. He did not see anyone having the capacity to write a story of such magnitude.

At that time, Lord *Brahmā* visited his hermitage. He suggested to *Vyāsa* to seek Lord *Gaṇeśa*'s help. *Vyāsa* prayed to the Lord and Lord *Gaṇeśa* arrived. *Vyāsa* received him with due worship and asked him if he could write the *ślokas* as and when *Vyāsa* composed and recited them. Lord *Gaṇeśa* agreed to it with a condition that once they began the work, *Vyāsa* would not stop reciting at any time, until the work was completed. *Vyāsa* thought over the matter and knowing that he could not possibly meet the condition, wisely offered a counter condition to the Lord suggesting that the latter should not write any word unless he understood its meaning.

Vyāsa then composed many tough verses at regular intervals, called *kūṭa-ślokas*, verses with hidden meaning and as *Gaṇeśa* thought about its meaning *Vyāsa* composed further verses. The entire story is composed in one hundred thousand verses.





Vyāsa and Gaṇeśa writing the Mahābhārata

ĀDI PARVA

In the lunar dynasty, there lived many great kings including *Yadu*, *Puru*, *Bharata* and *Kuru*. In the lineage of *Kuru*, lived a king named *Pratīpa*, who ruled the kingdom of *Hastināpura*. One day, as he was performing his worship on the banks of *Gaṅgā*, Goddess *Gaṅgā* emerged from the river in the form of a beautiful maiden. She saw the king and attracted by his *tejas*, lustre, approached him to marry her. *Pratīpa*, being already married refused to marry a second woman. Instead he promised to marry her to his son. In course of time, *Śantanu* was born to *Pratīpa*. *Pratīpa* coronated *Śantanu* as the king, and retiring to the forest told him about his promise to *Gaṅgā*. *Śantanu* keeping his father's promise, married *Gaṅgā*, and had a son named *Devavrata*.

Once *Śantanu* was walking on the banks of *Yamunā* when he saw a beautiful maiden and fell in love with her. She was *Satyavati*, the daughter of a fisherman. The king approached her father and asked for *Satyavati*'s hand in marriage. *Satyavati*'s father consented on a condition that the son born to her alone would rule the kingdom. The king though overpowered by his love for *Satyavati*, could not accept the condition and returned without her.

Devavrata saw his father distressed and unhappy, and on enquiry he came to know of his father's desire to marry *Satyavati*. He went to the fisherman and asked him to give *Satyavati*'s hand in marriage to his father. He made a vow that he would not stake his claim for the throne and that *Satyavati*'s son alone would succeed his father.

Satyavati's father expressed fears about the possible claim by *Devavrata*'s future son, when *Devavrata* promised that he would never marry in his life and maintain lifelong celibacy for the sake of his father. The celestials and other beings on the earth applauded at the grave promise made by *Devavrata* and since then, he came to be known as *Bhīṣma*, meaning one who makes difficult vows. His *pratiṅṅā*, vow, became known as *Bhīṣma-pratiṅṅā*.





Bhishma takes the vow of celibacy

I. Jumbled Message

This message is for *Devavrata*. But the little squirrels have put the letters wrongly. The wise owl comes and numbers them correctly. Now put them in order and find the correct message.

1 18 9
W H Y

17 15 19 7
B A I T

21 10 6 20 8
M O U S E

4 3
A S

12 22 16 2
G A T E

13 11 5 14
R U L E

Correct message:

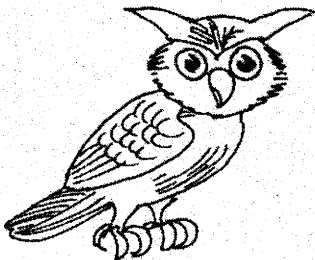
1 2
□ □

3 4 5 6 7 8
□ □ □ □ □ □

9 10 11
□ □ □

12 13 14 15 16
□ □ □ □ □

17 18 19 20 21 22
□ □ □ □ □ □



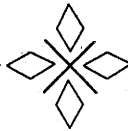
Ādi Parva contd...

Śantanu married *Satyavatī* and had two sons: *Citrāngada* and *Vicitravīrya*. *Śantanu* soon passed away and later on *Citrāngada* was killed in a war. *Bhīṣma* made *Vicitravīrya* the king and arranged for his marriage with the three princesses of *Kāśirājā*. Among the three, *Ambikā* and *Ambālikā* married *Vicitravīrya*, but *Ambā* refused to marry him as she was already committed to the king of *Śālva*. As per her desire, *Bhīṣma* sent her to the king. The king of *Śālva* refused to marry her as he had been defeated by *Bhīṣma* when the latter was returning from *Kāśī* with the three princesses. *Ambā* returned to *Bhīṣma* and asked him to marry her. *Bhīṣma* expressed his inability to do so due to his *pratijñā*, vow to his father. Annoyed with *Bhīṣma* for destroying her life, she vowed to avenge the humiliations suffered by her due to *Bhīṣma*, by being the cause of his death. She performed penance and prayed to Lord *Śiva* for his grace. She was reborn as *Śikhandī*, the daughter of King *Drupada*, and later became a male.

Vicitravīrya passed away without any heir to the throne. *Satyavatī* pleaded with *Bhīṣma* to take up the kingdom or for the sake of perpetuating the royal lineage, have a child with the widowed wives of his brother. *Bhīṣma* firmly stood by his vow and suggested to *Satyavatī* to seek a noble brahmin for this purpose. *Satyavatī* sent for her son *Vyāsa* (born of *Rṣi Parāśara* when she was young before she married *Śantanu*) and shared with him the graveness of the situation.

Vyāsa agreed to help provided the widowed queens could accept him without fearing him. It so happened that when *Vyāsa* approached *Ambikā*, she was so disgusted with his age and complexion that she closed her eyes. Her son, *Dhṛtarāṣṭra*, was thus born blind. *Ambālikā* turned pale at the sight of *Vyāsa* and her son *Pāṇḍu* was thus born with pale and white complexion. *Satyavatī* was unhappy with the result and requested *Ambikā* to approach *Vyāsa* again for another progeny. *Ambikā*, instead, sent her maid impersonated as *Ambikā* and another son was conceived. The maid accepted *Vyāsa* without fearing him and her son *Vidura* turned out to be the wisest of the three children.

Dhṛtarāṣṭra married *Gāndhārī*, the sister of the *Gandhāra* prince *Śakuni*. *Kuntī*, the sister of *Vasudeva*, chose *Pāṇḍu* as her husband in a *svayamvara*. As *Dhṛtarāṣṭra* was blind and *Vidura* was born of a maid, *Pāṇḍu* became the king of *Hastināpura*.



Ādi Parva contd...

Before her marriage, as a young girl, *Kuntī* had once served Sage *Durvāsā* with great devotion, when he visited the palace. Pleased with her, the sage gave her a boon in the form of a *mantra*. He told her that when she recited the *mantra* and thought of any particular deity, the deity would come to her. One day, looking at the beautiful morning sun, *Kuntī*, curious to test the *mantra* and innocent of its implications, recited the *mantra*. The Lord in his divine form came and *Kuntī* got bewildered and frightened. It was too late to retract the *mantra* and *Kuntī* bore a son from the sun deity. The child had a *kavaca*, armour and *kuṇḍala*, ear rings, as part of his body. Embarrassed to face the world with a child, she placed the baby in a wooden box and set the box afloat in the River *Gaṅgā*. He was picked up and brought up by a charioteer and was later known as *Karṇa*.

Pāṇḍu married *Mādri*, who was younger than *Kuntī*. Once *Pāṇḍu* went hunting to the forest with *Mādri* and *Kuntī*. In the forest he mistakenly shot an arrow and killed a male deer which was sporting with his female partner. To *Pāṇḍu*'s surprise, from the body of the deer arose a dying sage who cursed *Pāṇḍu* for his sinful act; he cursed that like him *Pāṇḍu* would also meet with his death if he approached his wife at any time. Repenting for his action, *Pāṇḍu* decided to renounce the kingdom and stay in the forest. *Mādri* and *Kuntī* also left for the forest with him. With the consent of *Bhīṣma* and *Vidura*, *Dhṛtarāṣṭra* now occupied the throne of *Hastināpura*.

In the forest *Pāṇḍu* led a strict life of austerities. But he was sad that he did not have any son who could relieve him of his debt to the *pitṛs*, ancestors. *Kuntī* revealed to *Pāṇḍu* about the boon she had received from Sage *Durvāsā*. With *Pāṇḍu*'s consent, using the *mantra*, she invoked the Lord of *Dharma* and conceived a son, who was named *Yudhiṣṭhira*. A year later, as requested by *Pāṇḍu*, she begot another son with the blessings of the wind deity, *Vāyu-devatā*. This child was called *Bhīma*. *Arjuna* was born with the blessings of *Indra*. *Mādri*, too, invoked the same *mantras* and thought of *Aśvinī-kumāras*. With their grace, she conceived *Nakula* and *Sahadeva*. *Pāṇḍu* lived happily with his five sons and his wives for a number of years and the princes received their education in the forest.

One day, *Pāṇḍu*, desiring *Mādri*, forgot his curse and approached her. He died instantly and an aggrieved *Mādri* also passed away. *Kuntī* was left alone with the five children. Heeding to the words of the sages in the forest, she returned to *Hastināpura* along with the children.





Karna is born

II. The Pāṇḍavas

Kuntī had a boon to invoke any God to have a child. Each child carried a special quality that was attributed to the God. Match the son, God and special quality.

SON	GOD	SPECIAL QUALITY
1. <i>Yudhiṣṭhira</i>	<i>Sūrya</i>	handsome and wise
2. <i>Bhīma</i>	<i>Aśvinīkumāras</i>	skilled archer
3. <i>Arjuna</i>	<i>Dharma</i>	lustrous
4. <i>Nakula and Sahadeva</i>	<i>Vāyu</i>	righteous
5. <i>Karṇa</i>	<i>Indra</i>	strong

Ādi Parva contd...

In *Hastināpura*, *Gāndhārī* became the mother of one hundred sons, the eldest being *Duryodhana*. She also had one daughter by name *Duśśalā*. *Dhṛtarāṣṭra* had a second wife who bore him a son named *Yuyutsu*. The five *Pāṇḍavas* and the hundred *Kauravas* now lived together in the palace. *Kṛpācārya* taught them archery and other war skills. The *Pāṇḍavas* exhibited brilliance in their learning. The people of *Hastināpura* were attracted by *Yudhiṣṭhira* and loved him for his truthfulness, purity, humility, generosity and other great qualities. *Bhīma*, the strongest among them, was always a winner in any fight. As he had great muscle strength, *Bhīma* went about bullying *Duryodhana* and his brothers, and humiliated them in many ways. *Duryodhana* developed jealousy towards *Yudhiṣṭhira* and nursed immense hatred for *Bhīma*. He felt that he would not inherit the throne if the *Pāṇḍavas* were alive and so he plotted to kill them, especially *Bhīma*, whom he considered invincible.

One day, he lured the *Pāṇḍavas* for a watersport in *Gaṅgā*. He stealthily fed *Bhīma* with poisonous food, bound him with wild creepers and threw him in the river in an area which was infested with poisonous snakes. The poison in *Bhīma*'s body was counteracted by snake bites and after being dragged far in the water, he was safely washed ashore. He returned home stronger to the delight of his mother and brothers. *Yudhiṣṭhira* suspected the hand of *Duryodhana* in the incident; but on the advice of *Vidura* did not pursue the matter. *Duryodhana* was shocked to see *Bhīma* return alive and his hatred only grew more.

Once *Droṇācārya* visited the place where the *Pāṇḍavas* and the *Kauravas* were playing. At that time, they were looking for some help to retrieve the ball that had fallen in a well nearby. *Droṇa* sent an arrow which pierced the ball. Then sending arrows consecutively making an arrow-chain, he lifted the ball out of the well. The boys were thrilled at this feat and rushed to inform *Bhīṣma*. *Bhīṣma* knew about *Droṇa*'s greatness and immediately appointed him as their teacher.



III. Fill in the blanks using the following words.

Drupada

Kuru

Vyāsa

Kuntī

Droṇa

Indraprastha

jealous

kavaca

Bhīṣma

Ekalavya

Vidura

svayaṃvara

1. The *Mahābhārata* was written by Sage _____.
2. The *Pāṇḍavas* and the *Kauravas* belong to the _____ family.
3. _____ was the wise brother of *Pāṇḍu* and *Dhṛtarāṣṭra*.
4. *Karṇa* was born with a _____ and *kuṇḍalas*.
5. _____ was the great archery teacher of the *Kuru* princes.
6. _____ gave his right thumb as *guru-dakṣiṇā* to his teacher.
7. *Duryodhana* was _____ of his cousins, the *Pāṇḍavas*, and tried to kill them.
8. *Arjuna* won *Draupadī* in a _____.
9. *Draupadī* was the daughter of King _____.
10. *Yudhiṣṭhira* became the king of _____.
11. King *Śantanu* gave _____ a boon so that he could choose the time of his death.
12. Sage *Durvāsā* gave _____ a boon that she could invoke any god to have a child.

IV. Kuru Family Tree

Fill in the blanks with the right names from the word list.

Satyavati

Pāṇḍu

Pāṇḍavas

Citrāṅgada

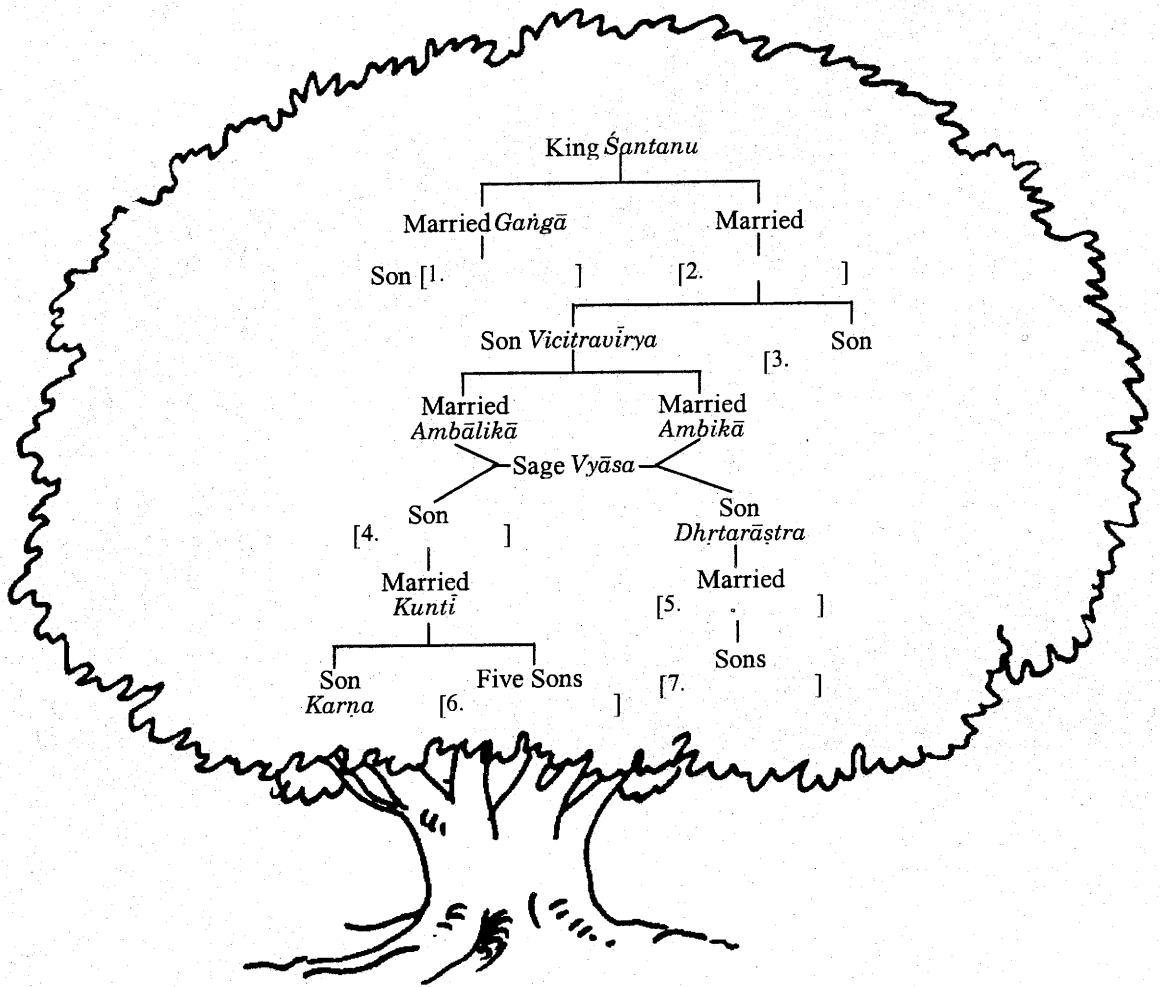
Gāndhārī

Bhīṣma

Kauravas

Vidura

Kṛṣṇa

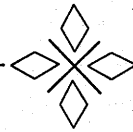


Ādi Parva contd...

Droṇa was the son of *Bharadvāja* and had learnt *dhanur-vidyā*, the science of archery, from *Paraśurāma*. He had married *Kṛpī*, the sister of *Kṛpācārya* and had a son named *Aśvatthāmā*. *Droṇa* had great enmity with *Drupada*, king of *Pāñcāla*, before he met the *Pāṇḍavas*. *Drupada* had insulted *Droṇa* when the latter visited him to reaffirm his childhood bond and friendship with *Drupada*. Being a king, *Drupada* had considered it inferior to have friendship with a poor brahmin. *Droṇa* felt humiliated and was angry; he vowed to teach *Drupada* a lesson. He had heard about the young princes learning *dhanur-veda* from *Kṛpācārya* and thought that they could serve his purpose in humiliating *Drupada*. He thus accepted the role of a teacher and taught them archery and other types of warfare.

Arjuna was attentive in learning and worked hard in practising the skills of archery, sometimes even sacrificing his sleep. He was thus also known as *Guḍākeśa*, one who has mastery over sleep. He had also gained the skill of shooting arrows with his left hand and was thus given the name *Savyasācī*, meaning one who has the ability to shoot with left hand. *Arjuna* became the favourite disciple of his *guru* and *Droṇa* taught him special skills such as the use and withdrawal of *Brahma-sīras astra*.

Once a young boy named *Ekalavya* came to *Droṇa* to learn archery. *Droṇa* refused to accept him as a student as he was a hunter's son. *Ekalavya* being committed to learn, made an image of *Droṇa* and sitting before the image practised archery. Soon he became an expert archer. When *Arjuna* discovered that *Ekalavya* was more skilled than himself, he took *Droṇa* to task. *Droṇa* was surprised to hear about this, since he had not taught anyone any more than what he did to *Arjuna*. He met *Ekalavya* and understood what had happened. *Ekalavya* attributed his mastery to his teacher *Droṇa* and sought his blessings. *Droṇa* asked for his right thumb as *guru-dakṣiṇā* and *Ekalavya* immediately cut his thumb and offered to his *guru*. With no one else left to match *Arjuna's* skill in archery, he was considered the best archer.





Ekalavya, the silent student of Drona

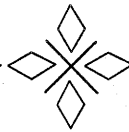
Ādi Parva contd...

After the education of the princes was complete, *Droṇa* arranged for a public performance to display the proficiency of his students' skills in using *astras* and other arms. All the members of the royal family including *Dhṛtarāṣṭra* were present on the occasion. Among the princes, *Arjuna* won everyone's heart by demonstrating his knowledge and skill in the use of many missiles such as *Āgneyāstra* and *Vāruṇāstra*. He displayed his speed and concentration in sending arrows by aiming at the small holes of moving objects. At the end of the performance, everyone's attention was suddenly drawn to a thunderous twang of a young warrior's bow-string. The young lad was *Karṇa* and he challenged *Arjuna* for a single combat by exhibiting all the skills that *Arjuna* displayed. When *Arjuna* and *Karṇa* got ready to fight, *Kṛpācārya* announced that *Arjuna* being a *kṣatriya* prince, could fight only with another *kṣatriya* prince and asked *Karṇa* to declare his family lineage. *Karṇa's* face fell as he remembered his past.

It had so happened that when *Kuntī* had dropped *Karṇa* in the river in a wooden box, he was picked up by a charioteer, *Adhiratha*, and raised by him. His foster-mother was *Rādhā* and he was thus known as *Rādheya*. His parents named him *Vasuṣeṇa*, as he was born with *vasu*, wealth, in the form of *kavaca* and *kuṇḍalas*. When *Karṇa* grew to be an adult, *Rādhā* revealed the fact that he was found in a wooden box floating down the river and that he was not their real son. Since *Karṇa* had princely countenance, she asked him to find out his real mother and claim his royal status. But *Karṇa* loved *Rādhā* so much that he did not want to leave her.

Karṇa was desirous of learning archery but *Droṇa* refused to teach him as he was a *sūta-putra*, the son of a *kṣatriya* charioteer and a *brāhmaṇa* woman. *Karṇa* then approached *Paraśurāma*. He knew that *Paraśurāma* hated *kṣatriyas* and so presenting himself as a *brāhmaṇa* he asked *Paraśurāma* to teach him *dhanur-vidyā*. *Paraśurāma* accepted *Karṇa* as his disciple and taught him everything he knew.

One day, *Paraśurāma* was sleeping with his head resting on *Karṇa's* thigh, when a stinging bee relentlessly pursued a spot on *Karṇa's* thigh which was close to *Paraśurāma's* head causing a deep wound. Thinking that his attempt to drive the bee away would disturb his *guru's* sleep, *Karṇa* silently bore the pain. Blood began to stream out of the wound and trickle down to *Paraśurāma's* face.





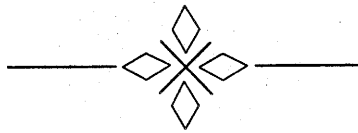
Bhārgava's curse on Karṇa

Ādi Parva contd...

Paraśurāma woke up by the warmth of the blood. He learnt from *Karṇa* what had happened and knew that only a *kṣatriya* had the capacity to bear such torments and pains. Upon confronting his disciple, *Karṇa* revealed the truth and apologised for telling a lie. *Paraśurāma* did not relent and cursed him that his memory would fail him at the critical moment when he needed to use an *astra* against his most formidable enemy. He added, however, that *Karṇa* would be known as the greatest archer on earth.

Karṇa felt deeply dejected at the turn of events. Adding to his misery another unfortunate incident happened as he was returning home. Seeing a target at a distance, *Karṇa* shot an arrow which incidentally happened to be a cow of a brahmin. The brahmin cursed *Karṇa* that his chariot would stick to the ground in his fight against his strongest enemy and that he would be killed unaware in the battle, just as he killed the cow which had been caught unaware. *Karṇa* returned home, but he could no longer enjoy the parental love and desiring a recognition in the assembly of heroes, he reached the theatre where the princes were performing.

As *Karṇa*'s face fell, upon being questioned regarding his lineage, *Duryodhana* sensed that *Karṇa* was not a prince, but he would be a match to *Arjuna*. He immediately appointed *Karṇa* as the king of *Aṅga-deśa*, and qualified him for a combat with *Arjuna*. *Karṇa* expressed his gratitude to *Duryodhana* and offered to do anything he asked. *Duryodhana* sought a lasting friendship and they struck an inseparable bond of friendship. Just then *Adhiratha* entered the hall calling out his son's name. *Karṇa*'s identity as a *sūta-putra* was revealed to all. *Bhīma* insulted *Karṇa* saying he was not worthy of a combat with *Arjuna*. *Duryodhana* gave a befitting reply in favour of *Karṇa* and led *Karṇa* away with honours.



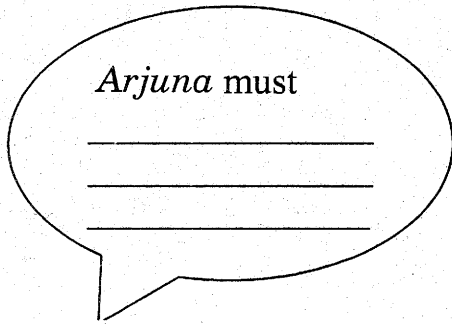
V. Word Search

Colour all the squares which have a small letter in them. The remaining squares form a name. Read it and write it down below.

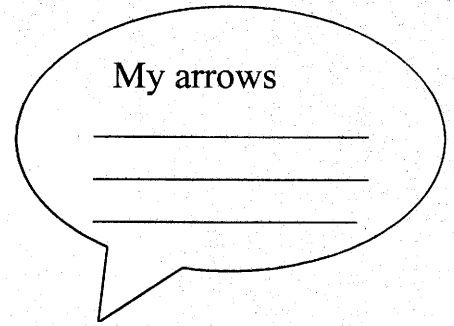
w	i	l	l	A	y	o	u	t	e	l	l	m	e
w	h	e	t	h	e	N	r	i	a	m	o	n	t
h	e	r	i	g	h	t	t	r	G	a	c	k	o
r	n	o	t	A	o	t	h	e	r	w	i	s	e
i	w	i	l	l	h	a	v	e	t	R	o	f	i
n	d	a	n	o	t	h	Ā	e	r	w	a	y	o
f	g	o	J	i	n	g	a	b	o	u	t	t	h
i	s	j	o	b	o	f	f	i	n	d	i	Ā	n
g	K	a	w	a	y	o	f	g	e	t	t	i	n
g	e	v	e	n	w	i	t	h	A	t	h	e	s
e	m	o	u	s	R	i	n	s	o	f	m	i	n
e	w	h	o	s	h	o	u	l	d	h	N	a	v
e	s	t	a	y	e	d	A	i	n	t	h	e	j

It is _____

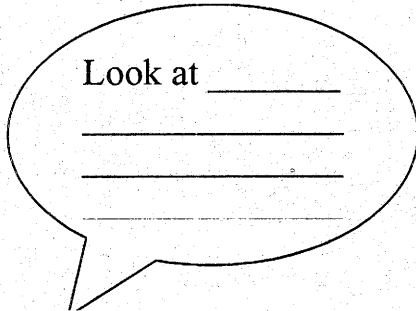
VI. Fill in these thought bubbles.



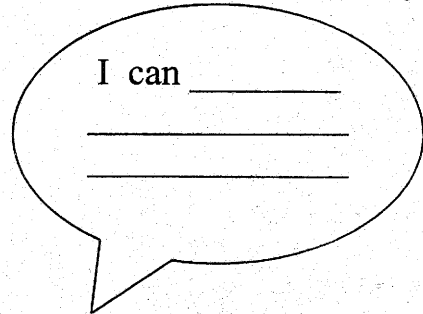
Droṇācārya



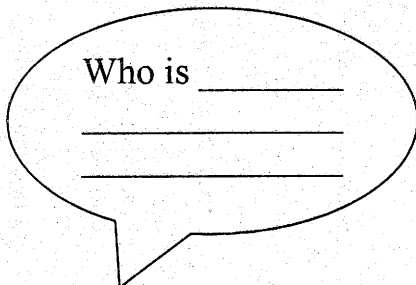
Arjuna



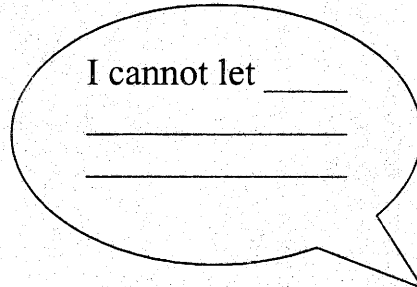
Spectators



Karna



Bhīṣma



Kṛpācārya

Ādi Parva contd...

Droṇa, having equipped his disciples in warfare, asked them to capture *Drupada* in a battle and bring the king to him as an offering of their *guru-dakṣiṇā*. When the *Kauravas* failed to do so, *Arjuna* was sent for the task. He returned successfully by fulfilling the wishes of his *guru*. *Droṇa* humbled *Drupada* and told him that he would have half of his kingdom and then let him go. *Drupada* now began to work for *Droṇa's* destruction. He performed penances and sacrifices to obtain a son who would kill *Droṇa*. He also desired a daughter who would marry *Arjuna* as he was highly impressed with *Arjuna's* prowess. In course of time, *Drupada* had a son named *Dhr̥ṣṭadyumna* and a daughter named *Draupadī*.

Soon after *Arjuna's* fight with *Drupada*, *Dhṛtarāṣṭra* installed *Yudhiṣṭhira* as the *yuvārājā*, crown prince of *Hastināpura*. *Yudhiṣṭhira* was sought after by every one for his great qualities. *Duryodhana* became worried about *Yudhiṣṭhira's* growing popularity. He approached his father with a plot to destroy the *Pāṇḍavas* and asked him to send the *Pāṇḍavas* away for one year to *Vāraṇāvata* so that he could establish himself in the hearts of the people. *Dhṛtarāṣṭra*, anxious to please *Duryodhana* at any cost agreed and asked the *Pāṇḍavas* to spend a year in *Vāraṇāvata*.

Duryodhana, in the meanwhile, arranged to get a mansion constructed of inflammable materials such as lac, wax and jute for their stay in the forest. When the *Pāṇḍavas* left *Hastināpura*, *Vidura*, the wise minister, secretly cautioned them regarding the danger of fire and the need to dig a tunnel for escape. The *Pāṇḍavas* dug an underground tunnel without anyone's knowledge. When they knew that the scheduled day for arson was not far away, they decided to escape. One night, as their attendants and the minister in charge of the construction were sleeping in the mansion, the *Pāṇḍavas* made their way out through the tunnel and *Bhīma* followed them after setting fire to the mansion.

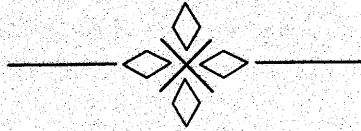
The news of the house fire reached *Hastināpura*. Seeing the unrecognisable burnt bodies, everyone concluded that the *Pāṇḍavas* and *Kuntī* had died in the fire, and grieved over the loss. *Vidura*, too, joined them in their mourning.

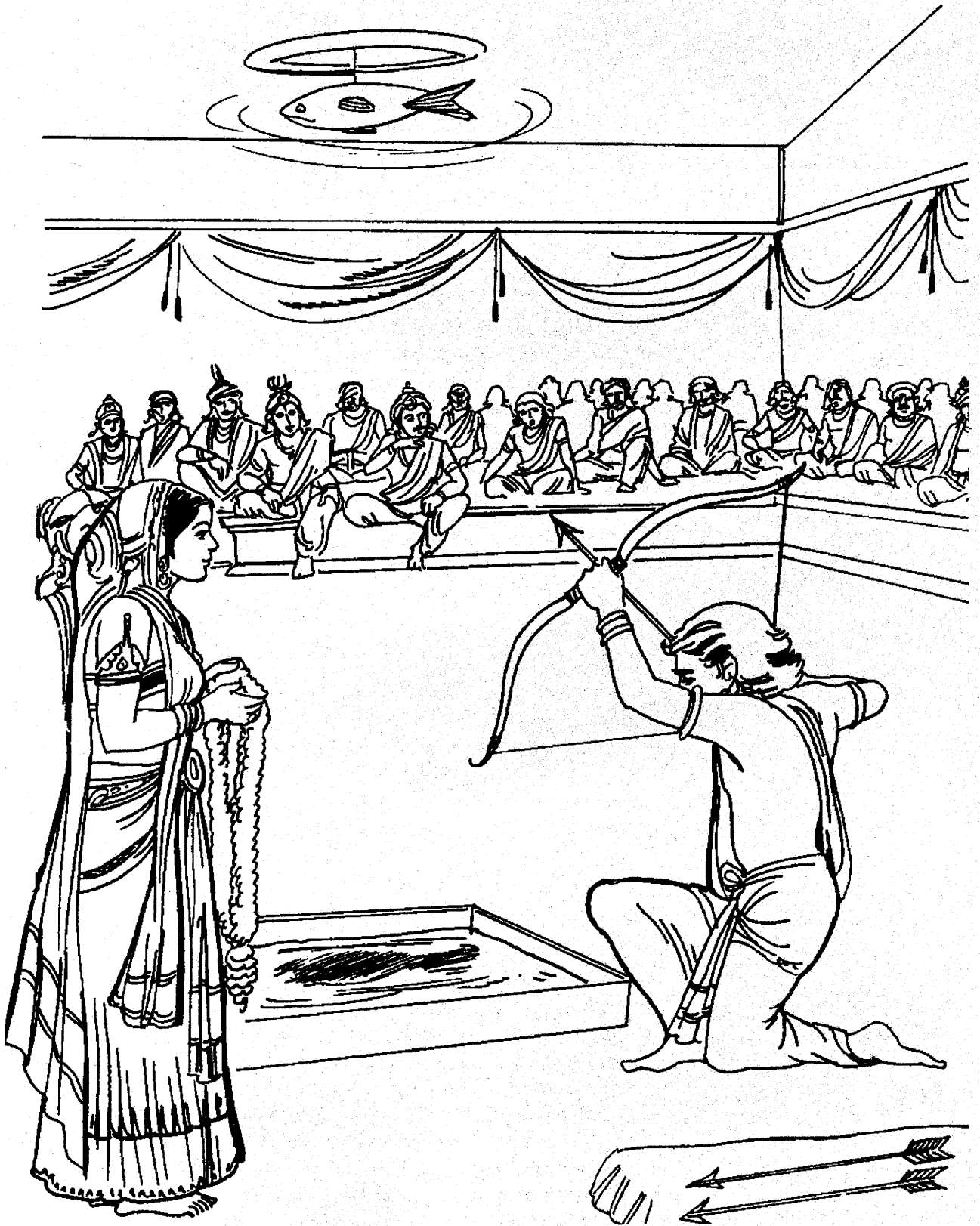
The *Pāṇḍavas* came out at the other end of the tunnel which led to the banks of *Gaṅgā*. A boatman was waiting as instructed by *Vidura* to take them across the river. Walking through a forest, *Hiḍimbavana*, *Bhīma* had an encounter with a *rākṣasa*, *Hiḍimba* and killed him. At the request of his sister, *Hiḍimbā*, *Bhīma* married her and stayed with her until a son was born to them. The son was named *Ghaṭotkaca*. Then taking leave of *Hiḍimbā*, *Bhīma* and others proceeded to the city of *Ekacakra*.

Ādi Parva contd...

On their way, the *Pāṇḍavas* stayed in the guise of brahmins in a *brāhmaṇa*'s house in *Ekacakra*. *Bhīma* killed a *rākṣasa Bakāsura* in a fight and thus relieved the people from his harassments. While staying in *Ekacakra*, the *Pāṇḍavas* received the news of *Draupadī*'s *svayamvara*. Desiring to attend the *svayamvara*, the *Pāṇḍavas* set out for *Pāñcāla*. In the capital of *Pāñcāla*, they stayed in a potter's house.

At the *svayamvara* hall, *Dhr̥ṣṭadyumna* announced the test laid out for the prospective bridegroom of his sister. A target, a fish, was tied hanging down from the ceiling. Beneath the fish was a revolving wheel with a hole at the centre. One had to simultaneously send five arrows with a bow that had a steel string and hit the target through the hole of the wheel. This was a devise to bring *Arjuna* out if he was still alive and hiding. Many great archers failed in their attempts. *Arjuna* sought permission from *Dhr̥ṣṭadyumna* for a brahmin's eligibility for a trial. Upon *Dhr̥ṣṭadyumna*'s consent, he went to the centre of the hall and instantly hit the target. *Draupadī*, thus, placed the garland on *Arjuna*'s neck.

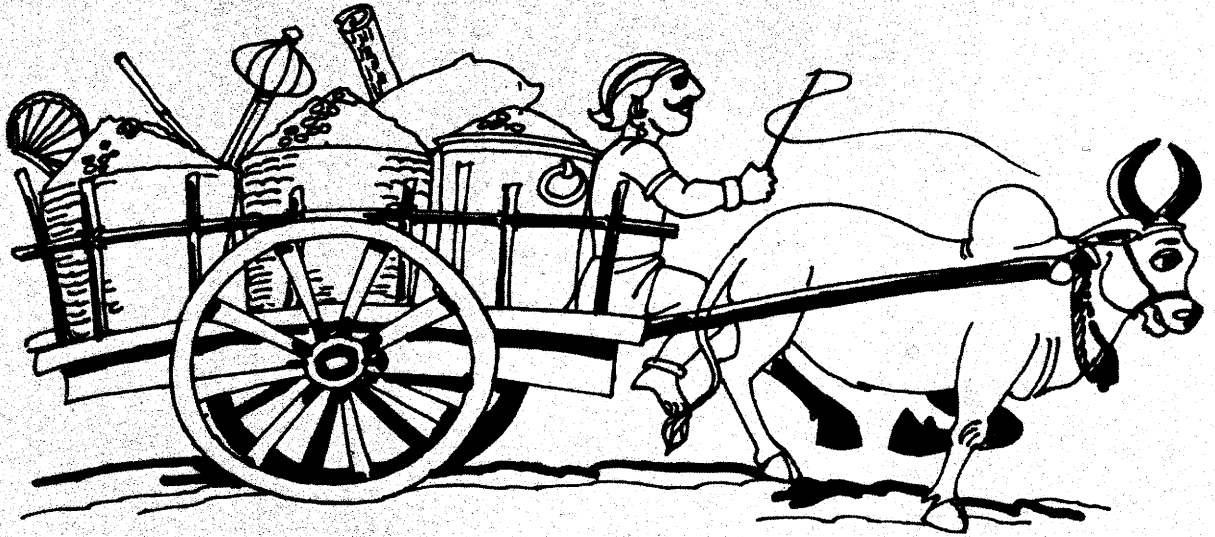




Draupadi's Svayamvara

VII. Food Cart

Can you spot five objects that is not a part of the delicacy that *Bhīma* is going to offer *Bakāsura*. Circle them out and colour the rest of the picture.



The five extra items are :

1) _____ 2) _____

3) _____ 4) _____

5) _____

VIII. Story Writing



Complete the story.

I am a woodcutter from *Ekacakras*. One day, I was cutting wood in the jungle. Suddenly, I heard a great roar and a loud voice saying, “Where is my food?” I knew it was the *rākṣasa Bakāsura*. So, I quickly climbed up a tree and hid there. I was really scared. Soon I saw a big man coming along with a food cart singing merrily. O! What courage he had.....

It was now safe for me to come down. So I did.

IX. Unscramble each word and complete each phrase about Bhīma.

1. N R S G O T

Bhīma was _____ like an elephant.

2. E L V O B A L

He was a _____ giant.

3. N S O I P O

Duryodhana tried to _____ him.

4. Ā H I B D M I

His *rākṣasī* wife was named _____.

5. N S O

Ghaṭotkaca was his _____.

6. A K B A

He killed the *rākṣasa* named _____.

X. Story Time

Match the person to the story that best describes him by placing the number of the name in the blank in front of the matching story.

1. *Droṇa* _____ Story of cunningness

2. *Ekalavya* _____ Story of loyalty

3. *Duryodhana* _____ Story of revenge

4. *Pāṇḍavas* _____ Story of devotion

5. *Karṇa* _____ Story of love

6. *Śakuni* _____ Story of jealousy

7. King *Śantanu* _____ Story of *dharma*

Ādi Parva contd...

There was a great uproar in the hall and the assembled princes including *Duryodhana*, *Śalya*, *Karṇa* and *Śakuni* began to attack *Drupada* for having insulted them by giving *Draupadī* to a brahmin. The *Pāṇḍavas* came to the rescue of *Drupada*. *Arjuna* defeated *Karṇa*; *Bhīma* overpowered *Śalya* and *Yudhiṣṭhira* humbled *Duryodhana* in the fight.

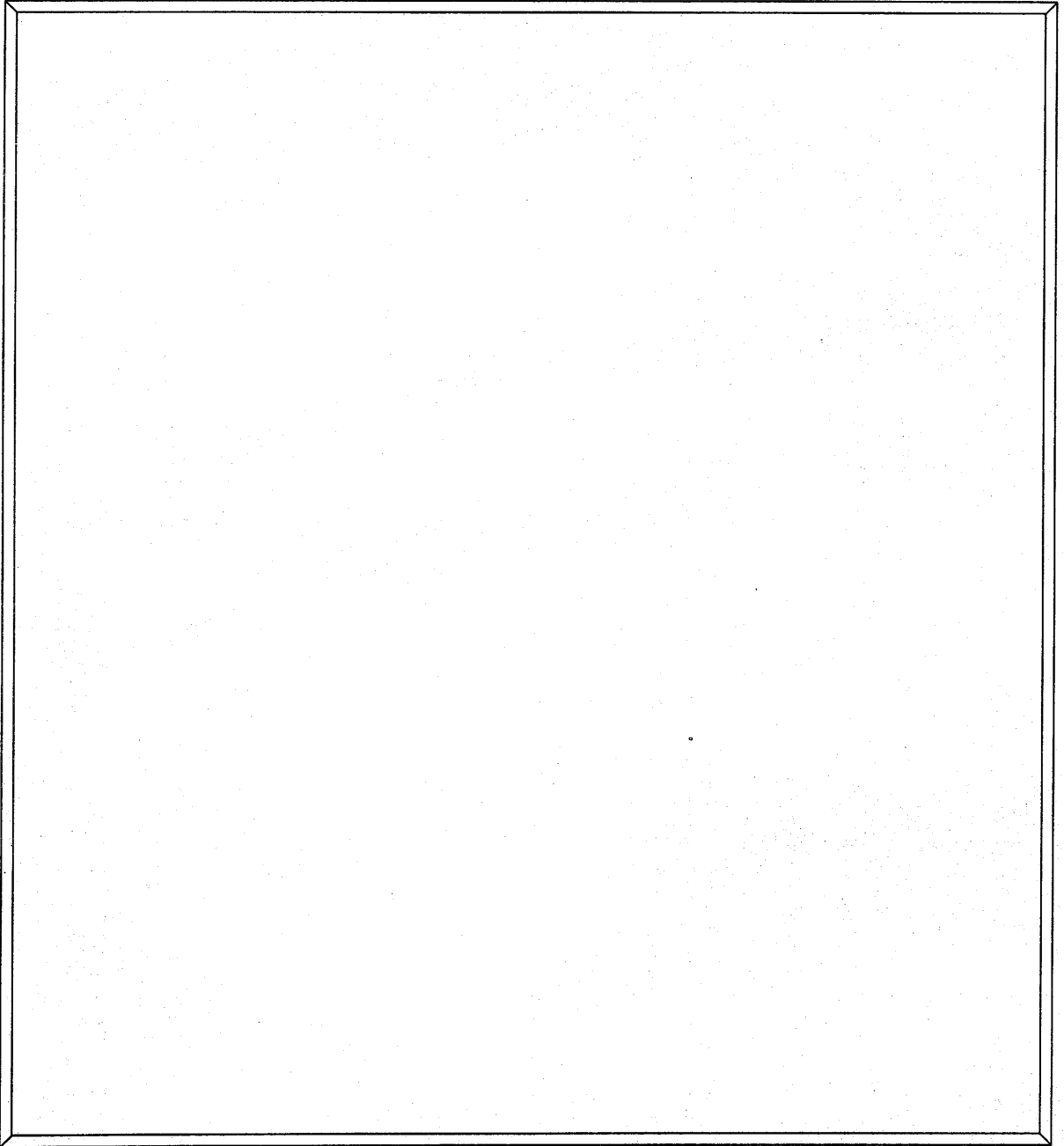
The *Pāṇḍavas* returned home with *Draupadī*. At that time, *Kuntī* was engaged in her work in the house. *Bhīma* and *Arjuna* entered the house shouting in joy that they had brought home a *bhikṣā*, a gift. Not knowing what the gift was, *Kuntī* told them to share it, as the *Pāṇḍavas* always shared anything they got. When she came to know that the gift was *Draupadī*, *Kuntī* was taken by surprise. She was bound by her spoken words, and yet *Draupadī* could not be asked to marry the five *Pāṇḍavas*. A discussion took place in the assembly of *Drupada* with *Vyāsa*, *Dhṛṣṭadyumna*, *Yudhiṣṭhira* and *Drupada* regarding this matter. *Vyāsa* finally gave the verdict that it was in keeping with *dharma* for all the five *Pāṇḍavas* to marry *Draupadī* as *Kuntī*'s words have to be honoured. It was in the potter's house that *Kṛṣṇa* and *Balarāma* met the *Pāṇḍavas*, their cousins, for the first time.

The news that the brahmin who won *Draupadī* was *Arjuna*, reached *Hastināpura*. *Duryodhana* was furious to discover this. However, *Dhṛtarāṣṭra*, on the advice of elders such as *Vidura*, *Droṇa* and *Bhīṣma*, brought the *Pāṇḍavas* and *Draupadī* back to *Hastināpura*. *Kṛṣṇa*, too, accompanied them. *Dhṛtarāṣṭra* decided to divide the kingdom into two and give one portion to the *Pāṇḍavas* for their rule. The country given to the *Pāṇḍavas* was *Khāṇḍavaprastha*, a desolate place. *Kṛṣṇa* asked *Indra* to make the land fertile and build a beautiful city. Henceforth it was known as *Indraprastha*. *Yudhiṣṭhira* was coronated as the ruler of *Indraprastha*. The *Pāṇḍavas* spent their days happily with *Draupadī* and their mother.



XI. Imagination at work

One day, *Yudhisṭhira* appears in your dream and requests you to design his new palace at *Indraprastha*. Draw the royal palace and colour it.



Designed by _____

Ādi Parva contd...

It was agreed upon that *Draupadī* would spend one year with each *Pāṇḍava* in succession. One day *Arjuna* was constrained to break this rule due to an urgent mission and entered *Yudhiṣṭhira's* place when *Draupadī* was with him. *Arjuna* decided to perform *prāyaścitta*, an act of atonement, and went on a pilgrimage for one year. In his travels, he went to *Prabhāsa*, near *Dvārakā*. While in *Prabhāsa*, he heard about *Subhadrā*, *Kṛṣṇa's* sister. He fell in love with her and with *Kṛṣṇa's* help, and *Subhadrā's* consent, he brought her to *Indraprastha* and married her. *Draupadī* gave birth to five sons; *Prativindhya*, son of *Yudhiṣṭhira*; *Sutasoma*, son of *Bhīma*; *Śrutakarmā*, son of *Arjuna*, *Śatānīka*, son of *Nakula*; and *Śrutasena*, son of *Sahadeva*. *Abhimanyu* was born to *Subhadrā*. *Dhaumya*, their family priest, performed all the *saṃskāras* for the princes and gave them Vedic education. *Arjuna* also taught them *dhanur-vidyā*.

Once when *Kṛṣṇa* and *Arjuna* were camping in a forest with other family members, *Agni*, the deity of fire, sought *Arjuna's* help for burning the *Khāṇḍava* forest in order to satiate his hunger. *Arjuna* agreed to help provided he was given a chariot, a bow and an inexhaustible quiver. Through *Varuṇa*, the deity of waters, *Arjuna* received the famous *Gāṇḍīva* bow. A divine chariot carrying the emblem of a monkey was also presented to *Arjuna*. *Arjuna* set the forest on fire. *Indra*, who was helping his serpent friend *Takṣaka* by sending heavy rains every time the forest was on fire, came to the rescue of the forest. *Arjuna* with his arrows stopped the rains. *Indra*, *Arjuna's* father, realising that he was no match to *Arjuna* appeared before him and offered a boon. *Arjuna* asked for divine missiles. *Indra* promised to give the same, after *Arjuna* had received the *Pāśupata* missile from Lord *Śiva*. The family then returned to the palace.



XII. Who am I?

Fill in the names of the people who had these thoughts:

I must convince king *Dhṛtarāṣṭra* to bring the *Pāṇḍavas* back to *Hastināpura*.

1

I know I must call the *Pāṇḍavas* back. But my beloved son will be unhappy.

2

Why does father want to bring back my cousins? Let them stay where they are!

3

Uncle *Dhṛtarāṣṭra* has invited us back to *Hastināpura*. So, we must go back.

4

I will see to it that they get only the barren portion of the kingdom.

5

I will help the *Pāṇḍavas* to make this the most beautiful kingdom on earth.

6

I am glad that my son *Yudhiṣṭhira* has now become the king.

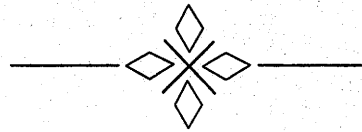
7

SABHĀ PARVA

This section is titled *Sabhā-parva* as it begins with the construction of a *sabhā*, a palace constructed by *Maya* for *Yudhiṣṭhira* in *Indraprastha* and later deals with the incidents that took place in the *dyūta-sabhā*, hall of dice built by *Duryodhana* in *Hastināpura*. *Maya* was saved by *Arjuna* during the burning of the *Khāṇḍava* forest and *Maya* constructed a beautiful *sabhā* as an expression of gratitude. He also presented a mace to *Bhīma* and a conch to *Arjuna*.

Once Sage *Nārada* visited and hailed the *sabhā* and called it the most beautiful palace on earth that was ever constructed. He reminded *Yudhiṣṭhira* of *Pāṇḍu*'s desire of wanting *Yudhiṣṭhira* to perform the *Rājasūya* sacrifice. In order to perform the *Rājasūya*, one had to conquer all the kings on earth. *Yudhiṣṭhira* consulted *Kṛṣṇa*, regarding this matter. *Kṛṣṇa* warned him regarding *Jarāsandha*, the ruler of *Magadha*, who was a difficult opponent to conquer. He narrated his own experience of how he had to shift from *Mathurā* to *Dvārakā* due to the repeated attacks of *Jarāsandha*.

Jarāsandha was born in two vertical halves. A *rākṣasī* named *Jarā*, joined the two portions by chance and the baby came alive. Thus, the child was called *Jarāsandha*, meaning united by *Jarā*. *Jarāsandha* was a cruel king. He had imprisoned many kings for using them as sacrificial offerings. His oppressive rule had reached its limits and *Kṛṣṇa* knew that his end was near. After listening to *Kṛṣṇa* about *Jarāsandha*, *Yudhiṣṭhira* wanted to give up the proposal of *Rājasūya*. But *Arjuna* and *Bhīma* undertook the task of killing *Jarāsandha* with *Kṛṣṇa*'s help. *Kṛṣṇa* consented and asked *Yudhiṣṭhira* to proceed with the preparations for the sacrifice.



I. Word Search

Find the following words in the word search. Look up, down, across and diagonally.

Jarāsandha

Śiśupāla

Kṛṣṇa

Dvārakā

Nārada

Subhadṛā

Rukmiṇī

Maya Sabhā

J	I	L	O	Q	T	V	X	Z	S	A
D	A	R	U	K	M	I	N	Ī	M	L
V	N	R	A	J	Y	A	S	U	Y	Ā
Ā	A	B	Ā	O	P	Q	A	S	T	P
R	N	Q	X	S	Y	R	E	B	N	U
A	Ṣ	L	M	W	A	I	R	V	Ā	Ś
K	R	S	T	U	V	N	O	P	R	I
Ā	K	J	I	H	G	F	D	E	A	Ś
A	R	S	T	U	V	N	O	H	D	I
L	K	J	I	H	G	F	D	E	A	S
S	U	B	H	A	D	R	Ā	H	D	X
Ā	H	B	A	S	A	Y	A	M	A	W

Sabhā Parva contd...

Arjuna, *Bhīma* and *Kṛṣṇa* set out for *Jarāsandha*'s place in the guise of brahmins and stealthily entered his palace. They challenged *Jarāsandha* for a fight. *Jarāsandha* dismissed *Kṛṣṇa* and *Arjuna* as unworthy of being his opponents and accepted the challenge from *Bhīma*. Both *Bhīma* and *Jarāsandha* wrestled with matching skills and strength. *Bhīma* then vertically tore his body by holding one leg and pulling up the other. The torn parts joined together and *Jarāsandha* got up again. *Kṛṣṇa* indicated to *Bhīma* that unless the torn parts were thrown in asymmetry, one part with leg down and the other with head down, *Jarāsandha* could never be killed. *Bhīma*, picking up the cue, did the same and ultimately killed him.

Yudhiṣṭhira sent his four brothers in the four directions of the country to conquer all the kings. The brothers returned victorious with a lot of wealth. All the kings were invited for the *Rājasūya* sacrifice and they gave a lot of wealth in the form of various gifts to *Yudhiṣṭhira*. *Kṛṣṇa* entrusted the management of the treasury to *Duryodhana*. *Duryodhana* saw the good fortune of the *Pāṇḍavas* and his jealousy grew a hundredfold.

In the *Rājasūya* sacrifice, the king had to select a noble ruler from those assembled, and give him the status of the guest of honour for the occasion. *Yudhiṣṭhira* felt that *Kṛṣṇa* alone qualified for this honour and yet he consulted *Bhīṣma* who selected *Kṛṣṇa* as the appropriate person for the honour. *Sahadeva* performed the first *pūjā* to him.

Śiśupāla, the king of *Cedi* and an ally of *Jarāsandha*, could not tolerate this and accused *Kṛṣṇa* of unrighteously killing *Jarāsandha* and *Kaṃsa*. He added that *Kṛṣṇa* was unworthy of the honour as he was a mere cowherd. *Bhīṣma* responded to *Śiśupāla* by narrating the virtues and glorious deeds of *Kṛṣṇa*; but *Śiśupāla* did not relent. A fight ensued between *Kṛṣṇa* and *Śiśupāla* in which *Kṛṣṇa* slew *Śiśupāla* with his disc. *Yudhiṣṭhira* arranged to get the final rites done for *Śiśupāla* with all state honours and installed *Śiśupāla*'s son as the king of *Cedi*. The *Rājasūya* was then completed in a grand manner and *Yudhiṣṭhira* was coronated as the emperor.



II. Matching

Match the kings with the kingdoms they ruled by placing the number of the king in the space by his kingdom.

KINGS

KINGDOMS

1. *Yudhiṣṭhira*

_____ *Cedi*

2. *Śiśupāla*

_____ *Magadha*

3. *Jarāsandha*

_____ *Hastināpura*

4. *Duryodhana*

_____ *Matsya*

5. *Kaṁsa*

_____ *Aṅga*

6. *Karṇa*

_____ *Indraprastha*

7. *Virāṭa*

_____ *Pāñcāla*

8. *Drupada*

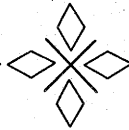
_____ *Mathurā*

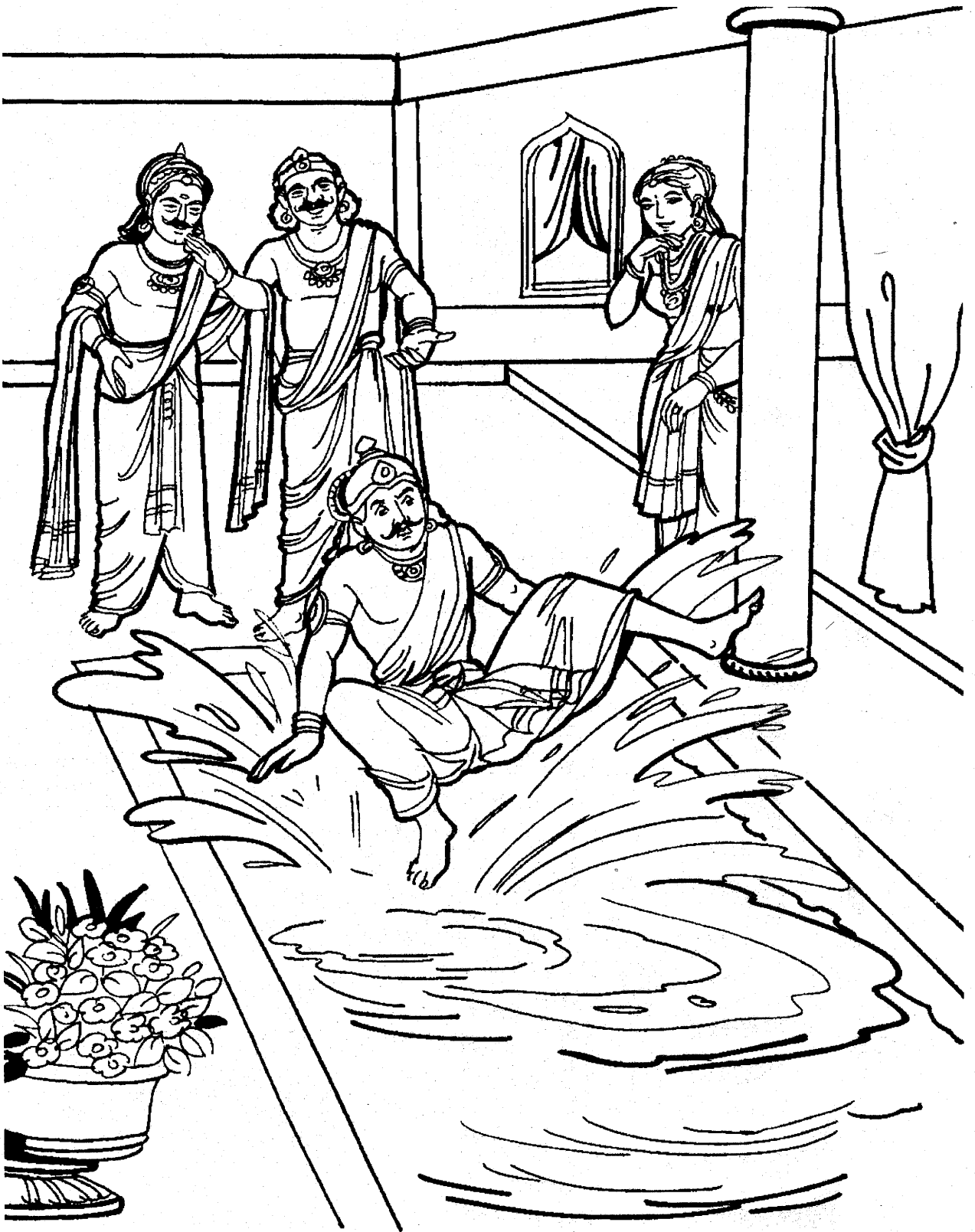
Sabhā Parva contd...

Vyāsa came to take leave of *Yudhiṣṭhira*, when *Yudhiṣṭhira* asked him whether the *Rājasūya* would have helped ward off any evil omens in their lives. *Vyāsa* replied that the next thirteen years would be a period of great suffering due to the *Kauravas*' enmity with them. He asked *Yudhiṣṭhira* to rule the country with courage of conviction in *dharma* and accept the calamities as the play of destiny. *Yudhiṣṭhira* became worried and vowed never to give room for any conflict with the *Kauravas* or any other king, never to get angry or be harsh with any of them and never oppose any of the wishes of his cousin brothers for the next thirteen years.

Duryodhana continued to stay on with *Śakuni* in the *sabhā* even after the *Rājasūya*, to see the wonderful things in the palace that he had never seen before. One day, he was walking along the corridor of the palace burning in jealousy over the glory of the *Pāṇḍavas*. Being preoccupied with thoughts of jealousy, he did not see clearly what was in front of him. Seeing a clean marble floor ahead, he walked along only to fall in a pool of water and get drenched. What he had seen as a clean marble floor was in fact, a pool of crystal clear water with spotless marble slabs underneath that reflected on the surface. Everyone who happened to see *Duryodhana* fall could not control his/her laughter. *Draupadī*, too, laughed in derision. *Duryodhana* saw this and felt humiliated. Cutting a sorry figure, he returned to *Hastināpura*, his heart filled with frustration and anger.

Duryodhana and *Śakuni* together plotted to bring about the downfall of the *Pāṇḍavas* through a game of dice. Knowing from *Śakuni* that his son was depressed, *Dhṛtarāṣṭra* enquired from him the cause of his sadness. *Duryodhana* replied that he felt insignificant and humiliated by the *Pāṇḍavas*' glories and prosperity. He pleaded with his father to invite *Yudhiṣṭhira* for a game of dice. He threatened to give up his life if *Dhṛtarāṣṭra* heeded to *Vidura*'s advice and desisted from sending the invitation to *Yudhiṣṭhira*. *Dhṛtarāṣṭra*, in his blind attachment to his son, agreed and sent *Vidura* to *Indraprastha* for extending the invitation to *Yudhiṣṭhira*. *Vidura* had failed in his attempts to convince *Dhṛtarāṣṭra* that this gesture would only bring about the downfall of the *Kuru* lineage. A hall for the dice game was specially built for the occasion.





Draupadī laughs at Duryodhana

III. Code Game

Draupadi laughed at *Duryodhana*. What vow did *Duryodhana* take? Replace each letter in the 'thought bubble' with its pair letter given in the code box. Now write them down in the space provided.

For eg.: 1. N becomes A; A becomes N

2. B becomes O; O becomes B and so on.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z

LBH YNHTURQ NG ZR QENHCNQV
 V JVYY FRR GUNG LBH NER
 QVFTENPRQ



“

_____”

Sabhā Parva contd...

Yudhiṣṭhira was fond of the dice game. He knew the *kṣatriya* etiquette which was against turning down an invitation for a game of dice from another *kṣatriya*. *Yudhiṣṭhira* had also taken a vow never to displease his cousins at any time. Even though he knew the evils of gambling, he justified his intentions to accept the invitation and left for *Hastināpura* with his brothers, *Draupadī* and *Kuntī*, unaware of the impending catastrophe awaiting them.

The next morning, after completing his daily oblations, *Yudhiṣṭhira* reached the hall of games with his brothers. *Śakuni* received him and led him to the dice game. It was too late to retract when *Yudhiṣṭhira* realised that he was expected to play with *Śakuni* and not *Duryodhana*. He hesitated to play with *Śakuni* as he knew *Śakuni* to be an expert player. But he found himself yielding to *Śakuni*'s taunts who cleverly exploited *Yudhiṣṭhira*'s goodness. All the elders including *Bhīṣma*, *Droṇa* and King *Dhṛtarāṣṭra* had taken their seats, and the game began.

Yudhiṣṭhira placed his necklace as stake while *Duryodhana* staked his entire jewellery. *Śakuni* threw the dice and won the stake. Then *Yudhiṣṭhira* staked his gold and silver and lost again. *Śakuni* continued to win with every throw of the dice, as the dice was loaded. *Yudhiṣṭhira* staked his horses, elephants, chariots and other forms of wealth. But he could not make any dent in the winning bout of *Śakuni*.

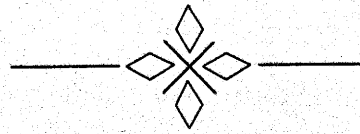
Yudhiṣṭhira had been lured deep into the game and there was no question of withdrawing from it. At each stake, *Duryodhana* placed all the wealth he won from *Yudhiṣṭhira* upto the previous game. With every new stake, *Yudhiṣṭhira* thought that he would win all his previous losses. *Vidura*, unable to stand *Śakuni*'s cunning moves in the game, asked *Dhṛtarāṣṭra* to intervene and stop the game, lest, it would cause great destruction to the family. But the king kept silent and the game continued.

Having lost his army and servants, *Yudhiṣṭhira* began staking his brothers. He lost *Nakula* and *Sahadeva* one after the other. *Śakuni* was doubtful whether *Yudhiṣṭhira* would stake *Arjuna* and *Bhīma*. He taunted *Yudhiṣṭhira* saying that he had staked *Nakula* and *Sahadeva* only because they were *Mādri*'s sons. Hurt by *Śakuni*'s words, *Yudhiṣṭhira* also staked *Arjuna* and *Bhīma*. Carried away by hope, *Yudhiṣṭhira* had lost all his wisdom about gambling. Ultimately he lost himself also. *Śakuni* did not give up. He advised him to bet on *Draupadī*. The assembly was gripped in fearsome silence. *Bhīma* had to be constantly kept under check by *Arjuna* as he was raging in fury within. To the surprise of everyone, *Yudhiṣṭhira* took the ultimate step and staked *Draupadī* hoping to win back everything he lost. Again the evil genius *Śakuni* won. This was the end of the game.

Sabhā Parva contd...

Duryodhana and others were jubilant with their success. *Duryodhana* immediately asked *Vidura* to bring *Pāñcālī* to the hall as she had been won by him. *Vidura* spoke harsh words to *Duryodhana* and reprimanded him for his rashness. Seeing that *Vidura* would not concede to his request, he asked his charioteer, *Prātikāmī* to go and bring *Draupadī*. *Draupadī* was shocked to hear about the calamity that had overtaken her husbands. Sending a message through *Prātikāmī*, she posed a question for *Yudhiṣṭhira* whether he had lost himself before staking her or after.

Seeing that *Draupadī* was not going to easily concede, *Duryodhana* decided to send his brother *Duśśāsana* to fetch her. *Duśśāsana*, cruel like his brother, was happy to carry out the job and reached the apartments of *Draupadī*. He verbally abused her and tried to catch her. *Draupadī* was burning with rage but was helpless. She ran to the apartment of *Gāndhārī* for refuge. But *Duśśāsana* overtook her and seizing her by her long hair, dragged her to the assembly. *Duryodhana* was full of vanity with his newly acquired power and wealth, and his jealousy and hatred against the *Pāṇḍavas* had found their outlet.





Yudhishthira losing in the dice game

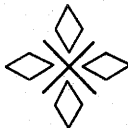
Sabhā Parva contd...

Draupadī, with all tears, begged the elders in the assembly for justice. Her voice was writ with anguish and indignation as *dharma* had been violated in the presence of great people such as *Bhīṣma*, *Droṇa*, *Vidura* and *Kṛpa*. She asked them to answer whether she had been lost in the game or she was free. The elders hung their heads in shame and sadness. *Bhīṣma* voiced his helplessness in answering her question. *Bhīma* lashed out in anger against *Yudhiṣṭhira*. *Arjuna*, who had maintained a composure throughout, pacified *Bhīma* again.

Vikarna, the only wise brother of *Duryodhana* got up and spoke words of justice. He argued that *Yudhiṣṭhira* had no right to stake *Draupadī* as he had lost himself first. He added that *Draupadī* belonged equally to all the brothers and hence *Yudhiṣṭhira* had no right to stake her without the consent of the other brothers. The rules of the dice game also stated that the opponent should not seek or suggest any stake and *Śakuni* had violated this rule by suggesting to *Yudhiṣṭhira* to stake *Draupadī*. *Vikarna*, thus, concluded that *Draupadī* had not been lost in the game. Everyone in the assembly applauded the young *Vikarna* and started criticising *Śakuni*.

At that time, *Karna* arose and identified as he was with *Duryodhana* claimed that along with the *Pāṇḍavas* and *Draupadī*, their garments also belonged to *Duryodhana*. He sought the disrobing of garments of the *Pāṇḍavas* and *Draupadī*. The *Pāṇḍavas* flung off their uppergarments, while *Duśśāsana* began disrobing *Draupadī* in front of everyone. *Draupadī* pleaded and begged her elders and her husbands to protect her, but to no avail. Disenchanted with their indifferent attitude towards her, she finally threw up her arms and prayed to Lord *Kṛṣṇa* to protect her from the disgrace.

Draupadī's prayers were answered and a miracle happened. *Draupadī*'s sari kept extending in length to the extent it was being pulled by *Duśśāsana*. *Duśśāsana*, worn out in his attempts to disrobe *Draupadī*, gave up his efforts and *Draupadī* was saved. *Bhīma*, wild with *Duśśāsana*'s action, vowed to tear off his chest and drink his blood.



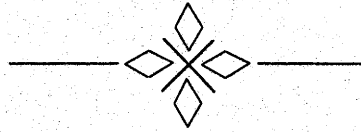


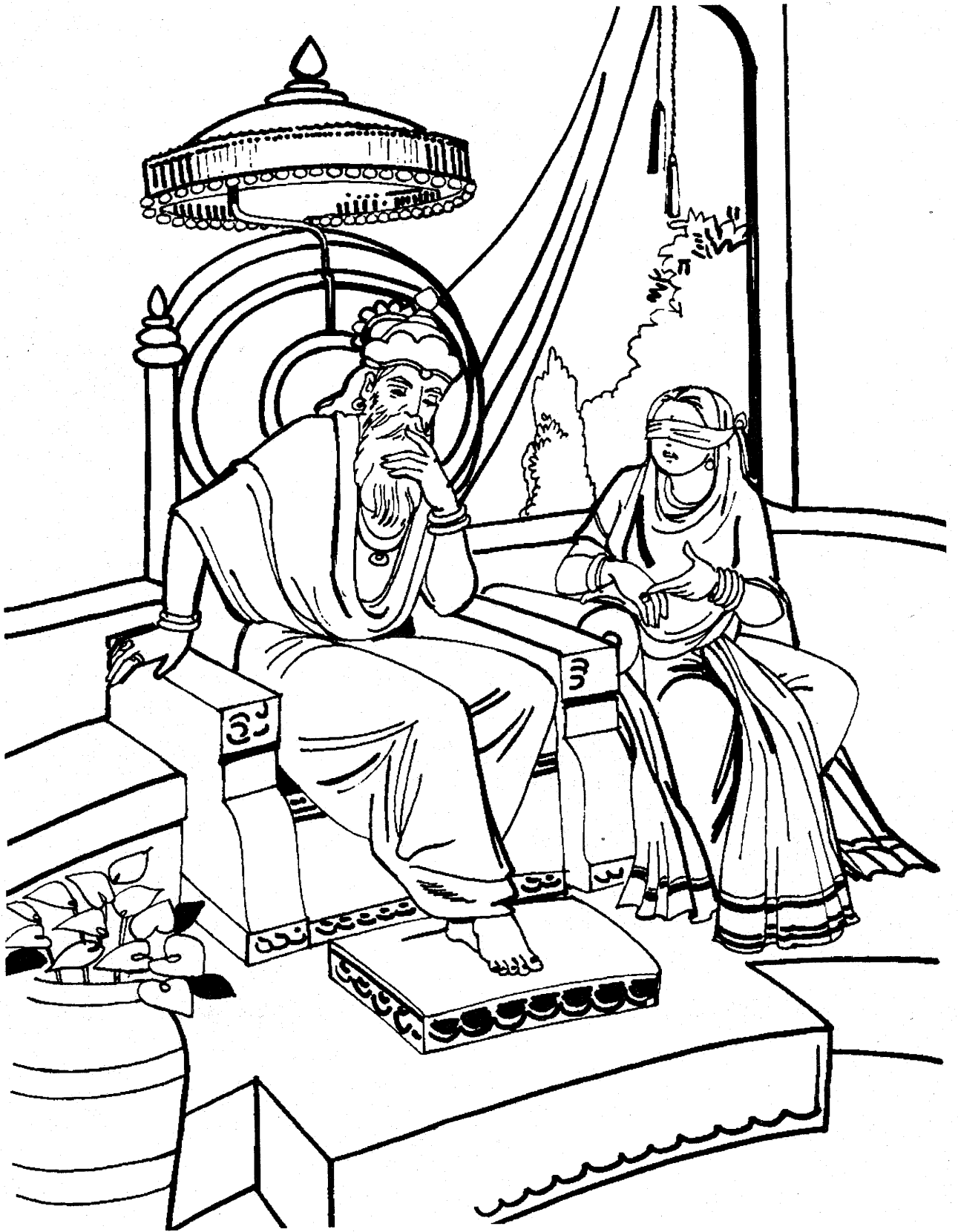
Draupadi is humiliated by the Kauravas

Sabhā Parva contd...

Duryodhana and *Karṇa* continued to abuse and insult the *Pāṇḍavas*. *Duryodhana* pointing his bare thigh signalled to *Draupadī* to sit there. *Bhīma* became furious and swore to break his thigh with his mace. *Dhṛtarāṣṭra* finally woke up from the spell of delusion he was under. Though it was too late, he retrieved the situation by calling *Draupadī* to his side and comforted her. He sought *Yudhiṣṭhira*'s forgiveness for what had happened. In repentance, he gave a boon to *Draupadī*. *Draupadī* asked *Dhṛtarāṣṭra* to free King *Yudhiṣṭhira* from slavery so that his son *Prativindhya* would not be called a *dāsaputra*, the son of a servant. *Dhṛtarāṣṭra* not only released *Yudhiṣṭhira* from the bonds of slavery, but also gave freedom to all the brothers. *Dhṛtarāṣṭra* also returned the wealth and kingdom to *Yudhiṣṭhira* and asked him to return to *Indraprastha* and rule the kingdom.

Duryodhana was very displeased with his father for having returned everything to *Yudhiṣṭhira*. He went to him and told him about the valour of *Arjuna* and his invincibility due to his acquisition of the divine missiles. He suggested that the only way to conquer the *Pāṇḍavas* was in the game of dice and hence *Yudhiṣṭhira* should be called back for another game. *Gāndhārī* advised her husband against this grave mistake. She asked him to exercise control over *Duryodhana* and see that he functioned within the limits of *dharma*.





Gāndhārī advises Dhṛtarāṣṭra

Sabhā Parva contd...

Dhṛtarāṣṭra, however, had a weakness for his son and yielded to him again. Even before *Yudhiṣṭhira* reached *Indraprastha*, *Dhṛtarāṣṭra* asked him to return immediately. *Yudhiṣṭhira*, too, agreed for another game. The force of destiny clouded his judgement once again. This time, the stake was that the loser would go into exile for thirteen years with a condition that the thirteenth year would be spent incognito, the violation of which would entail another twelve years of exile.

Śakuni, the wizard of the dice game, won again. The *Pāṇḍavas* wore garments of barks and got ready to leave for their life of exile. The atmosphere in the city of *Hastināpura* was enveloped with gloom. *Kuntī* was advised to stay with *Vidura*. When the *Pāṇḍavas* took leave of her, it was another heart-rending scene.

At the time of leaving, *Duśśāsana* verbally abused and humiliated the *Pāṇḍavas*. Provoked by *Duśśāsana*, the *Pāṇḍavas* took an oath to destroy all those who had taken part in the atrocities committed. *Bhīma* reiterated his vow to rip open *Duśśāsana*'s chest and break *Duryodhana*'s thigh; *Arjuna* took an oath to kill *Karṇa*; *Sahadeva* swore to kill *Śakuni*; and *Nakula* vowed to kill *Ulūka*, *Śakuni*'s son. As the *Pāṇḍavas* walked through the streets, the people of *Hastināpura* watched with tears in their eyes. Many of them could not bear the separation for thirteen long years and followed the *Pāṇḍavas*. *Dhṛtarāṣṭra* lost his peace of mind from the time the *Pāṇḍavas* left for the forest.



V. Game of Dice

Fill in the blanks using the following words.

Vidura

Duśśāsana

Ulūka

twelve

Duryodhana

thigh

heart

Lord *Kṛṣṇa*

Karna

one

the game of dice

Śakuni

1. _____ went to *Indraprastha* to invite the *Pāṇḍavas* to a game of dice.
2. *Draupadī* was dragged by her hair and insulted by _____.
3. *Draupadī* prayed to _____ to save her from disgrace.
4. *Bhīma* swore that he would rip *Duśśāsana*'s _____ and break *Duryodhana*'s _____.
5. *Arjuna* took an oath to kill _____ in the war.
6. *Nakula* promised to kill _____, the son of *Śakuni*.
7. *Sahadeva* swore to kill _____ in the war.
8. The *Pāṇḍavas* were banished for _____ years from their kingdom.
9. They had to be in disguise for _____ year before completing their exile.
10. Due to _____ many unjust actions took place.

VANA PARVA

This section, which is the second largest *parva* of the *Mahābhārata*, deals with the life of the *Pāṇḍavas* in the forest during the twelve years of exile. The first half of the twelve years were spent by the *Pāṇḍavas* in *Kāmyakavana* and *Dvaitavana* in the company of sages and their teachings. The second half of the exile was spent in pilgrimage. *Arjuna*, however, parted with the others to equip himself with more divine missiles. On the whole, the life of exile gave an opportunity for the *Pāṇḍavas* to prepare themselves physically and mentally for the war that was inevitable.

Leaving the outskirts of *Hastināpura*, the *Pāṇḍavas* went towards *Gaṅgā*. *Dhaumya*, the family priest, accompanied them throughout their period of exile. As they reached the banks of the river, *Yudhiṣṭhira* explained to the citizens who had followed them, the difficulties of forest life and asked them to go back. Some of them, however, succeeded in staying back with the *Pāṇḍavas*. The night was spent in a place called *Pramāṇakoṭi-tīrtha*.

The next morning *Yudhiṣṭhira* was worried about feeding the accompanying brahmins. He did not want the brahmins to suffer in the forest, as they were his guests. On *Dhaumya*'s suggestion, he worshipped Lord Sun. The Lord appeared and gave *Yudhiṣṭhira* an *akṣaya-pātra*, an inexhaustible copper pot. He told *Yudhiṣṭhira* that once *Draupadī* starts serving from the pot, it will provide the desired food without any shortage. He added when she finishes her meal for the day, the vessel will become empty for that day. *Yudhiṣṭhira* was happy to receive the pot and fed the brahmins daily to his heart's content. From *Pramāṇakoṭi-tīrtha*, the *Pāṇḍavas* left for *Kāmyakavana*.

At *Hastināpura*, *Dhṛtarāṣṭra* was full of anxiety over the consequences of the injustice done to the *Pāṇḍavas*. He sought the company of *Vidura* for solace. The forthright *Vidura* spoke in favour of the righteous *Pāṇḍavas* and pointed out the wrong doings of *Duryodhana*. *Dhṛtarāṣṭra*, annoyed with *Vidura*'s words, left for his apartments in a huff. *Vidura* decided to stay with the *Pāṇḍavas* and went to *Kāmyakavana*.

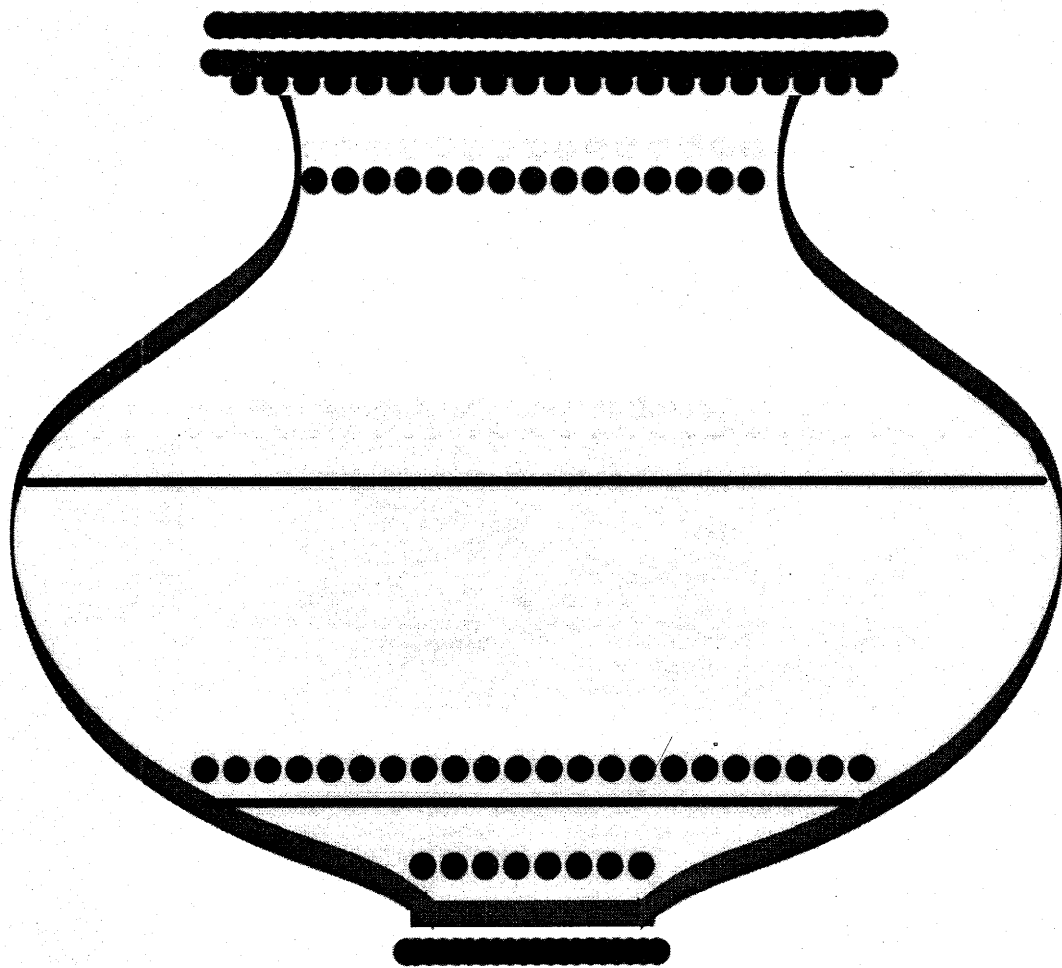




Yudhiṣṭhira receiving the Akṣaya-pātra

I. Delicious Game

Fill in the *Akṣaya-pātra* with the food items you love. You can also paste some pictures.

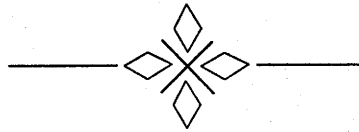


Vana Parva contd...

Dhṛtarāṣṭra repenting for his action, sought forgiveness from *Vidura* through *Sañjaya*, his minister, and brought him back to the palace. *Duryodhana* was concerned with the role of *Vidura* in his father's dealings and decided to get rid off the *Pāṇḍavas* with the help of *Karna*, while they were still in the forest. By the intervention of *Vyāsa*, however, the tragedy was averted.

On the third day in the forest, *Bhīma* performed a great feat of killing the huge *rākṣasa*, *Kirmīra*. In the meanwhile, *Kṛṣṇa* came to know of the plight of the *Pāṇḍavas* and their life of exile in *Kāmyakavana*. He reached the forest along with other well-wishers of the *Pāṇḍavas* in the *Bhoja*, *Vṛṣṇi* and *Andhaka* clans. *Draupadī* cried before *Kṛṣṇa* narrating the insults heaped on her in the assembly. *Kṛṣṇa* was touched by her grief and consoled her. He assured her that *Duryodhana* and his allies would be killed by the *Pāṇḍavas* and that he would help them in every way in achieving this goal. *Kṛṣṇa* added that the game of dice would not have taken place had he been present at that time. He narrated how he was occupied then in releasing the kingdom of *Dvārakā* from the aggression of King *Śālva*. *Dhṛṣṭadyumna* and *Arjuna* also consoled *Draupadī*. Then *Kṛṣṇa* and others took leave of the *Pāṇḍavas*. *Subhadra* and *Abhimanyu* were living with *Kṛṣṇa* in *Dvārakā* while *Draupadī*'s sons were taken care of by *Dhṛṣṭadyumna* in *Pāñcāla*.

Yudhiṣṭhira wanted to live in a place inhabited by sages, birds and other animals. As suggested by *Arjuna*, they shifted to a place called *Dvaitavana* on the banks of the River *Sarasvatī*. Sage *Mārkaṇḍeya*, a devotee of Lord *Śiva*, was the first illustrious visitor to their new place. He blessed them with success in their efforts to get back their kingdom from the *Kauravas*. *Yudhiṣṭhira* was happy with his stay in *Dvaitavana* as it suited his contemplative disposition, while *Bhīma* and *Draupadī* were impatient as they could not rest until the sinners had been punished for their wrong doings.



II. Cross Word Puzzle

M L D U R Y O D H A N A
Z S H O A R Ī M R I K M
K A R R Q P O A U A D Ī
U O T K U M N V V C U H
D R A U P A D Ī R A Ś B
P Q R J T K R Ś N A Ś P
B S Ā L V A B R M P A O
T M Ś H Y R A D F G L T
N U T F Ā K L V Q S Ā B
X Y R E S V I D U R A N
L V A C A D O A B D F S

Clues:

1. King of *Hastināpura*
2. *Kaurava* Prince
3. Wife of the *Pāṇḍavas*
4. *Yudhiṣṭhira's* brother
5. Half brother of *Dṛtarāṣṭra* and *Pāṇḍu*
6. *Rākṣasa* killed by *Bhīma*
7. Sage who wrote *Mahābhārata*
8. *Duryodhana's* friend
9. Daughter of *Dṛtarāṣṭra*
10. Incarnation of Lord *Viṣṇu*

Vana Parva contd...

Bhīma once gave vent to his feelings and took *Yudhiṣṭhira* to task for his gentle nature. *Yudhiṣṭhira* owned up the responsibility for all the happenings. He reaffirmed his commitment to truth but saw no choice in having to suffer the thirteen years of hard life in the forest. *Yudhiṣṭhira* promised that at the end of thirteen years he would not hesitate to take any action required if the *Kauravas* did not return the kingdom. Satisfied with *Yudhiṣṭhira*'s reply and being confident of his steadfastness in *dharma*, *Bhīma* and *Draupadī* did not complain any more as they did till then. Sage *Vyāsa*'s arrival at that time was very helpful to *Yudhiṣṭhira* in satisfying *Bhīma* and *Draupadī*.

Vyāsa apprised the *Pāṇḍavas* of the strength of the *Kauravas* which included great warriors such as *Bhūriśravas*, *Aśvatthāmā*, *Karṇa* and *Jayadratha* besides *Bhīma* and *Droṇa*. He presented the need for the *Pāṇḍavas* to equip themselves with more missiles and weapons. He reminded *Arjuna* about *Indra*'s promise to give him divine *astras*, missiles, after he had acquired the *Pāśupatāstra* from Lord *Śiva*. He persuaded *Yudhiṣṭhira* to send *Arjuna* to get the *Pāśupata* from Lord *Śiva* by performing penance in the *Himālayas*. *Vyāsa* gave *Yudhiṣṭhira* the *upadeśa* of *pratismṛti-vidyā*, a *mantra* practising which one could gain extraordinary eye sight and the *darśana* of *Indra*. *Vyāsa* told the *Pāṇḍavas* to go back to *Kāmyakavana* as they had already stayed in *Dvaitavana* for five years. With these words, *Vyāsa* blessed them and left.

Yudhiṣṭhira and others parted with *Arjuna* with great difficulty. *Yudhiṣṭhira* gave the *Pratismṛti-vidyā* to *Arjuna* before his departure. *Arjuna* reached the interior of *Himālayas* and sat in penance observing hard disciplines such as fasting. The Lord decided to bless *Arjuna* and appeared with his consort, in the guise of a *kirāta*, a hunter.

Just then *Arjuna* saw a *rākṣasa* in the form of a boar, advancing towards him. He took up his *Gāṇḍīva* and was about to send his arrow, when the hunter asked him to stop, as he had already made the boar his target. *Arjuna*, however, went ahead and sent his arrow. The hunter also shot his arrow. Both of them hit the target simultaneously. The hunter accused *Arjuna* that he did not follow the *dharma* in hunting. He was not supposed to hit a game which was already aimed by another.



Arjuna receives Pāsupatāstra

Vana Parva contd...

The hunter claimed that he was the first one to aim at the boar. *Arjuna* retorted saying that he was the first one. After a verbal fight, there was a real fight to settle the dispute. *Arjuna* exhausted all his missiles, lost his *Gāṇḍīva*, and his sword too. Finally, they fought a duel with their bare hands and *Arjuna* was defeated.

Bewildered at the prowess of the hunter, *Arjuna* fell at the feet of the image of Lord *Śiva* he was worshipping. He offered a garland to the image but surprisingly saw it on the neck of the hunter. *Arjuna* instantly knew who the hunter was. Offering his salutations to the Lord, he sought his forgiveness. The Lord blessed him with the *Pāśupatāstra*. He also returned the *Gāṇḍīva* to *Arjuna* and blessed him.

Arjuna then went to *Indra-loka*, the kingdom of *Indra*, (*Amarāvati*) and received the divine *astras* from *Indra* and other *devas*. He stayed in the heavens for five years and incidentally learnt dance and music from the *gandharva*, *Citrasena*. Once, *Urvaśī*, an *apsarā*, fell in love with *Arjuna* who did not return her love as she wanted. Rejected by a mere mortal, *Urvaśī* cursed him that he would become a eunuch and live in the midst of women as a dancer, dancing to their tunes. *Indra* came to know of the curse and got it reduced for one year period. He consoled *Arjuna* that the curse would, in fact, become a blessing to him when he had to live incognito for a year. He assured *Arjuna* that he would regain his normal self, at the end of one year period of incognito.

In the *Kāmyakavana*, separated from *Arjuna*, *Yudhiṣṭhira* and others were spending their days in great mental agony. One day, Sage *Brhadāśva* visited *Yudhiṣṭhira*. *Yudhiṣṭhira* received him with due respects and shared his sufferings. He asked the sage if he had seen or heard of any prince or king who had been cheated of his fortunes and who had suffered as much as he did. The sage replied that no one had faced more agony and hardships in life than *Nala* and *Damayantī*, and yet they had overcome their struggles by sheer fortitude. He then narrated the story of *Nala* and *Damayantī*, and advised *Yudhiṣṭhira* to take refuge in his virtues as this was the time his destiny was harsh.



III. Matching

Place the number of the person in the blank next to the best description of that person.

1. *Urvaśī* _____ devotee of Lord *Śiva*
2. *Jayadratha* _____ brother of *Draupadī*
3. *Mārkaṇḍeya* _____ an *apsarā*
4. *Damayanti* _____ son of *Satyavatī*
5. *Dhr̥ṣṭadyumna* _____ king of *Sindhu*
6. *Vyāsa* _____ wife of *Nala*
7. *Satyabhāmā* _____ taught music to *Arjuna*
8. *Citrasena* _____ wife of *Kṛṣṇa*

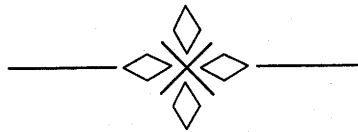
Vana Parva contd...

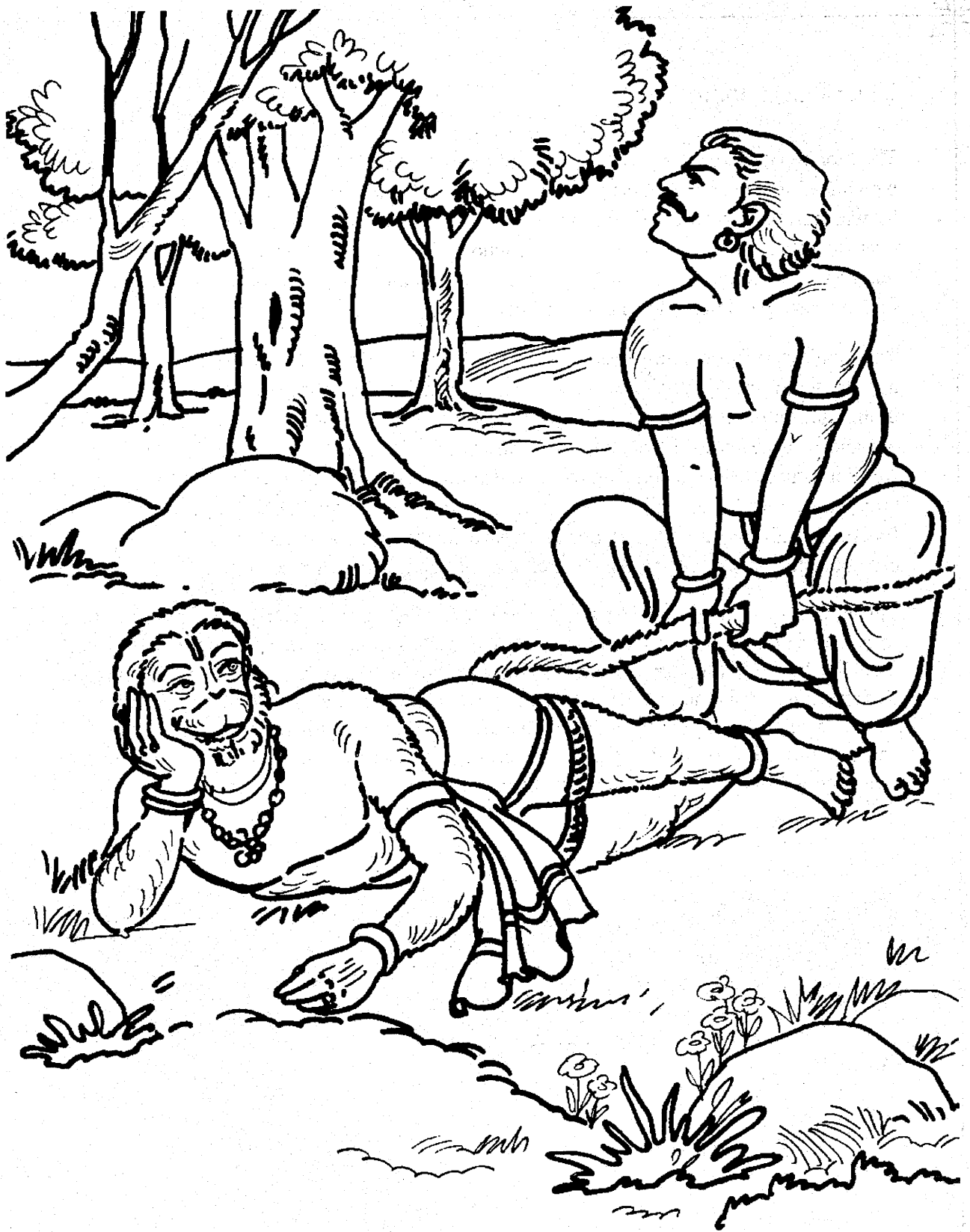
After *Brhadaśva* left, the *Pāṇḍavas* and *Draupadī* began to worry about *Arjuna* as he had been away for a long time. *Nārada* then made his usual visit to the *Pāṇḍavas*. *Yudhiṣṭhira* asked him about the greatness of pilgrimage. *Nārada* repeated the conversation that once took place between *Bhīṣma* and Sage *Pulastya* describing the merits, *puṇya*, resulting from pilgrimage to places such as *Puṣkara*, *Kurukṣetra*, *Gaṅgāsāgara* and *Prayāga*. He told him that a pilgrimage undertaken with devotion, observing all the prescribed disciplines, purifies one's mind. He asked *Yudhiṣṭhira* to undertake a pilgrimage to all the holy places in *Bhārata*.

During *Arjuna*'s stay in heavens, Sage *Lomaśa* had happened to visit *Indra*, where he met *Arjuna*. He learnt from *Indra* about *Arjuna*'s achievements and acquisition of divine *astras*. As directed by *Indra* he went to *Kāmyakavana* and met the *Pāṇḍavas* and told them about *Arjuna*'s happy learning life in heaven and his acquiring the *Pāśupata* and other *astras*, missiles. *Yudhiṣṭhira* and others were relieved to hear about him. *Lomaśa* also suggested that the *Pāṇḍavas* should undertake a pilgrimage immediately.

The *Pāṇḍavas*, with *Lomaśa* and *Dhaumya*, began their pilgrimage with a visit to *Naimiśāraṇya* and covered places such as *Gayā*, *Gaṅgāsāgara*, *Vaitaraṇi* and *Prabhāsa*. *Yudhiṣṭhira* acquainted himself with the traditions that had made these places sacred. *Lomaśa* narrated the stories of *Agastya*, *Paraśurāma*, *Rṣyasṛṅga*, *Aṣṭāvakra* and other noble souls, upon visiting the places associated with them.

Returning to the north, they proceeded towards the *Himālayas*. They climbed the *Gandhamādana* hill with the help of *Ghaṭotkaca*, who came there upon being thought of by *Bhīma*. They took abode in the *Nara-Nārāyaṇa āśrama*. During their wanderings in the hill, *Draupadī* once happened to lay her hands on an exotic flower known as *Saugandhika*, which was brought in by a breeze from the north-east. She requested *Bhīma* to get her some more for presenting to *Yudhiṣṭhira*. *Bhīma* who was waiting for opportunities to please *Draupadī*, immediately went in the direction of the breeze. As he was walking, he came across a big monkey lying in the middle of the path.





The meeting of Hanumān and Bhīma

Vana Parva contd...

The monkey did not give way to *Bhīma* to proceed further and advised him to return as the path ahead was perilous. Seeing *Bhīma* annoyed, he permitted him to jump over his tail if he was particular to proceed further. *Bhīma* replied that he was capable of jumping over even an entire mountain like *Hanumān*, who had crossed the ocean in one leap. He added that he considered jumping over any living being as an act of disrespect, as the Lord abides in every being and pervades the whole body.

The monkey, pleased within, asked *Bhīma* who *Hanumān* was. Ridiculing the monkey for not knowing the great *Hanumān*, *Bhīma* proudly described him. He then gave an ultimatum to the monkey to move away from his path. The monkey replied that he was too old and weak even to lift his own tail and asked *Bhīma* to move his tail aside and make way for himself. *Bhīma* felt slighted and deciding to pull the monkey by his tail, went near him and tried to lift the tail. To his surprise he could not move the tail even by a hair-line. Exhausting all his strength, he began to gasp for breath. He realised that this was not an ordinary monkey and sought his forgiveness for being harsh with him.

The monkey revealed his identity as *Hanumān*, *Bhīma*'s brother. The two embraced each other affectionately with tears of joy. Upon *Bhīma*'s repeated request, *Hanumān* revealed his gigantic form to *Bhīma*, which *Bhīma* could have never even imagined. Contracting his size again, he granted a boon to *Bhīma* that he would sit in the flag of *Arjuna*'s chariot and create terror in the *Kaurava* army with his thunderous roars. He pointed out to *Bhīma* the garden where the *Saugandhika* flowers were available. Embracing *Bhīma* once again, he disappeared.



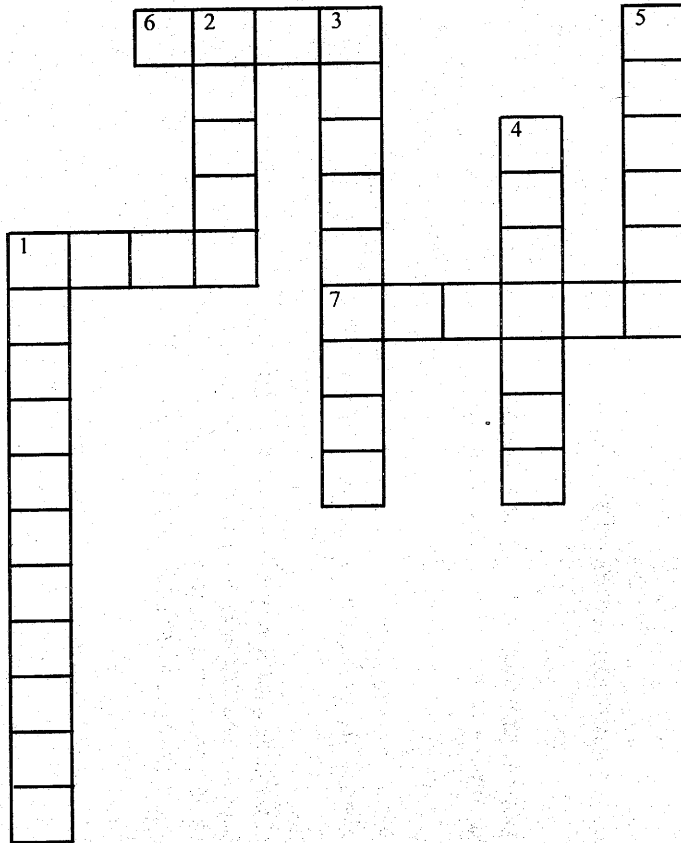
IV. Crossword Puzzle

DOWN

1. The most righteous monarch.
2. Lord of the heavens.
3. A city in the heavens.
4. Found on *Arjuna's* flag staff.
5. Lord of wealth.

ACROSS

1. Lord of death.
6. The Lord from whom *Arjuna* received *pāśupatāstra*.
7. Lord of the oceans.

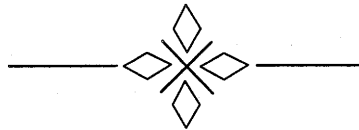


Vana Parva contd...

Bhīma went to the garden and, after a fight with the *rākṣasas* who were guarding the place, got the flowers. Worried over *Bhīma's* delay, *Yudhiṣṭhira* and *Draupadī*, accompanied by *Ghaṭotkaca*, reached the garden and met *Bhīma* there. A voice from the heavens advised *Yudhiṣṭhira* not to proceed further north, instead to return to his *āśrama* in *Badari*. The voice also informed that *Arjuna* would soon return. *Yudhiṣṭhira* and others went back to *Badari* soon after which *Arjuna* returned to everyone's joy. *Arjuna* brought new life and energy to all besides all the gifts from *Indra*. He recounted his adventures on earth and the episodes that took place in the heavens.

Ten years had passed by that time. The thoughts of war began to occupy their mind more and more. They decided to go back to *Kāmyakavana* soon. Spending a year in the holy places enroute, they arrived at *Dvaitavana*. Sage *Mārkaṇḍeya*, once again visited the *Pāṇḍavas*. He stayed with them for some time and engaged them with many stories including Lord's incarnation as a fish and Lord *Subrahmaṇya's* victory over *Mahiṣāsura*.

One day, *Yudhiṣṭhira* glorified women and their qualities such as patience and chastity. He described their capacity to undergo sufferings of pregnancy, in protecting the child in the womb with utmost care for ten long months, in bearing the pains of delivery, in devoting themselves to the health and happiness of the child once the child was born and in sacrificing their personal desires and happiness for the sake of the welfare of the child. *Yudhiṣṭhira* also wondered at the continued love they showered even on cruel husbands who hated and hurt them all the time. *Mārkaṇḍeya* also narrated stories describing the greatness of virtuous women and illustrating various values in living a human life. The *Pāṇḍavas* thus spent their time fruitfully in the company of Sage *Mārkaṇḍeya*.



V. Fill in the blanks using the following words.

Yudhiṣṭhira

Dhaumya

pilgrimage

Nala

Daṇḍaka

Durvāsā

Urvaśī

Rāma

pāśupata

Kāmyakavana

Hanumān

1. Among other places, the *Pāṇḍavas* stayed in the _____ forest during their exile.
2. Seeing *Yudhiṣṭhira*, *Mārkaṇḍeya* was reminded of Lord _____ who was sent to the forest for 14 years.
3. The beautiful *apsarā* _____ cursed the great *Arjuna* that he would become a eunuch.
4. _____ was another famous king who lost his kingdom in a game of dice.
5. *Arjuna* prayed to Lord *Śiva* to obtain the powerful weapon _____.
6. The *Pāṇḍavas* went on a _____ to all the holy places in India.
7. *Bhīma* met his brother _____ when he went in search of an exotic flower for *Draupadī*.
8. The *Pāṇḍavas*' family priest was _____.
9. _____ was the only *Pāṇḍava* who did not disregard the *Yakṣa* and his questions.

Vana Parva contd...

In *Hastināpura*, *Dhṛtarāṣṭra* was regularly receiving news about the *Pāṇḍavas*. While he sympathised with the *Pāṇḍavas* for their privations which they did not deserve, he was also concerned about *Duryodhana's* welfare. He feared that the *Pāṇḍavas'* anger, muscle power and missiles may one day destroy the *Kauravas*. *Duryodhana*, on the other hand, was revelling in his unrivalled royal riches, in the company of *Śakuni*, *Duśśāsana* and *Karṇa*.

One day, in their arrogance, they decided to display their riches and enjoyments before the *Pāṇḍavas* to tease them and aggravate their anger and suffering. *Śakuni*, persuading King *Dhṛtarāṣṭra*, succeeded in getting the latter's permission for a *ghoṣayātrā*, a royal procession to the cattle-stations, in *Dvaitavana* for an inspection and stock-check of the cows. *Duryodhana* went to *Dvaitavana* with a big army along with *Karṇa* and others. Their wives impressively dressed with all ornaments followed the army. It was as if *Rājya Lakṣmī*, the royal wealth, had moved to the forest.

Duryodhana asked his men to put up a camp near the *Pāṇḍavas'* hermitage. *Citrasena*, the Lord of *Gandharvas*, had also planned to camp at the same location. A skirmish started over the site, which turned into a big fight between the army of the *gandharvas* and the *Kauravas*. *Citrasena* himself came to the battle front and defeated *Karṇa*. Seeing the retreating *Karṇa*, the *Kaurava* army fled for safety. *Duryodhana* fought alone with *Citrasena* and was captured at the end. The *gandharvas* carried him away along with their royal women.

Duryodhana's people reported the matter to *Yudhiṣṭhira*. *Bhīma* was elated to hear what had happened. *Yudhiṣṭhira* censured him for his wrong thinking and pointed out that any humiliation to their kith and kin in the hands of strangers reflected on them also. He asked *Bhīma* and *Arjuna* to go and rescue them.

Arjuna stopped the *gandharvas* on their way and demanded release of all the captives. When they refused, a fight ensued. *Citrasena* saw *Arjuna* and ordered the fighting to stop. *Arjuna*, too, dropped his weapons upon seeing *Citrasena* as he was *Arjuna's* dance and music teacher in the heaven. They talked to each other affectionately. *Citrasena* told the *Pāṇḍavas* about the real purpose of *Duryodhana's* visit to *Dvaitavana*. When *Duryodhana* was handed over to *Yudhiṣṭhira*, the latter set him free. He advised *Duryodhana* not to venture into such childish adventures and asked him to return to the kingdom.

Duryodhana could not bear the disgrace he had suffered. He decided to end his life by fasting unto death. Sending his retinue back to *Hastināpura*, he resorted to a secluded spot and began his fasting. *Karṇa* and *Śakuni* went to him and persuaded him to give up his fasting but were unsuccessful in their attempts. The next day *Karṇa* again visited him and reassured him of defeating the *Pāṇḍavas* in a war. *Duryodhana* yielded, and all of them returned to *Hastināpura*.

Vana Parva contd...

Bhīṣma advised *Duryodhana* to give up his enmity and make peace with the *Pāṇḍavas*. He reminded *Duryodhana* of the defeat of all the *Kauravas* and *Karṇa* in the hands of the *gandharvas* who were friendly to the *Pāṇḍavas*. Offended by *Bhīṣma*'s words, *Karṇa* set out on a *dig-vijaya*, expedition of conquering all the kingdoms of the land.

He returned successfully and *Duryodhana*, pleased with *Karṇa*'s accomplishment was prompted to do the *Rājasūya* sacrifice. But the priests desisted him from performing the *Rājasūya*, as his father and *Yudhiṣṭhira* were alive; instead, they suggested the performance of *Vaiṣṇava-yajña*, considered equivalent to *Rājasūya* in status. The sacrifice was completed on a grand scale.

Duryodhana did not learn from the disgrace he had suffered in *Dvaitavana*. He was still looking for occasions to hurt and humiliate the *Pāṇḍavas*. An occasion arose when Sage *Durvāsā* arrived at his palace. *Duryodhana* received the sage with all honours. The sage was known for his temper. Hence *Duryodhana* was careful not to offend the sage and patiently served him day and night. Pleased with his hospitality, *Durvāsā* told *Duryodhana* whether he could do anything to him in return.

Duryodhana's mind was so filled with hatred for the *Pāṇḍavas*, that instead of asking for his own good, he told *Durvāsā* to visit the *Pāṇḍavas* with all his disciples at an odd hour of the day when *Draupadī* would have finished her meal, to be their guest. *Durvāsā*, who was fond of testing people, agreed to do so.

With a large number of disciples, *Durvāsā* reached the *āśrama* of the *Pāṇḍavas*. *Draupadī* was resting at that time. The brothers received the sage and his disciples with due respect. The sage requested them to be ready with food when they return after their bath in the river. *Draupadī* was worried as to how she would feed the sage and his disciples, as her *akṣaya-pātra* had exhausted itself for the day when she had finished her meal. She fervently prayed to the Lord.

Kṛṣṇa appeared before her and before she could say anything, asked her to feed him as he was very hungry. *Draupadī* was bewildered at *Kṛṣṇa*'s response to her prayers. She explained to *Kṛṣṇa* her difficulties. *Kṛṣṇa* asked her to bring the pot. A small piece of green leaf was stuck in a corner of the pot. *Kṛṣṇa* ate the same and appeased his hunger. *Draupadī* felt ashamed at her careless cleaning of the vessel. She was not aware of the consequences of the Lord's act of eating the remnant green leaf.



Draupadī feeds Kṛṣṇa

Vana Parva contd...

Kṛṣṇa then called *Bhīma* and asked him to inform the sage that the food was ready. Having full faith in *Kṛṣṇa*'s words, *Bhīma* rushed to *Durvāsā* and informed him. The sage told *Bhīma* that as soon as he entered the river, he felt the satisfaction of having eaten a sumptuous feast. He added that he could not consume anything any more. He said that his disciples also felt the same way and seeking forgiveness, the sage left the place with his disciples. *Kṛṣṇa* thus, revealed to the *Pāṇḍavas* that his *saṅkalpa*, thought, alone was enough to achieve anything.

Once the *Pāṇḍavas* went for a hunt, leaving *Draupadī* behind with *Dhaumya*. At that time, *Jayadratha*, the king of *Sindhu*, and the husband of *Duśśalā*, happened to pass by the *Pāṇḍavas*' hermitage. He saw *Draupadī* standing at the door. Enchanted by her beauty, he forcibly carried her to his chariot and fled. Sensing some danger, the *Pāṇḍavas* rushed back to the *āśrama*. *Dhaumya* told them of *Draupadī*'s abduction by *Jayadratha*. They chased *Jayadratha* and captured him. *Bhīma* dis-figured him by partially shaving his hair and brought him to *Yudhiṣṭhira*'s presence. *Yudhiṣṭhira* set him free as he was the son-in-law of their family.

The last few days of the twelfth year were spent by the *Pāṇḍavas* in listening to *Rāmāyana* and other stories such as the story of *Satyavān* and *Sāvitrī* from the Sage *Mārkaṇḍeya*.

In the forest, a brahmin once lost his *araṇis*, fire-producing sticks. He had kept them on the branch of a small tree. A stag came there and scratched its body against the tree. The sticks fell on its horns and got locked between the horns. The brahmin sought help from the *Pāṇḍavas* in retrieving his *araṇis*. The *Pāṇḍavas* chased the stag for a long time but it disappeared from sight.

Tired and thirsty, they sat under a tree. *Yudhiṣṭhira* asked *Nakula* to bring some water. *Nakula* saw a lake at a distance and went towards it. As he stepped into the lake, a voice asked him to stop and told him to use the water only after answering his questions. *Nakula*, without paying any heed to the voice, drank the water. He immediately fell dead. *Yudhiṣṭhira* sent *Sahadeva* to search for *Nakula* and he too met with the same fate. *Arjuna* and *Bhīma* also lost their lives in the same manner. Finally, *Yudhiṣṭhira* arrived at the lake and saw the dead bodies of his brothers. He lamented over their loss.

Vana Parva contd...

All of a sudden, he heard a voice from a crane standing on a rock which said that he had caused the death of his brothers. He asked *Yudhiṣṭhira* to answer his questions. When *Yudhiṣṭhira* asked his identity, the crane told him that he was a *yakṣa*, a celestial and then appeared in the form of a *yakṣa*. *Yudhiṣṭhira* agreed to answer his questions, which were on *dharma*, ethics and conduct. Some of the questions and answers were:

- What makes one learned?

The study of the *sāstras* makes one learned.

- Who is heavier than earth?

Mother is heavier than earth.

- Who is higher than heavens?

Father is higher than heavens.

- In what is the sun established?

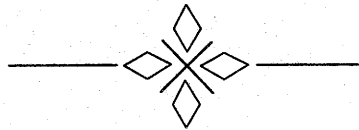
The sun is established in truth.

- With the mastery of which knowledge, does a warrior perform his duties?

A warrior performs his duties with the mastery of the knowledge of weapons.

- What is more numerous than grass?

Thoughts are more numerous than grass.





Yudhishtira answering the questions of Yaksha

Vana Parva contd...

- What is faster than wind?

Mind is faster than wind.

- What is the highest form of wealth?

Knowledge of scriptures is the highest form of wealth.

- What is it that, when given up, leads to no regrets?

Anger, when given up, leads to no regrets.

- By what virtue does one become a brahmin?

By righteous living one becomes a brahmin.

- What is the greatest wonder in creation?

The greatest wonder in creation is the thinking of the people that they will live for more years even when they see many people dying day after day.

- What do people seek in life?

People seek happiness in life.

- What is the highest value in the world?

Compassion is the highest value in the world.

The *yakṣa* was satisfied with the answers of *Yudhiṣṭhira* and restored the lives of the other *Pāṇḍavas*. The *yakṣa* was none other than Lord *Dharma*, *Yudhiṣṭhira*'s father. *Yudhiṣṭhira* was very happy to see his father. He sought his blessings to always remain steadfast in *dharma*. Lord *Dharma* returned the *araṇis* and informed *Yudhiṣṭhira* that it was he alone who had come in the form of the stag and blessed him. He told *Yudhiṣṭhira* that the *Pāṇḍavas* would successfully spend their thirteenth year without being traced by *Duryodhana*. Lord *Dharma* then disappeared. Returning the *araṇis* to the brahmin, the *Pāṇḍavas* returned to the *āśrama*.



VI. Help Yudhiṣṭhira answer the Yakṣa's questions.

Tick the correct answer.

1. What has the highest value in the world?

_____ Money _____ Kindness _____ Power

2. What do people want most in life?

_____ Skills _____ Happiness _____ Wealth

3. What makes one learned?

_____ Study of the *śāstra* _____ Music _____ Politics

4. A warrior's duties can be done after the mastery of

_____ Weapons _____ Books _____ Communication

5. What is faster than the wind?

_____ Mind _____ Aeroplane _____ Rocket

6. What is more numerous than grass?

_____ Thoughts _____ People _____ Stars

7. What is it that, which when given up, is good for us?

_____ Wisdom _____ Anger _____ Happiness

Vana Parva contd...

As the *Pāṇḍavas* were completing the twelfth year in exile, *Indra*, desirous of helping them, decided to deprive *Karṇa* of his *kavaca* and *kuṇḍalas*. Lord Sun, *Karṇa*'s father, knew about *Indra*'s plans and appeared in *Karṇa*'s dream. He forewarned his son that *Indra* would come in the guise of a *brāhmaṇa*, asking for his *kavaca* and *kuṇḍalas*, and told *Karṇa* not to part with them. *Karṇa* had never refused anything to a *brāhmaṇa* especially when one came to him during his noon time worship of Lord Sun. When *Karṇa* expressed his difficulty in refusing *Indra*, Lord Sun told *Karṇa* to ask of *Indra* for divine weapons, in return.

The next morning, *Indra* came to *Karṇa* disguised as a *brāhmaṇa* as he finished his worship of Lord Sun. He asked *Karṇa* to give his *kavaca* and *kuṇḍalas*. *Karṇa* asked *Indra* to compensate him with his *Śakti* weapon as he would lose his invincibility by giving away his *kavaca* and *kuṇḍalas*. *Indra* gave him his *Śakti* and warned him that the weapon could be used only once, after which the weapon would return to *Indra* after destroying the target.

Karṇa then cut off his ear-rings and armour from his body and gave to *Indra*. Since the *kavaca* and the *kuṇḍalas* were part of his body, he had to inflict wounds on his body. But they all disappeared leaving no scar by the grace of *Indra*. The celestials showered flowers from the heavens for the great act of charity done by *Karṇa*.





VIRĀṬA PARVA

Virāṭa-parva deals with the *Pāṇḍavas*' life incognito in the country of King *Virāṭa*.

When the last year of exile was about to begin, the *Pāṇḍavas* shifted to a secluded spot and decided to spend their time incognito in *Matsya-deśa* of King *Virāṭa*. Each one planned to assume a role with a new name. *Yudhiṣṭhira* decided to be a companion to the king and present himself as one who is well-versed in scriptures and proficient in the dice game (which he learnt from *Bṛhadbala* while in exile.) His name was to be *Kanka*. *Bhīma* said he would serve as the chief cook in the palace kitchen under the name of *Ballava* and would prove his skills to King *Virāṭa* with his delicious soups and dishes.

Arjuna said that he would not have any problem in hiding his identity as *Urvaśī*'s curse upon him as a eunuch would have effect for one year. He expressed his desire to serve as a dance teacher training the women in the palace. His name was to be *Bṛhannalā*.

Nakula said that he would call himself *Granthika* and work in the stables of the king as he had the knowledge and skill in handling the horses. *Sahadeva* said that he would look after the cattle and named himself *Tantripāla*. *Draupadī* said that she would engage herself as a personal maid to the queen and called herself *Sairandhrī*.

The *Pāṇḍavas* asked *Dhaumya* to live in the court of *Pāñcāla* tending their sacrificial fires. They requested him not to reveal their plans even to King *Drupada*. *Dhaumya* advised them to follow certain guidelines while serving in the palace such as making minimum conversation, giving advice only when asked, praising the king at the right occasions, keeping the king informed of any action they undertake and remaining neither too close nor too far from the king. The *Pāṇḍavas* took leave of *Dhaumya* and reached the outskirts of *Matsya-deśa*.

Yudhiṣṭhira arranged to tie all their weapons together and putting them in a bundle, asked *Nakula* to hang the bundle on one of the thick branches of a *Śamī* tree that was standing in a crematorium nearby. He also covered the bundle with the skin of an animal and it now looked like a dead body. They knew that people would keep off from the tree.





Bhīma in his disguise as the chief cook in Virāṭa's palace

I. Unscramble the words.

The *Pāṇḍavas* lived in disguise for one year. Find the *Pāṇḍavas* in their disguises!

1. Disguised as *Ballava*, the chief cook, was ĪHBAM.

_____.

2. Disguised as *Tantripāla*, the cowherd, was ASDHVAEA.

_____.

3. Disguised as *Granthika*, the horsetrainer, was KUNALA.

_____.

4. Disguised as *Kaṅka*, the companion of King *Virāṭa*, was
RATIHISYDUH.

_____.

5. Disguised as *Sairandhrī*, the queen's maid, was PĪUADARD.

_____.

6. Disguised as *Brhannalā*, the teacher of fine and performing arts,
was JAARNU.

_____.

Virāṭa Parva contd...

Yudhiṣṭhira entered the court of King *Virāṭa* and introduced himself as *Kaṅka*, a Vedic scholar. King *Virāṭa* was impressed by him and readily accepted him. *Bhīma* and others were also able to secure their places in the palace. Successfully concealing themselves in their new roles they earned the appreciation of every one. The king's daughter, *Uttarā* became a devoted student of *Bṛhannalā*. *Sairandhrī* pleased Queen *Sudeṣṇā* with her services. Three months passed without any major incident.

In the fourth month of their life in disguise, *Matsya-deśa* was celebrating the annual worship of Lord *Brahmā* on a large scale. The king had invited renowned wrestlers for a tournament. *Jīmūta* from another kingdom defeated all the wrestlers and shouted in triumph if there was yet anyone else who could challenge him. The king was sad that there was no one in *Virāṭa* to challenge this wrestler. *Ballava*, who was in the audience, challenged *Jīmūta* and defeated him. The king honoured *Ballava* with gifts.

Some more months had gone and now there was trouble. *Kīcaka*, the commander-in-chief of the king and the brother of queen *Sudeṣṇā*, happened to see in the queen's garden *Draupadī* whom he had never seen before. He was smitten by her beauty and expressed his desire to be with her. *Draupadī* gently pointed out the impropriety in his desiring another's wife. She tried to instill fear in him by telling him that she was married to some *gandharvas* and that they would destroy anyone who dared to touch her. But *Kīcaka* would not give up. His overtures only grew and *Draupadī* could not bear the annoyance any longer. She reported the matter to the queen and sought her protection.

Kīcaka, who carried great influence over his sister, confided to her his love for *Sairandhrī*. He implored her help in arranging a private meeting with *Sairandhrī*. Due to her affection for *Kīcaka*, *Sudeṣṇā* yielded to his desire. One day, much against *Sairandhrī*'s pleas, *Sudeṣṇā* sent her to *Kīcaka*'s apartment on an errand. *Sairandhrī*, caught in a difficult situation, obliged.





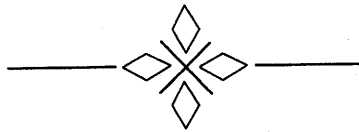
Kicaka trying to disgrace Draupadi

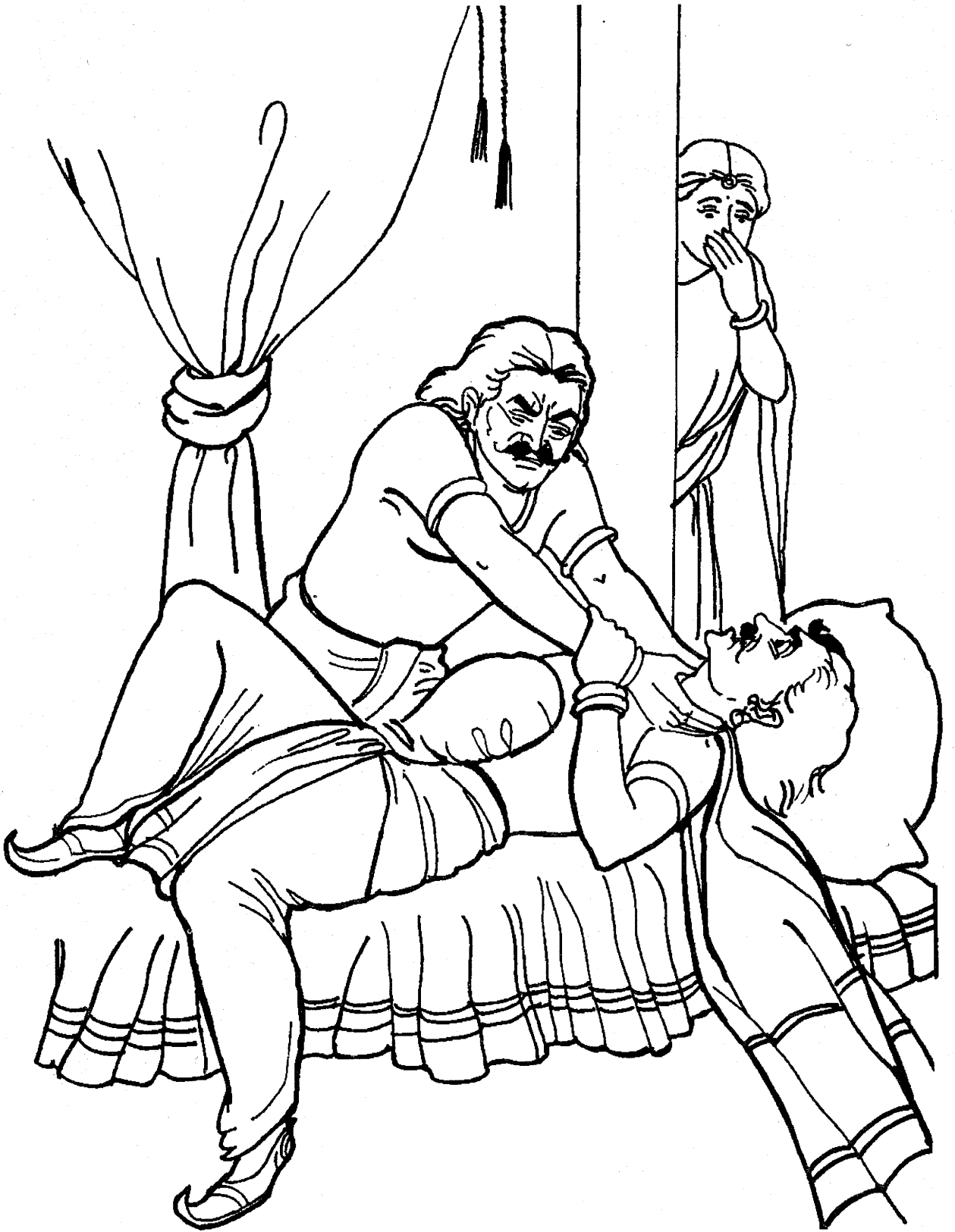
Virāṭa Parva contd...

As feared, *Kīcaka* tried to misbehave with her. *Sairandhrī* broke away from his hold and ran towards the assembly hall. *Kīcaka* followed her and pulled her before everyone in the assembly. None dared to intervene, out of fear for him. *Kaṅka* and *Ballava* were sitting with the king at that time. Their hands were tied by the hard reality of their incognito life. Even the king did not intervene in order that he may not antagonise *Kīcaka*. He gave lame excuses for his inaction.

Draupadī became furious at *Yudhiṣṭhira*, forgetting everything about their concealed life. *Yudhiṣṭhira* tried his best to pacify her with measured words and asked her to wait for another fifteen days at which time her husbands would come and do whatever she wanted them to do. Hurt and angered, *Sairandhrī* strode out of that place. When *Sudeṣṇā* asked her as to what had happened, she narrated her insults in the hands of *Kīcaka* and mentioned to her that she was worried about her *gandharva* husbands killing *Kīcaka* at any time since they knew of the incident.

That night *Sairandhrī* managed to reach *Bhīma*'s place in secrecy and provoked him to do something about what had happened. *Bhīma* said that he was ready to kill *Kīcaka* at once, but the time was not right. When *Draupadī* threatened to end her life, he agreed to fulfill her request. They planned that *Draupadī* would invite *Kīcaka* alone, to the newly built dance hall that night and *Bhīma* would wait on the bed in the guise of a woman and kill him. *Kīcaka* was elated to see a change in *Draupadī*'s attitude when she met him and invited him. Feeling a sense of fulfillment in his life, he reached the hall and groped for the bed in darkness. When he embraced the sleeping *Sairandhrī*, death embraced him. *Bhīma* jumped out and killed him. *Bhīma* then quietly left for his apartment without being noticed.





Bhīma kills Kīcaka

Virāṭa Parva contd...

Draupadī led the guards to the dead body of *Kīcaka* and told them that her *gandharva* husbands killed him when *Kīcaka* tried to molest her. The king and the queen began to fear her and thinking that her beauty might become a death trap for more people asked her to find another place for herself. However, she begged to be allowed to stay on for another thirteen days at the end of which period she added that her husband's curse would be lifted.

In *Hastināpura*, *Duryodhana* was frantically trying to get some information about the *Pāṇḍavas*. But his secret agents could not find any clues about their whereabouts. However, they told him about the news of *Kīcaka*'s death in the palace of *Virāṭa*. *Duryodhana* suspected that *Kīcaka* may have been killed by *Bhīma* on account of *Draupadī*. After getting permission from elders such as *Droṇa* and *Bhīṣma*, *Duryodhana* took immediate steps to confirm his suspicion. With the help of King *Suśarmā* of *Trigarta*, he decided to attack *Matsya-deśa*. As a prelude to the attack, it was decided that *Trigartas* would seize the cattle stations of *Matsya-deśa* from the south-east direction while the *Kauravas* would invade from the north on the following day.

King *Virāṭa* himself went to face *Suśarmā* with his whole army. *Suśarmā* captured *Virāṭa* in the battle. *Kaṅka* immediately asked *Ballava* to go and rescue *Virāṭa*. *Ballava* defeated *Suśarmā* and his army and rescued the king.

While *Virāṭa* was engaged in his battle with *Suśarmā*, the *Kauravas* invaded from the north and seized the cattle stations holding about sixty thousand cows. In *Virāṭa*'s absence, the cowherds approached the young prince *Uttarakumāra* for help. *Uttarakumāra* replied that he could fight like *Arjuna* and defeat the *Kauravas*, but he needed a charioteer. *Sairandhrī* overhearing this conversation, told the prince about *Bṛhannalā*'s skills as a charioteer and asked him to use her services as his charioteer. *Uttarakumāra* had also heard from his sister *Uttarā* regarding *Bṛhannalā*'s capabilities. He immediately agreed and enthusiastically set out to fight the enemies.



Brhannalā persuading Uttarakumāra to return and fight

Virāta Parva contd...

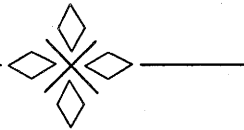
As they were approaching the battlefield, seeing the large army of the *Kauravas*, *Uttarakumāra* became nervous. He did not have any army with him since his father had taken the army in the opposite direction. He asked *Brhannalā* to turn back the chariot. *Brhannalā* continued to move forward. Panic-stricken, the prince jumped down from the chariot and started running away. *Brhannalā* assured him that he would fight the enemies and asked *Uttarakumāra* to drive the chariot, instead. Reluctantly *Uttarakumāra* returned to the chariot.

Brhannalā went to the *Śamī* tree and asked *Uttarakumāra* to bring down the bundle from the tree. The prince was amazed to see the wonderful weapons in the bundle. The mere touch of the weapons gave him new spirit and energy. *Brhannalā* revealed his identity and apprised him of the weapons. *Uttarakumāra* was totally relieved of all his fears. He fell at the feet of *Arjuna* and sought forgiveness for all the wrong acts he had committed against him.

Arjuna twanged his *Gāṇḍīva* and blew his conch *Devadatta*. The thunderous reverberating sound revealed the identity of *Arjuna* to the *Kauravas*. But the thirteen years had already expired.

Seeing *Arjuna* before him, *Droṇa* praised his valour. At this, a commotion took place in the *Kaurava* army. *Karṇa* offered to handle the fight single-handedly. When *Kṛpācārya* told him not to brag about his valour, *Karṇa* retorted wildly and *Aśvatthāmā* began deriding *Karṇa*. *Bhīṣma* intervened and brought the situation under control. He told *Duryodhana* that the thirteenth year of the *Pāṇḍavas*' exile had ended the previous day and asked him to decide, once and for all, for either war or peace with *Arjuna*.

Duryodhana opted for war and *Droṇa* gave him the plan of action: that *Duryodhana* should return with one-fourth of the army to *Hastināpura*; that one-fourth of the army should guard the seized cattle, and that *Karṇa*, *Droṇa*, *Kṛpācārya*, *Bhīṣma* and *Aśvatthāmā* should fight *Arjuna* with the remaining army.



II. Word Game

Select the right names from the word chart to answer the following:

Kṛṣṇa

Draupadī

Sudeṣṇā

Śakuni

Dhr̥ṣṭadyumna

Karṇa

Śikhaṇḍī

Duśśāsana

Yudhiṣṭhira

Vidura

Uttarā

Kīcaka

1. Who were loyal to *Duryodhana*?

- a. Ś _____
- b. K _____
- c. D _____

2. Who were righteous people?

- a. Y _____
- b. K _____
- c. V _____

3. Who were related to *Virāṭa*?

- a. K _____
- b. S _____
- c. U _____

4. King *Drupada* had three children

- a. Ś _____
- b. D _____
- c. D _____

Virāṭa Parva contd...

Arjuna, saluting his teachers by sending arrows at their feet, sped past them in lightning speed and retrieved the cows by defeating the *Kaurava* army that was guarding the cattle stations. He then pursued *Duryodhana* who was returning to *Hastināpura*. *Bhīṣma* and others came to the rescue of *Duryodhana*. *Arjuna* fought with *Karna*, *Kṛpācārya*, *Drona* and *Aśvatthāmā* and defeated them one by one. Then, a glorious battle took place between *Bhīṣma* and *Arjuna*. Finally *Bhīṣma* fell unconscious. Having broken the cordon of the ring of warriors, *Arjuna* again attacked *Duryodhana* and overpowered him. *Duryodhana* retreated from the scene.

Arjuna's taunts, however, compelled *Duryodhana* to return and protected by others, again fought with *Arjuna*. *Arjuna*, with his *Sammohanāstra*, a missile that put the enemy in trance, made them fall unconscious. He asked the prince to snatch away their upper garments, thus indicating his ultimate victory. Telling *Uttarakumāra* not to reveal their identity and placing the weapons back in the *Śamī* tree, they proceeded towards the city. *Virāṭa*, received the news that *Uttarakumāra* was returning victorious.

The king wanted to celebrate the happy news with a game of dice and asked *Kaṅka* to sit with him. In the course of their conversation, *Kaṅka* repeatedly praised *Bṛhannalā* for *Uttarakumāra*'s victory. The king lost his patience and threw the dice at *Kaṅka*'s face in frustration. *Kaṅka*'s forehead began to bleed. Seeing this, *Sairandhrī* rushed to his presence and received the blood that was gushing out in a cup. She washed *Kaṅka*'s forehead with water and cleansed it with her sari. The king still had no sense of remorse and began to question *Sairandhrī*'s action. She told the king that had the blood fallen on the ground, the king's life would have been in danger and the country would have suffered from famine. The king did not take the statements seriously.

At this time, *Uttarakumāra* entered the court. The king received him with great joy. Seeing what had happened to *Kaṅka*, *Uttarakumāra* asked his father to seek forgiveness from him. The next day, the *Pāṇḍavas* dressed in their true identity revealed themselves to the king. *Arjuna* added that the roles played by them were meant to fulfill one year of their lives incognito. *Uttarakumāra* informed the king that he had been merely a charioteer in the fight with the *Kauravas* and it was *Arjuna* who had won the war. The king fell at *Yudhiṣṭhira*'s feet and shed tears, repenting for his misbehaviour. He offered his kingdom to *Yudhiṣṭhira*; *Yudhiṣṭhira* instead, sought his alliance in the war. The king also offered his daughter *Uttarā* to *Arjuna*. *Arjuna* replied that since she had been his student, he would accept her in the family as his daughter-in-law. *Abhimanyu* and *Uttarā* were wedded and the marriage function was celebrated on a grand scale.

III. Fill in the blanks using the following words.

Matsya

tree

kuṇḍalas

Kaurava

Karṇa

Arjuna

Uttarā

Kīcaka

once

kavaca

twice

Pāñcāla

1. The *Pāṇḍavas* spent their year of exile in the kingdom called _____.
2. The *Pāṇḍavas* hid their weapons in a _____.
3. _____ was the brother of Queen *Sudeṣṇā*.
4. *Uttarakumāra* was frightened when he saw the huge _____ army.
5. Prince _____ saved the cows of King *Virāṭa* by uprooting the *Kaurava* army.
6. _____ married *Arjuna*'s son, *Abhimanyu*.
7. _____ was known as the greatest giver.
8. *Indra* gave *Karṇa* his weapon which could be used only _____ against an enemy.
9. Despite being warned in his dream, *Karṇa* gave away his _____ and _____ to *Indra*.

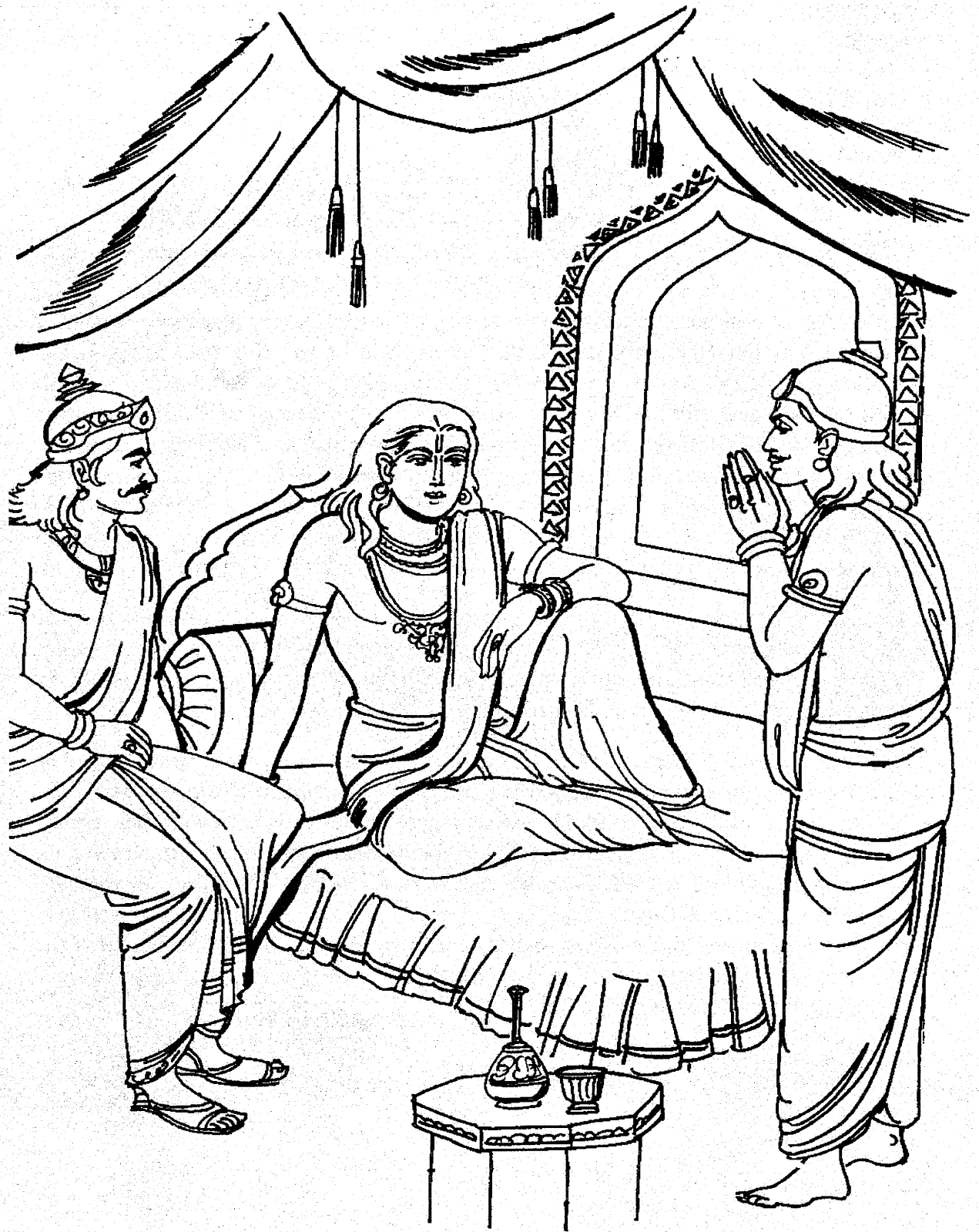
UDYOGA PARVA

This chapter describes the efforts of the *Pāṇḍavas* and the *Kauravas* in preparing themselves for the great war and is known as *Udyoga-parva*, *udyoga* meaning effort.

After *Abhimanyu's* marriage, *Kṛṣṇa*, who had graced the occasion, addressed the kings and princes in *Virāṭa's* court next day. While presenting the *Pāṇḍava's* position, *Kṛṣṇa* expressed his view that before making any move, *Duryodhana's* intentions should be ascertained by sending a messenger. *Balarāma*, who had a soft corner for *Duryodhana*, felt that *Yudhiṣṭhira* had invited trouble by playing the dice game and that *Duryodhana* could not be blamed for the *Pāṇḍavas'* sufferings. He stressed the need for taking peace initiative. *Sātyaki* differed from *Balarāma* and advocated a tough line of action as *Duryodhana* had questioned the successful completion of *Pāṇḍava's* life of one year incognition. He defended *Yudhiṣṭhira* by pointing out how he had been called to *Hastināpura* for the game with ulterior motives, how he had been forced to play against *Śakuni*, and how the game played was full of deceit and violation of the rules.

Drupada concurred with *Sātyaki*. He pointed out the urgency to send messages to all the kings of the country, seeking their alliance and participation in the war. He suggested sending his priest on a peace mission to *Hastināpura*. *Kṛṣṇa* gave his consent for *Drupada's* proposal and left for *Dvārakā*.

Drupada briefed his priest regarding his mission and sent him to *Hastināpura* to present the *Pāṇḍavas'* intent and find out *Duryodhana's* and King *Dhṛtarāṣṭra's* response. Then, he and *Virāṭa* sent messages to the various kings seeking their help with their armies. *Arjuna* went to *Dvārakā* to seek *Kṛṣṇa's* help in the war. *Duryodhana* also received the news that *Kṛṣṇa* had left for *Dvārakā* and he, too, rushed to *Dvārakā*. *Arjuna* and *Duryodhana* arrived in *Dvārakā* at the same time. *Kṛṣṇa* was resting in his palace. *Duryodhana* entered his room first and *Arjuna* followed him. Both waited for *Kṛṣṇa* to wake up. While *Duryodhana* sat on a chair that was beside *Kṛṣṇa's* head, *Arjuna* stood near his feet with folded hands.



Kṛṣṇa helps Arjuna and Duryodhana

Udyoga Parva contd...

Kṛṣṇa woke up and his eyes fell on *Arjuna*, as he was standing before him. *Kṛṣṇa* came to know the reason for their arrival and assured them that he would help both of them as *Duryodhana* came to him first and *Arjuna* was seen by him first. *Arjuna* being the younger of the two, was given the first choice. He offered his huge army and its arsenal as one option and his mere physical presence as the other. *Kṛṣṇa*'s presence in the war meant that he would not wield any weapon or fight in any way personally.

Duryodhana's heart was beating fast. He prayed that *Arjuna* would not choose the army which he knew was very big and strong. *Arjuna* felt that he had all the necessary missiles and army strength in order to defeat the *Kauravas*. All he wanted was the Lord's grace, which he knew would make all the difference between victory and defeat. He, therefore, opted for *Kṛṣṇa*. *Duryodhana* heaved a sigh of relief and returned happily having achieved what he came for.

When *Kṛṣṇa* asked *Arjuna* why *Arjuna* chose him, *Arjuna* replied that he knew that *Kṛṣṇa* could destroy the entire enemy camp by his mere *saṅkalpa*, thought, and so he sought his grace alone in winning the war. He requested *Kṛṣṇa* to drive his chariot in the war and *Kṛṣṇa* consented. *Balarāma* decided to play a neutral role in the war by choosing not to participate in it.

After receiving the *Pāṇḍavas*' message for help in the war, King *Śalya* of *Madra-deśa*, *Mādri*'s brother, proceeded towards *Upaplavya*, where the *Pāṇḍavas* were staying after the completion of the thirteenth year. *Śalya* had an army of one *akṣauhiṇī*, a military unit. *Duryodhana* came to know of this through his agents and he arranged to construct huge halls with all facilities enroute for the comfort of *Śalya* and his army. *Śalya* was pleased with the hospitality extended to him and promised a boon to the organiser of the facilities. *Duryodhana* revealed himself to be the organiser and encashed on *Śalya*'s promise, asking him to be a commander in his army and give him his army support.



I. Word Search

Find Lord *Kṛṣṇa*'s qualities listed below in the word game. Look up, down, across and diagonally.

righteous

playful

kind

joyous

helpful

giving

loving

respectful

powerful

T S L U F R E W O P
R I G H T E O U S L
E M S O T D R V N A
S K U N F N X S P Y
P R O E G L H L L F
E G Y S K E P O R U
C T O T L O K V E L
T N J P S D N I K Z
F O F Z P U X N N N
U U G N I V I G S D
L P Q R K N H P D V

Udyoga Parva contd...

Śalya then met *Yudhiṣṭhira* in *Upaplavya* and narrated to him how he had been tricked into taking the *Kauravas*' side. *Yudhiṣṭhira*, even though disappointed, supported *Śalya*'s decision. He, however, asked *Śalya* to do him one favour. He told him that in the war when *Karṇa* and *Arjuna* would fight, as *Karṇa*'s charioteer, *Śalya* should constantly dampen *Karṇa*'s spirits. *Śalya* promised to do so and blessed *Yudhiṣṭhira* assuring him that he would win the war and get back his kingdom.

Some of the armies that joined the *Pāṇḍavas*' side were one *akṣauhini* each from *Sātyaki* of *Yādava* clan, *Dhr̥ṣṭaketu* of *Cedi* kingdom and *Sahadeva* of *Magadha* kingdom. The total number of *akṣauhini*s in the *Pāṇḍava* army was seven. *Bhagadatta*, *Bhūriśravas*, *Kṛtavarmā* and *Jayadratha* were some of the kings who joined the *Kauravas* with their armies and the *Kaurava* army totalled eleven *akṣauhini*s.

Drupada's messenger who was sent to *Hastināpura* informed the assembly that the *Pāṇḍavas* had not received their due share in the paternal property. Furthermore, even the kingdom of *Indraprastha* had been taken away by wrong means. In spite of this, the *Pāṇḍavas* had silently suffered in exile for thirteen years. Now they wanted to forget everything and live in peace with the *Kauravas*. The messenger appealed to the elders that they should help the *Pāṇḍavas* get back their kingdom and avert the war. *Bhīṣma* agreed and praised *Arjuna*'s strength. *Karṇa* felt that the *Pāṇḍavas* should go to the forest for another twelve years as they had been discovered before the expiry of one year of incognito. *Dhṛtarāṣṭra* accepted the peace initiative from the *Pāṇḍavas* and decided to send *Saṅjaya*, his minister, to *Yudhiṣṭhira* with a message.

Saṅjaya arrived at *Upaplavya* and shared with the *Pāṇḍavas*, *Dhṛtarāṣṭra*'s sympathy for them, and his support in settling the conflict peacefully. He conveyed *Dhṛtarāṣṭra*'s message presenting the evils of war. The message included *Dhṛtarāṣṭra*'s suggestion that the *Pāṇḍavas* should avoid killing their kith and kin for the sake of a mere kingdom and that they either resign for a forest life or stay in *Dvārakā* with *Kṛṣṇa* in case *Duryodhana* refused to return the kingdom.

II. Word Game

Help *Dhṛtarāṣṭra* discover the qualities of a dharmic person.
Mark the correct answer.

1. A dharmic person aspires for
_____ honesty _____ money _____ presidency _____ none of these
2. His strength lies in his
_____ muscles _____ power _____ wisdom _____ none of these
3. His actions are based in
_____ anger _____ jealousy _____ pride _____ none of these
4. He has a
_____ wavering mind _____ distracted mind _____ steady mind
_____ all of these
5. He acts
_____ differently from what he thinks _____ as he thinks
_____ opposite to what he thinks _____ none of these
6. He shows kindness to others
_____ by laughing at them _____ by helping them
_____ by hurting them _____ none of these
7. He has a value for not hurting others by
_____ action _____ words _____ thoughts _____ all of these
8. If a calamity overtakes him, he blames
_____ the Lord _____ the world _____ himself _____ none of these
9. He has reverence for
_____ the scriptures _____ nature _____ all living beings
_____ all of these

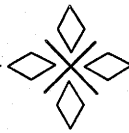
Udyoga Parva contd...

Yudhiṣṭhira told *Saṅjaya* that he would abide by *Kṛṣṇa*'s advice as *Kṛṣṇa* cared for the interests of both the *Kauravas* and the *Pāṇḍavas*. *Kṛṣṇa* informed *Saṅjaya* that he would himself visit *Hastināpura* on a peace mission and see if the *Kauravas* were willing to negotiate for peace. *Yudhiṣṭhira* sent a clear message through *Saṅjaya* asking *Dhṛtarāṣṭra* to ensure the return of their kingdom, now that they had completed their term of exile.

Saṅjaya returned to *Hastināpura* and met the king. He accused him of treading the path of *adharmā* and branded him as a perpetrator of all evils. He told the king that he would read *Yudhiṣṭhira*'s and *Kṛṣṇa*'s message in the assembly the next day.

Dhṛtarāṣṭra, who had been eagerly waiting for *Saṅjaya*'s return, was taken back by *Saṅjaya*'s behaviour. Unable to sleep that night, he called *Vidura* for guidance. *Vidura* reminded the king about his duties and told him to share his love for the *Kauravas* and the *Pāṇḍavas* equally and protect the rights of the *Pāṇḍavas* as this alone was the right course of action.

The next day, *Saṅjaya* entered the assembly and gave a vivid account of his meeting with the *Pāṇḍavas*. The king wanted to know what *Arjuna* had said, to which *Saṅjaya* replied that *Arjuna* had challenged *Duryodhana* to either face him in the battlefield or else return half the kingdom and settle for peace. *Bhīṣma* intervened and tried to bring good sense in *Duryodhana* by pointing out his wrong associations with *Śakuni*, *Karṇa* and *Duśśāsana*, because of whom he had been misguided at every stage, and his own judgement of the *Pāṇḍavas* had been coloured. He explained how *Karṇa*, whose skills *Duryodhana* counted upon, was not invincible because of *Paraśurāma*'s and the brahmin's curses, as well as his loss of his protective armour and earrings. He reminded *Duryodhana* of the humiliating defeats he and *Karṇa* faced at the hands of *Arjuna* in *Virāṭa* and from the *gandharvas* in *Dvaitavana*.



III. Right or Wrong?

Arjuna and *Duryodhana* went to *Kṛṣṇa* for help in the war. *Kṛṣṇa* gave them a choice between:

1. His army with great warriors who would fight in the war.
2. *Kṛṣṇa* himself, who would not fight in the war.

Arjuna chose _____

Duryodhana chose _____

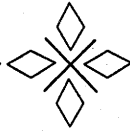
Who made a better choice? _____

Udyoga Parva contd...

When *Bhīṣma* came down heavily on *Karṇa*, *Duryodhana* stood by him and supported him with his love. *Duryodhana* won *Karṇa*'s heart and secured his loyalty for life. Like *Bhīṣma*, *Droṇa* too spoke of the greatness of the *Pāṇḍava* army and commended *Arjuna* as an invincible warrior. But their words fell on deaf ears of *Duryodhana*. *Dhṛtarāṣṭra* was also indifferent to *Bhīṣma* and *Droṇa*. He enquired from *Saṅjaya* regarding the preparations of the *Pāṇḍavas*' army. He became fearful of *Bhīma* and *Arjuna* and was concerned that they may destroy the *Kauravas*. He pleaded with *Duryodhana* to settle for peace. *Saṅjaya* questioned *Dhṛtarāṣṭra* as to why he did not exercise his authority on *Duryodhana* knowing fully well the repercussions of war. He blamed the king for supporting *Duryodhana*'s actions in damaging the *Pāṇḍavas*.

Duryodhana felt sorry for his father and tried to cheer him. He described the strength of his army which comprised of eleven *akṣauhiṇīs* as compared to the seven *akṣauhiṇīs* of the *Pāṇḍavas*. He told him that his army comprised of great stalwarts such as *Bhīṣma*, who had the boon of *svacchanda-maraṇa* because of which he could himself choose his time of his death; *Droṇa*, *Arjuna*'s teacher; and *Ásvatthāmā*, who was born by the grace of Lord *Śiva*. He added that his friend, *Karṇa*, was the greatest of archers and possessed the powerful weapon, *Śakti* which could never fail him. He expressed his own greatness over *Bhīma*. He asked his father to give up worrying and be at peace.

Dhṛtarāṣṭra felt at ease for a while. He, then, asked *Saṅjaya* about the kings who were with the *Pāṇḍavas*. *Saṅjaya* gave a detailed account of their allies. *Dhṛtarāṣṭra* was struck with fear and again requested *Duryodhana* to give up the battle. But *Duryodhana*, deluded by his pride and arrogance, declared that he would fight at any cost even if no one came forward to help him. He was convinced that with the mere help of *Duśśāsana* and *Karṇa* he could fight the *Pāṇḍavas* and win. *Karṇa* also boasted that he could single-handedly kill all the sons of *Kuntī*. When *Bhīṣma* ridiculed him, *Karṇa* got hurt and vowed that he would not enter the assembly or the battlefield until the fall of *Bhīṣma*, and laying down his weapons, walked out. Soon the assembly broke up.



IV. Identify the allies of the Pāṇḍava and Kaurava armies.

Place the names from the list in the correct army.

Dhr̥ṣṭadyumna

Sātyaki

Śikhaṇḍī

Karṇa

Śalya

Dhr̥ṣṭaketu

Drupada

Jayadratha

Bhīṣma

Droṇa

Bhūriśravas

Virāṭa

PĀṆDAVAS

KAURAVAS

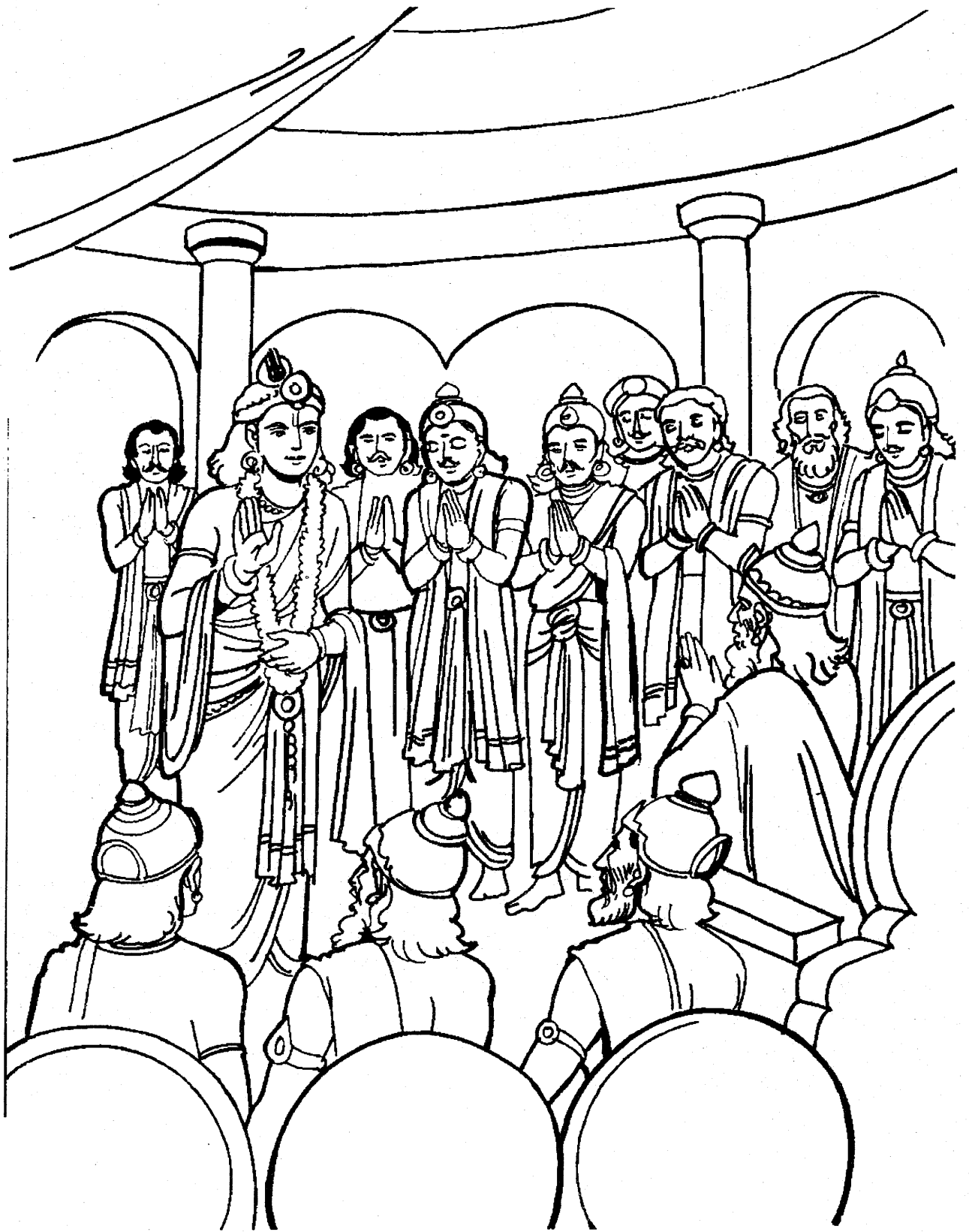
Udyoga Parva contd...

In *Upaplavya*, *Kṛṣṇa* was preparing himself to go to *Hastināpura* on a peace mission. *Yudhiṣṭhira* wanted to avoid war and asked *Kṛṣṇa* to help him. To the surprise of everyone, *Bhīma* also made a plea for peace. *Kṛṣṇa*, interested in getting rid of the unrighteous kings and establishing *dharma* on earth, evoked *Bhīma's* fighting spirits by reminding him of the vows he had taken. While *Arjuna* and *Nakula* told *Kṛṣṇa* to take steps that he thought appropriate, *Sahadeva* wanted only war. *Draupadī* who had not dressed her hair since *Duśśāsana* touched it, showed the same to *Kṛṣṇa* and sobbed. She reminded *Kṛṣṇa* that she had vowed not to tie her hair until the hands that touched them were severed. *Kṛṣṇa* consoled her that her wishes would soon be fulfilled.

The next day, *Kṛṣṇa* left for *Hastināpura* with his charioteer *Sātyaki*. *Dhṛtarāṣṭra* asked *Duryodhana* to please *Kṛṣṇa* with a grand reception and hospitality and win his favour. The streets of *Hastināpura* wore a festive look. People gathered in large numbers to welcome *Kṛṣṇa*. *Kṛṣṇa* was received with great honour in the palace. *Dhṛtarāṣṭra* wanted to offer costly gifts to him. *Vidura* advised him against it knowing that *Kṛṣṇa* could never be bought by gifts. He instead, asked *Dhṛtarāṣṭra* to help *Kṛṣṇa* accomplish his peace mission.

Kṛṣṇa declined to eat at *Duryodhana's* palace saying that emissaries were not supposed to accept any hospitality until their mission was accomplished. When *Duryodhana* insisted, *Kṛṣṇa* declared that he would not partake food in the house of a person who entertained hatred towards others and since *Duryodhana* had nothing but hatred for the *Pāṇḍavas*, he refused to eat there. *Kṛṣṇa* then went to *Vidura's* house for dinner and overnight stay.

The following day, *Kṛṣṇa* went to the *Kaurava-sabhā* and appealed to the king to avert the war and devise an honourable solution for the *Pāṇḍavas*. The king expressed his helplessness and sought *Kṛṣṇa's* help to change *Duryodhana's* mind. *Kṛṣṇa* requested *Duryodhana* to make peace with the *Pāṇḍavas* by returning half the kingdom that was due to them. *Duryodhana* refused to give even an inch of land to the *Pāṇḍavas*. In so doing, he asserted that he did not see anything wrong in his action. *Kṛṣṇa* listed all his wrong deeds. *Duśśāsana* accused everyone present as supporters of the *Pāṇḍavas*, and taking *Duryodhana* with him left the *sabhā*.



Kṛṣṇa in the Kaurava assembly on his peace mission

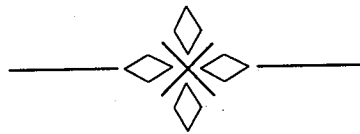
Udyoga Parva contd...

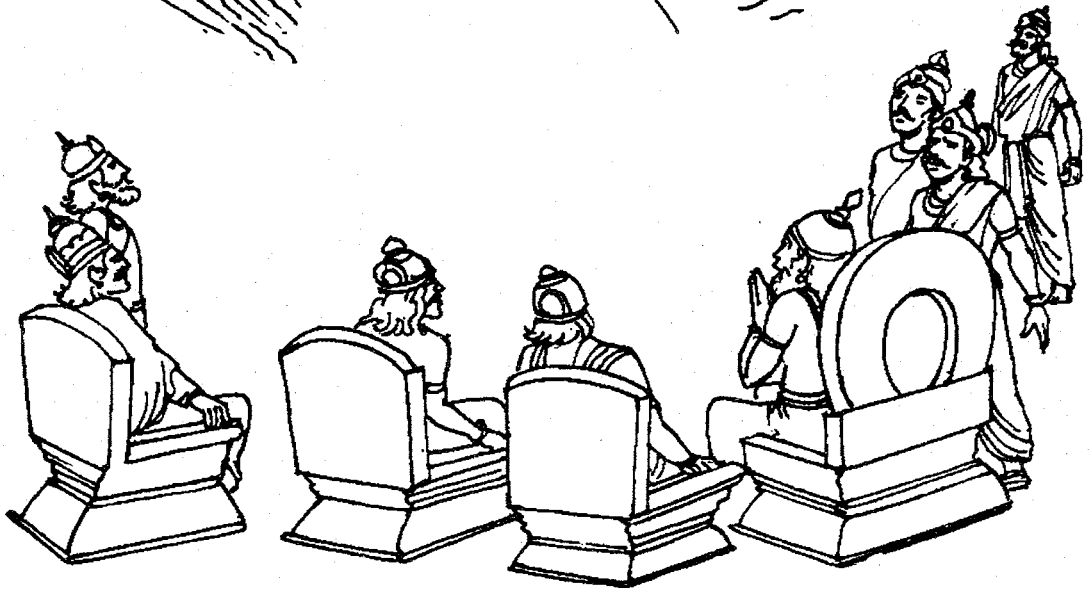
Kṛṣṇa told *Dhṛtarāṣṭra* that it would not be wrong to sacrifice one person for saving the entire clan and that *Duryodhana* could be taken prisoner with *Śakuni*, *Karṇa* and *Duśśāsana*, and delivered to *Yudhiṣṭhira*. With the hope that *Gāndhārī* might be able to convince *Duryodhana* to consent, the king sent for her. *Gāndhārī* tried her best to change *Duryodhana*'s thinking, but was unsuccessful. *Duryodhana* left her and went to *Śakuni*'s place where *Karṇa* and *Duśśāsana* were present. Fearing that they might be held captive, they plotted to capture *Kṛṣṇa*.

Sātyaki came to know of this plan and rushed to inform *Kṛṣṇa*. Amused, *Kṛṣṇa* revealed his divine form. He grew in size and the whole creation, including all the celestials and gods were seen in *Kṛṣṇa*. Except for *Droṇa*, *Bhīṣma*, *Vidura*, *Sañjaya* and other sages, none could see his divine form as their eyes were blinded by the brilliance of the form. *Kṛṣṇa* gave sight to *Dhṛtarāṣṭra* so that he could also see his *Viśvarūpa*, the cosmic form. Thus revealing his glories, *Kṛṣṇa* left the hall flanked by *Sātyaki* and *Kṛtavarmā*. While on the chariot, he turned towards the assembly and addressed the gathering for the last time. He told them that he had done his best and that the *Kauravas* were entirely responsible for the outbreak of the war.

Kṛṣṇa then went to *Kuntī*'s place and took leave of her. Just before leaving for *Upaplavya*, he called on *Karṇa* and drove with him to the outskirts of the city for a private conversation. *Kṛṣṇa* revealed to *Karṇa* the truth of his parentage. He told *Karṇa* that he was born to *Kuntī* and was the eldest of the *Pāṇḍavas*. He added that if he chose to fight for the *Pāṇḍavas*, he would not only become the king but also regain his mother and brothers.

Karṇa was overwhelmed by emotions at this discovery. But the hard realities of his life from the time *Rādhā* adopted him as her child stared at his face. He was choked with emotions. He told *Kṛṣṇa* that he could accept *Kuntī* and *Pāṇḍu* as his parents, but he was committed to his foster parents *Rādhā* and *Adhiratha*, who had brought him up with love and care. His life was inextricably linked to his wives of the *sūta* caste and his sons and grandsons born of them. Furthermore, he had enjoyed thirteen years of royal life in the company of *Duryodhana* and *Duryodhana* had chosen to wage a war against the *Pāṇḍavas* depending solely on him.





Kṛṣṇa revealing his Viśva-rūpa, cosmic form in the Kaurava assembly

Udyoga Parva contd...

He pleaded with *Kṛṣṇa* not to reveal this truth to his brothers. He knew that if *Yudhiṣṭhira* discovered that *Karṇa* was his elder brother, he would never accept the kingdom; instead he would hand it over to *Karṇa*, who, in turn, would pass it on to *Duryodhana*. *Karṇa* affirmed victory for the *Pāṇḍavas* and took leave of *Kṛṣṇa*.

After *Kṛṣṇa* left *Hastināpura*, it was clear to all that war was certain. *Vidura* went to *Kuntī* and shared his grief at *Kṛṣṇa*'s failure in his efforts to achieve peace. *Kuntī* was concerned at the disastrous consequences of war. She could reconcile with the fact that *Bhīṣma* and *Droṇa* were on the *Kauravas*' side, for she knew that their love for the *Pāṇḍavas* would weaken their strength. But she feared *Karṇa*'s strength. She decided to meet him and win his love by revealing the secret of his birth.

The next morning, she went to the banks of *Gaṅgā* where *Karṇa* used to perform his morning worship of Lord Sun and waited for him to finish his worship. When *Karṇa* opened his eyes, he saw *Kuntī* and prostrating before her, asked her what he could do for her. *Kuntī* told him that he was not *Rādheya*, but *Kaunteya*, the son of *Kuntī*, and sharing with him the story of his birth, requested him to join with the *Pāṇḍavas*. At that time, a voice from the orb of the sun confirmed *Kuntī*'s words as true and asked *Karṇa* to fulfill her wishes for his own welfare. *Karṇa* stood unmoved.

His anger against *Kuntī* for abandoning him which had caused him untold sufferings surfaced. However, his craving for his mother, whom he had dreamt about for years and whom he had hoped to meet one day, overpowered his anger. Embracing her, he sought her affection. He filled his heart with her presence and rested on her lap in silence for a long time.





Kuntī meets Karna

Udyoga Parva contd...

He explained to her how he could not leave *Duryodhana* as he carried a debt of love and gratitude towards him. But, since *Kuntī* had come to him asking for something, *Karna* promised her that he would only kill *Arjuna* in the battle and no other *Pāṇḍava*, or get killed; thus *Kuntī* would have her five sons even at the end of the war. *Kuntī* blessed him and they parted.

Kṛṣṇa reported to the *Pāṇḍavas* the failure of his talks at *Hastināpura* and asked the *Pāṇḍavas* to proceed to the battlefield. *Yudhiṣṭhira* issued orders for marshalling his forces in *Kurukṣetra*. He appointed *Dhr̥ṣṭadyumna*, *Drupada*, *Virāṭa*, *Śikhaṇḍī*, *Sātyaki*, *Cekitāna* and *Bhīma* as the commanders of his seven *akṣauhiṇīs* and *Dhr̥ṣṭadyumna* as the commander-in-chief.

Duryodhana selected *Kṛpācārya*, *Droṇa*, *Aśvatthāmā*, *Śalya*, *Jayadratha*, *Sudakṣiṇa*, *Kṛtavarmā*, *Karna*, *Bhūriśravas*, *Śakuni* and *Bāhlīka* as his commanders. *Duryodhana* offering his salutations to *Bhīṣma*, requested him to be the commander-in-chief of the *Kaurava* army. *Bhīṣma* laid a condition that he would not kill any of the *Pāṇḍavas* in the war as they were as dear to him as the *Kauravas*. *Duryodhana* accepted the condition and the army of eleven *akṣauhiṇīs* reached *Kurukṣetra*.

Balarāma visited the *Pāṇḍavas* and told them that as he did not want to witness the great calamity that was to happen, he wished to take their leave and go on a pilgrimage. The only other king who did not participate in the great war was *Rukmi*, the brother of *Rukmiṇī*. *Rukmi* had been boastful and had offered his help to *Yudhiṣṭhira* with one *akṣauhiṇī* of his army. *Yudhiṣṭhira* had turned him down. He, then, offered the same to *Duryodhana*, who also turned him down for having come to him after being refused by the *Pāṇḍavas*. Barring *Rukmi*, all the other kings participated in the war.



Both the Kauravas and the Pāṇḍavas prepared for the war. Each army unit was called an akṣauhiṇī.

Did you know ? One *akṣauhiṇī* consists of :

21,870 chariots;



65,610 horses;



21,870 elephants;



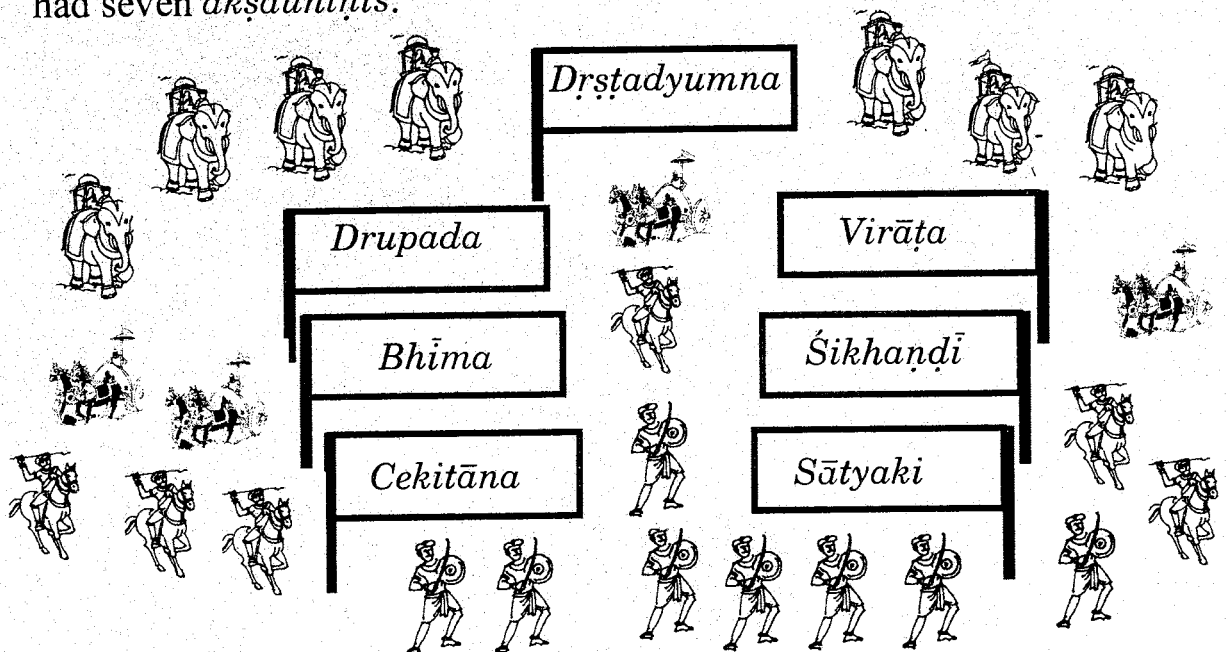
1, 09,350 foot soldiers



Here are the details of both the armies which met on the battlefield *Kurukṣetra* :

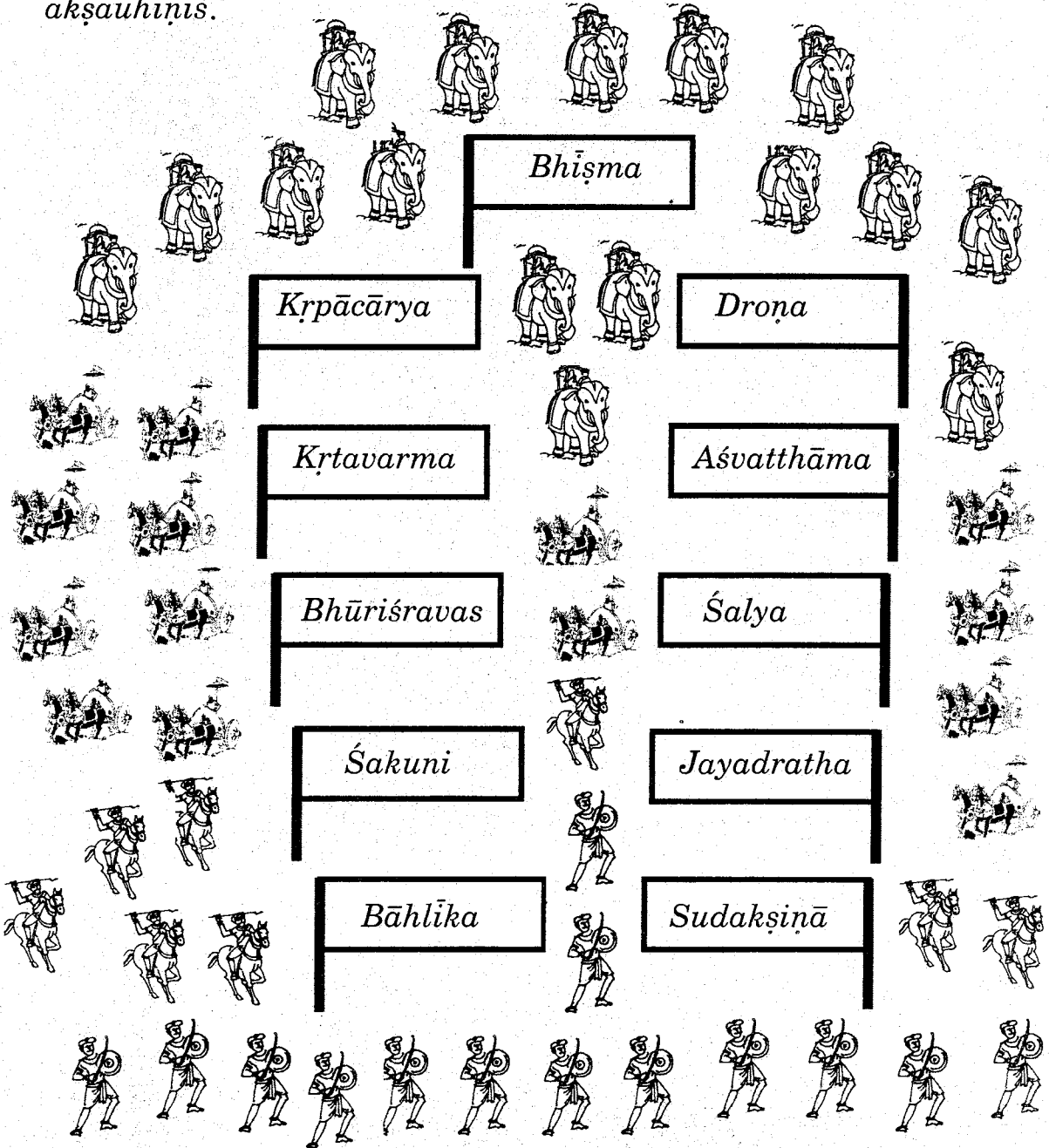
PĀṆḌAVA ARMY

Dr̥ṣṭadyumna was the commander-in-chief. These are the commanders who lead the *Pāṇḍava* units. The *Pāṇḍavas* army had seven *akṣauhiṇīs*.



KAURAVA ARMY

The *Kauravas* had eleven *akṣauhinīs*. *Bhīṣma* was the first commander-in-chief. These are the commanders who lead the *akṣauhinīs*.



V. Answer the following questions.

1. Who was *Karṇa*'s real mother? _____
2. Was *Karṇa* a *kaunteya* or a *Kaurava*? _____
3. How many *akṣauhiṇīs*, army units did the *Pāṇḍavas* and the *Kauravas* have in the war? _____
4. Where was the great war of the *Mahābhārata* fought?

5. Who would not fight on the battlefield in the presence of *Bhīṣma*? _____
6. Who tried to be a peacemaker? _____
7. Who was the first commander-in-chief of the *Kaurava* army?

8. What was the name of *Rukmiṇī*'s brother? _____
9. Who was the uncle of the *Pāṇḍavas* and the *Kauravas*?

10. Was *Karṇa* won over to the *Pāṇḍavas*' side?

BHĪṢMA PARVA

This section describes the war scenes for the first ten days with *Bhīṣma* as commander-in-chief.

Kṛṣṇa and *Arjuna* blew their respective conches, *Pāñcajanya* and *Devadatta* which sent waves of fear in the *Kaurava* army. The army generals of the two armies met and agreed upon the rules of war. Some of the rules agreed upon were: each day the fight should terminate at sunset (and the warriors should relax their spirit of destroying their enemies); the duels should be between equals such as a horse-rider should fight with another horse-rider and an elephant-rider with another elephant-rider; and anyone about to leave the battlefield, being unprepared, unarmed, frightened, in surrender, in retreat, or if engaged in services such as drumming, should not be killed.

Vyāsa, seeing the preparations for war, visited his son *Dhṛtarāṣṭra* and told him that the end of the *Kauravas* was fast approaching. He offered him with the divine vision in order to see the events of the war, but *Dhṛtarāṣṭra* declined as he did not want to see his sons dying or the grief of his family members. However, he wanted to hear about the happenings in the war-front and sought *Vyāsa*'s help. *Vyāsa* gave the divine vision as well as a boon to *Sañjaya* that he would remain free from fatigue and would not be touched by any weapon during the war. *Sañjaya*, thus having received the power of knowing the past, present and future, narrated the war happenings to the king.

In *Kurukṣetra*, the armies aligned themselves in specific formation known as *vyūha*. The battle plan for the day such as who should be the prime target or who should be protected against the opponent, decided the type of *vyūha* of that day. Those skilled in the warfare knew how to break the formation of the enemy and enter their *vyūha* as well as escape from it after achieving one's purpose.



I. Rules of War

Rules were followed in war to ensure that the fight was fair. Read each statement and then mark "True" if the statement was a rule of war, and "False" if it was not.

1. Both armies stop fighting at sunset.

_____ True _____ False

2. A warrior can attack another warrior from behind.

_____ True _____ False

3. A warrior on a chariot cannot attack a warrior on the ground.

_____ True _____ False

4. Six warriors can attack one warrior at the same time.

_____ True _____ False

5. A warrior cannot misuse a divine weapon given by a *devatā*.

_____ True _____ False

6. A warrior who refuses a challenge to a duel is brave.

_____ True _____ False

7. Only a brave warrior runs away from the battlefield.

_____ True _____ False

Bhīṣma Parva contd...

On the first day, the *Pāṇḍavas* arranged their army in *vajra-vyūha*, thunderbolt formation, with a concentration of forces rather than deployment. The battle was about to begin. The war was declared by the blowing of conch by *Bhīṣma*. *Arjuna* asked *Kṛṣṇa* to take him to the middle of the battlefield from where he could survey who were arrayed for and against the *Pāṇḍavas* in the war. *Kṛṣṇa* willingly obliged and stationed the chariot in the middle.

Upon seeing his teachers, friends and relatives *Arjuna* was overwhelmed by his affection for them. He felt deeply aggrieved at the possible bereavements that the war was to bring about. He could not bear to see himself as the cause of the death of his own kith and kin and desired to withdraw from the war. He saw the war as futile, but at the same time knew it was his duty to fight. He was confused about his course of action; he surrendered to Lord *Kṛṣṇa* and asked for his guidance.

Lord *Kṛṣṇa* gave his teachings, the *Bhagavad Gītā*, in which he unfolded the nature of the self as limitless and not subject to time. He revealed that what was subject to death was the physical body which was the non-self and did not deserve any grief. Thus there was no need for *Arjuna* to grieve over the loss of his near and dear ones. He also taught *Arjuna* how actions performed with a certain attitude of surrender to the Lord helps one gracefully receive the results, whether they be pleasant or unpleasant. *Kṛṣṇa* urged *Arjuna* to fight as it was the duty of a *kṣatriya* to protect *dharma* by destroying the unrighteous. He also talked about *sannyāsa*, meditation, devotion and glories of the Lord, and gave *Arjuna* the vision of his cosmic form.

Having gained clarity, *Arjuna* boldly held his *Gāṇḍīva* and prepared himself for the war. At that time, *Yudhiṣṭhira* made an unexpected move. He laid down his arms and alighting from the chariot, walked briskly towards the direction of the *Kaurava* army. *Arjuna* and others were concerned whether *Yudhiṣṭhira* was going to ask for peace with the *Kauravas* at any cost. While *Duryodhana* and his men were disgusted at the seeming cowardice of *Yudhiṣṭhira*, they were thrilled that they could win the war without sending a single arrow.





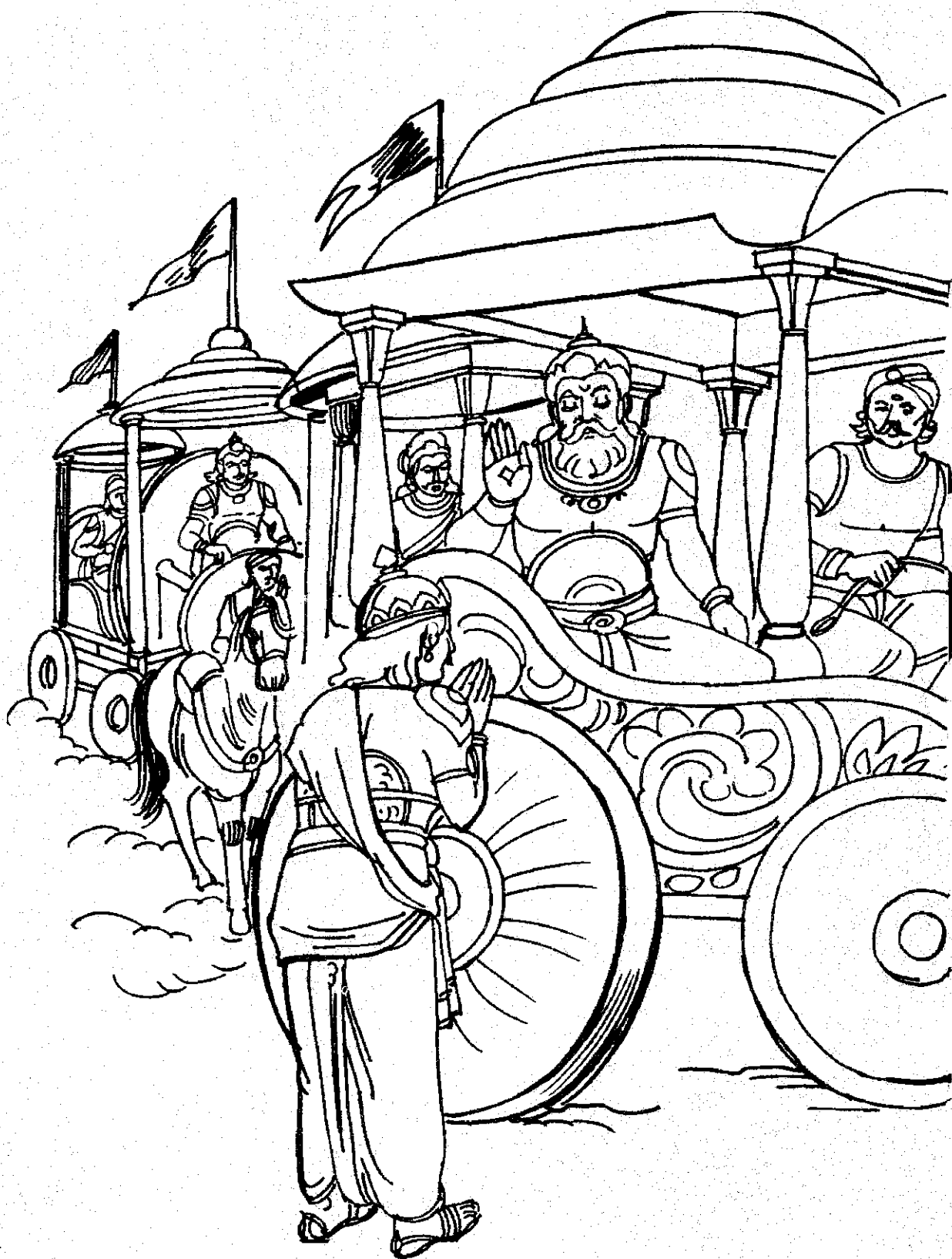
Bhīṣma Parva contd...

Yudhiṣṭhira disappointed everyone. He went towards *Bhīṣma* and touching his feet, sought his permission and blessings for the war. *Bhīṣma* was pleased with *Yudhiṣṭhira*'s action and expressed his helplessness in having to fight against *dharma*. *Bhīṣma* assured victory for *Yudhiṣṭhira* as he was committed to *dharma*. *Yudhiṣṭhira* also saluted his teachers, *Droṇa* and *Kṛpācārya* and his uncle *Śalya* and returned to his chariot.

The war began. Arrows were sent in lightning speed, glowing like burning meteors and the two armies started slaying one another. The highlights of the day's battle were the confrontations between *Bhīṣma* and *Abhimanyu*, and between *Virāṭa*'s sons and *Śalya*. Even the gods came to witness the fight between the veteran *Bhīṣma* and the young hero *Abhimanyu*. In the other confrontation, *Śalya* killed *Uttara-kumāra*. Furious at *Śalya* for killing his brother, *Śveta* fought with him and almost killed him. *Bhīṣma* came to *Śalya*'s rescue and killed *Śveta* by means of a sharp javelin. The first day of war had favoured *Kauravas* and *Kṛṣṇa* had to cheer the disappointed *Yudhiṣṭhira* in the *Pāṇḍava* camp.

The next day, *Dhr̥ṣṭadyumna* arranged his army in *krauñca-vyūha*, in the form of the *krauñca* bird. At the head of the formation was *Drupada* while *Yudhiṣṭhira* positioned himself at the tail portion. The *Kauravas* responded with a similar formation in which *Bhūriśravas* and *Śalya* guarded the left wing while *Somadatta* and the king of *Kamboja* guarded the right wing. The sound of the battle drums and conches signalled the dawn of the second day's war.

Bhīṣma began to fiercely destroy the *Pāṇḍava* forces like the previous day. *Kṛṣṇa* steered *Arjuna*'s chariot towards *Bhīṣma* and a great fight ensued between the two. The celestials gathered in the sky to watch the battle. *Arjuna* inflicted wounds upon *Bhīṣma* a number of times and was, in turn, hit by the sharp shafts of *Bhīṣma*. The *Kaurava* army cheered *Bhīṣma*. Thus provoked further, *Arjuna* broke into the army and massacred the entire battalion by his arrows. *Duryodhana* admonished *Bhīṣma* suspecting him of disloyalty. Hurt by *Duryodhana*'s words, *Bhīṣma*, cursed himself for having taken birth in a *kṣatriya* family and proceeded towards *Arjuna* to fight with more vigour. *Kṛṣṇa* and *Arjuna* were hit many times by the shafts of *Bhīṣma*. *Arjuna*, fighting with equal valour also caused severe damage to the *Kaurava* army.



Yudhishtira seeks Bhisma's blessings

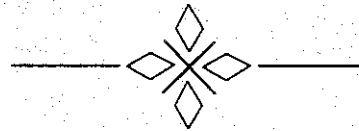
Bhīṣma Parva contd...

Drona and *Dhr̥ṣṭadyumna* also confronted and fought with each other on the second day. Elsewhere, the king of *Kaliṅga* and his army were attacked by *Sātyaki* and *Bhīma* and the army was routed. *Bhīṣma* rushed to help the king of *Kaliṅga* when *Sātyaki* killed *Bhīṣma*'s charioteer. The horses, now without a charioteer, began to gallop fast in the battlefield with *Bhīṣma*, and the *Pāṇḍavas* enjoyed the scene. *Duryodhana*'s son *Lakṣmaṇa* and *Arjuna*'s son *Abhimanyu* fought with valour like their fathers; soon the sun set; the soldiers retired for the day. The *Pāṇḍavas* were jubilant at the close of the second day, while *Duryodhana* felt defeated.

At the dawn of the third day, *Bhīṣma* again marched his army to the battlefield. The *Kaurava* army was in the *garuḍa-vyūha*, eagle formation, with *Bhīṣma* in the lead and *Duryodhana* at the rear. The *Pāṇḍavas* faced them with *ardhacandra-vyūha*, crescent formation.

Ghaṭotkaca, *Bhīma*'s son, excelled his father in the battlefield. He devastated *Duryodhana*'s division of army while *Duryodhana* was hit by a shaft of *Bhīma*. *Duryodhana* swooned and his charioteer drove him to safety. Recovering himself quickly, *Duryodhana* returned and took *Bhīṣma* to task. He asked *Bhīṣma* to clearly spell out his position - whether he would whole-heartedly fight against the *Pāṇḍavas*, or not. *Bhīṣma* calmly replied that he was doing his best. He rallied his forces and attacked the opponents with full force.

It was as though many *Bhīṣmas* were simultaneously fighting. Such was the swiftness of his movements all over and he, as though, pervaded the battlefield. The *Pāṇḍava* army was demoralised and no one could restore their confidence. *Kṛṣṇa* nudged *Arjuna* to come out fiercely and kill *Bhīṣma*. *Arjuna*, inspired by *Kṛṣṇa*, felled *Bhīṣma*'s banner by his first arrow. With more arrows he also broke *Bhīṣma*'s bow. *Bhīṣma* admired *Arjuna*'s skill, but *Arjuna* could not proceed further with his attacks against *Bhīṣma*.



II. Fill in the blanks.

Find out what happened before the war by filling in the blanks with the appropriate words.

Kurukṣetra

Karṇa

Vyāsa

Yudhiṣṭhira

Śikhaṇḍī

Dhṛṣṭadyumna

1. The *Pāṇḍavas* and the *Kauravas* met on the field of _____.
2. _____ granted *Sañjaya* a boon to see what happened on the battlefield through a divine sight.
3. _____ vowed not to fight the war as long as *Bhīṣma* was commander-in-chief.
4. *Yudhiṣṭhira* appointed _____ as the commander-in-chief of the *Pāṇḍava* army.
5. Before the war, _____ dropped all his weapons and went to *Bhīṣma* to seek his blessings.
6. _____ the warrior son of *Drupada*, was once a woman called *Ambā*.

III. Mark the correct answer.

1. *Arjuna* asked Lord *Kṛṣṇa* to place the chariot in the middle of the two armies because
 - a. _____ he wanted to clearly see his enemies.
 - b. _____ he wanted to mark his first arrow.
 - c. _____ he wanted to talk to Lord *Kṛṣṇa* privately.

2. *Arjuna* felt he could not fight his enemies because
 - a. _____ he was afraid to lose.
 - b. _____ he forgot how to fight.
 - c. _____ they were his relatives.

3. Lord *Kṛṣṇa* encouraged *Arjuna* to fight because
 - a. _____ it was *Arjuna's* duty to fight.
 - b. _____ he was already on the battlefield.
 - c. _____ he wanted *Duryodhana* to lose.

4. *Arjuna* asked Lord *Kṛṣṇa* to teach him
 - a. _____ how to fight.
 - b. _____ that which would give him total happiness.
 - c. _____ how to gain courage.

5. Lord *Kṛṣṇa* unfolded the truth of oneself which
 - a. _____ is identical with the Lord.
 - b. _____ made *Arjuna* escape from his duty.
 - c. _____ showed *Arjuna* that he didn't have to fight.

6. *Arjuna* discovered freedom and happiness in Lord *Kṛṣṇa's* teachings
 - a. _____ and decided to do his duty as a prince and fight.
 - b. _____ and decided to renounce the world.
 - c. _____ and decided to surrender to *Duryodhana*.

II. Fill in the blanks.

Find out what happened before the war by filling in the blanks with the appropriate words.

Kurukṣetra

Karṇa

Vyāsa

Yudhiṣṭhira

Śikhaṇḍī

Dhr̥ṣṭadyumna

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 - c. _____ they were his relatives.

3. Lord *Kṛṣṇa* encouraged *Arjuna* to fight because
 - a. _____ it was *Arjuna's* duty to fight.
 - b. _____ he was already on the battlefield.
 - c. _____ he wanted *Duryodhana* to lose.

4. *Arjuna* asked Lord *Kṛṣṇa* to teach him
 - a. _____ how to fight.
 - b. _____ that which would give him total happiness.
 - c. _____ how to gain courage.

5. Lord *Kṛṣṇa* unfolded the truth of oneself which
 - a. _____ is identical with the Lord.
 - b. _____ made *Arjuna* escape from his duty.
 - c. _____ showed *Arjuna* that he didn't have to fight.

6. *Arjuna* discovered freedom and happiness in Lord *Kṛṣṇa's* teachings
 - a. _____ and decided to do his duty as a prince and fight.
 - b. _____ and decided to renounce the world.
 - c. _____ and decided to surrender to *Duryodhana*.

II. Fill in the blanks.

Find out what happened before the war by filling in the blanks with the appropriate words.

Kuruksetra

Karṇa

Vyāsa

Yudhiṣṭhira

Śikhaṇḍī

Dhr̥ṣṭadyumna.

1. The *Pāṇḍavas* and the *Kauravas* met on the field of _____.
2. _____ granted *Sañjaya* a boon to see what happened on the battlefield through a divine sight.
3. _____ vowed not to fight the war as long as *Bhīṣma* was commander-in-chief.
4. *Yudhiṣṭhira* appointed _____ as the commander-in-chief of the *Pāṇḍava* army.
5. Before the war, _____ dropped all his weapons and went to *Bhīṣma* to seek his blessings.
6. _____ the warrior son of *Drupada*, was once a woman called *Ambā*.

III. Mark the correct answer.

1. *Arjuna* asked Lord *Kṛṣṇa* to place the chariot in the middle of the two armies because
 - a. _____ he wanted to clearly see his enemies.
 - b. _____ he wanted to mark his first arrow.
 - c. _____ he wanted to talk to Lord *Kṛṣṇa* privately.

2. *Arjuna* felt he could not fight his enemies because
 - a. _____ he was afraid to lose.
 - b. _____ he forgot how to fight.
 - c. _____ they were his relatives.

3. Lord *Kṛṣṇa* encouraged *Arjuna* to fight because
 - a. _____ it was *Arjuna's* duty to fight.
 - b. _____ he was already on the battlefield.
 - c. _____ he wanted *Duryodhana* to lose.

4. *Arjuna* asked Lord *Kṛṣṇa* to teach him
 - a. _____ how to fight.
 - b. _____ that which would give him total happiness.
 - c. _____ how to gain courage.

5. Lord *Kṛṣṇa* unfolded the truth of oneself which
 - a. _____ is identical with the Lord.
 - b. _____ made *Arjuna* escape from his duty.
 - c. _____ showed *Arjuna* that he didn't have to fight.

6. *Arjuna* discovered freedom and happiness in Lord *Kṛṣṇa's* teachings
 - a. _____ and decided to do his duty as a prince and fight.
 - b. _____ and decided to renounce the world.
 - c. _____ and decided to surrender to *Duryodhana*.

Bhīṣma Parva contd...

Kṛṣṇa could not stand it any more. He decided to break his oath of not wielding any weapon, in order that he could fulfill his promises to make *Yudhiṣṭhira* the king and to enable *Draupadī* to tie her hair. He jumped off his seat and ran towards *Bhīṣma* brandishing his disc. *Bhīṣma* welcomed the Lord and offered himself to be killed. *Arjuna* rushed behind *Kṛṣṇa* and pleaded with him to return, promising him that he would do *Kṛṣṇa*'s bidding. In his renewed attack, *Arjuna* inflicted heavy casualties on the *Kaurava* army with his divine missiles. The day ended and both the armies marvelled at *Arjuna*'s valour.

On the fourth day's battle, *Bhīma* mercilessly unleashed his fury. He killed eight brothers of *Duryodhana* within a short span of time. There was a fierce battle between him and *Duryodhana*. At the end, *Duryodhana* hit him on his chest with a shaft and *Bhīma* sat down dazed.

Ghaṭotkaca came to relieve his father and smashed the *Kaurava* army with his body weight on them. The army division was flattened under his huge body. He defeated the great *Bhagadatta* in a severe battle. *Bhīṣma* reserved the following day for confronting *Ghaṭotkaca*, as the army was weary. They retired earlier than usual, out of fear of *Ghaṭotkaca*. *Ghaṭotkaca* was the hero of the day.

On the fifth day, the *Kaurava* army's *makara-vyūha*, fish formation ranged against the *Pāṇḍavas*' *śyena-vyūha*, hawk formation. On the *Pāṇḍavas* side, it was a bad day for *Sātyaki*. *Bhūriśravas* had checked his advances and wounded him severely. He had also killed ten sons of *Sātyaki*. *Bhīma* rescued *Sātyaki* and the battle of the day was between *Bhima* and *Bhīṣma*. *Śikhaṇḍī* came to *Bhīma*'s support and *Bhīṣma* withdrew as he could not fight a woman. *Śikhaṇḍī* who had been born a female, later turned into a male. Towards the end of the day, *Arjuna* killed many warriors in his fight with *Bhīṣma*. *Aśvatthāmā* and *Arjuna* fought for the first time. *Arjuna* admired the prowess of *Aśvatthāmā* and being reluctant to fight against his *guru*'s son, slipped away.





Ghatotkaca, the warrior

Bhīṣma Parva contd...

On the sixth day, the *Pāṇḍavas'* *makara-vyūha* was countered by the *Kauravas'* *krauñca-vyūha*. *Bhīma*, *Dhṛṣṭadyumna* and *Droṇa* excelled in their valour on this day. *Duryodhana* was defeated by *Bhīma* in a fierce battle and was inflicted with many wounds. At night, *Bhīṣma* cheered the dejected *Duryodhana* and relieved his pain by applying medicines.

The seventh day's honours were shared by both sides. The *Kaurava* army was arranged in *maṇḍala-vyūha*, circular formation and the *Pāṇḍava* army was in *vajra-vyūha*. On the *Kaurava* side, *Duryodhana*, *Śrutāyu* and *Śalya* were defeated by *Dhṛṣṭadyumna*, *Yudhiṣṭhira* and *Sahadeva* respectively while on the *Pāṇḍava* side, *Virāṭa*, *Dhṛṣṭaketu* and *Ghaṭotkaca* were defeated by *Droṇa*, *Bhūriśravas* and *Bhagadatta* respectively.

The next day, the *Kauravas* arrayed their army in *ūrmi-vyūha*, wave formation and the *Pāṇḍavas* in *śṛṅgāṭa-vyūha*, triangular formation. *Bhīma* increased his count of killing *Duryodhana's* brothers to sixteen, by destroying eight more *Kauravas*. Tragedy struck *Arjuna*, when his son *Irāvān* was killed by *Alambuṣa*.

Earlier *Irāvān* had killed six brothers of *Śakuni* and also defeated *Śakuni* in an encounter. *Irāvān* was the son of *Arjuna's* *nāga* wife, *Ulūpi*. *Arjuna* grieved over the loss of his dear son. Hearing of *Irāvān's* death, *Ghaṭotkaca* began to destroy *Duryodhana's* army. *Bhagadatta*, riding on his invincible elephant *Supratika*, attacked young *Ghaṭotkaca*. The elephant caused much disaster in the *Pāṇḍava* army. *Bhīma* went to the aid of his son and *Arjuna* also joined them. *Bhagadatta* fought valiantly. Soon the two armies joined the respective sides and a long battle was fought for the day. At the end, the *Kaurava* army retreated.



IV. Circle the odd one in each group of words given to you.

1. *Irāvān* *Abhimanyu* *Ghaṭotkaca* *Śakuni*
2. *Arjuna* *Lakṣmaṇa* *Bhīma* *Nakula*
3. *Bhīṣma* *Śalya* *Arjuna* *Jayadratha*
4. Love hate jealousy greed
5. *Droṇa* *Kṛpācārya* *Dhaumya* *Śalya*
6. *Kuntī* *Maṇḍodari* *Gāndhārī* *Draupadī*
7. *Sudarśana cakra* *Nāgāstra* *Brahmāstra* *Pāśupatāstra*
8. mace sword arrow gun
9. horses elephant bomber planes chariots
10. *Virāṭa* *Gaṅgā* *Hastināpura* *Indraprastha*

Bhīṣma Parva contd...

Duryodhana consulted his mentors *Śakuni* and *Karna* at the camp. *Karna* suggested that *Duryodhana* should ask *Bhīṣma* to withdraw from the battle once and for all so that he could bring victory to the *Kauravas*. *Duryodhana* went to *Bhīṣma* and gave vent to his feelings of disappointment. He gave *Bhīṣma* an ultimatum to either fight and defeat the *Pāṇḍavas* or withdraw from the battlefield. His sharp words hurt *Bhīṣma* deeply. *Bhīṣma* pointed out the invincibility of the *Pāṇḍavas* due to *Kṛṣṇa*'s protection. He, however, assured *Duryodhana* that he would fight the battle the next day staking his life. Heartened by *Bhīṣma*'s promise, *Duryodhana* returned to his tent.

The battle plan of the *Kauravas* for the ninth day was to protect *Bhīṣma* in his fight and keep *Śikhaṇḍī* away from him. Accordingly, the *Kauravas* arranged the army in *sarvatobhadra-vyūha*, a formation that gave protection on all sides. *Abhimanyu* exhibited his chivalry in his fight against *Alambuṣa* and drove him to retreat. *Bhīṣma* then faced *Abhimanyu* and both were supported by additional warriors. There was also an encounter between *Droṇa* and *Arjuna*. *Arjuna* sent *Vāyuvāstra* which caused fierce winds and *Droṇa* nullified its effect with his *Śailāstra*. *Droṇa* shed tears of joy at seeing the excellence of his student and he cursed himself for having to fight against him. *Bhīṣma* had now become like a devastating fire which no one could satiate. He caused many deaths and panic in the *Pāṇḍavas*' army. *Kṛṣṇa* prompted *Arjuna* to kill *Bhīṣma*. *Arjuna* obliged but shot the arrows at *Bhīṣma*, such that they barely touched him. *Kṛṣṇa* once again threatened to kill *Bhīṣma* with his disc when *Arjuna* realised his mistake and swore to kill *Bhīṣma*. He routed the army supporting *Bhīṣma*, but was unable to vanquish his grandfather. The sun had set and the armies retired for the night.

The *Pāṇḍavas* were concerned about *Bhīṣma*'s supremacy. They decided to go and ask *Bhīṣma* himself, what means could be used to bring about his end. *Bhīṣma* suggested that they keep *Śikhaṇḍī* in the forefront and attack him with sharp arrows. By so doing, he added that he would lay down his arms as he would never fight when a woman encountered him in war.

Śikhaṇḍī led the *Pāṇḍava* army on the tenth day. *Bhīṣma* destroyed lakhs of warriors in the *Pāṇḍava* army by his valour and splendid fighting. *Śikhaṇḍī* accosted *Bhīṣma* and challenged him for a fight. *Bhīṣma* spurned the offer and continued with his destruction of the *Pāṇḍava* army. *Arjuna* gave a stiff resistance to him. The time had come for *Bhīṣma* to lay down his life. He was disgusted with himself and the war which had taken a big toll of lives. He indicated to *Yudhiṣṭhira* his desire to be killed and asked him to prepare for the final onslaught on him.

Bhīṣma Parva contd...

Arjuna keeping *Śikhaṇḍī* in front, broke *Bhīṣma*'s bow. *Śikhaṇḍī* then sent a series of arrows and hurt *Bhīṣma* and his charioteer after breaking his banner. *Bhīṣma* took another bow and sent a powerful missile at *Arjuna*. *Arjuna* intercepted it and broke it into pieces. When *Bhīṣma*'s bows were continuously broken by *Arjuna*, *Bhīṣma* aimed a divine *Sakti* at *Arjuna* and the latter warded it off with five powerful arrows.

Bhīṣma thought for a while and decided to give effect to the boon whereby he could decide the time of his death. His efforts for defensive and offensive attacks dwindled. Soon his body was pierced by hundreds of arrows sent by *Śikhaṇḍī* and *Arjuna*.



V. Unscramble the words to complete each sentence about Bhīṣma.

1. H T A O

To please his father, he took an _____.

2. R R O I W A R

He was a great _____.

3. E L B O N

He was very _____.

4. T R E C E P S

He commanded great _____.

5. A Ṇ G Ā G

He was the son of King *Śantanu* and Mother _____.

6. Ā Y Ṇ G A G E

He was also called _____.

7. V R A A T V A D E

His original name was _____.

Bhīṣma Parva contd...

Bhīṣma told *Duśśāsana* who was nearby that he could distinguish *Arjuna's* arrows from those of *Śikhandī*, as *Arjuna's* arrows alone could cause pain in his body. *Bhīṣma* was now about to get down from his chariot with a golden sword and shield in his hand, in order to fight *Arjuna*. But *Arjuna* sent a sharp arrow and broke the shield into hundreds of pieces. With more arrows piercing his body, *Bhīṣma* fell from his chariot.

Bhīṣma did not touch the ground; instead he lay on a bed of arrows that had pierced his body. The gods assembled in the heavens and showered flowers at the fall of the great grand-sire of the *Kuru* house. *Bhīṣma* chose to hold back his *prāṇa*, life-force in order to leave the world at the beginning of the auspicious *uttarāyana*, the northern solstice. The fall of *Bhīṣma* created panic and grief in the *Kaurava* army. *Droṇa* fainted in his chariot while *Duryodhana* stood stunned at what had happened. The *Pāṇdavas*, keeping their armour aside, stood around *Bhīṣma* with heads bowed and tears in their eyes. The *Kaurava* commanders, also crowded around him.

Bhīṣma asked for a pillow to support his head which was hurting him. People ran hither and thither to get the best pillow for *Bhīṣma*. *Bhīṣma* had wanted a pillow befitting the place and the condition he was in. *Arjuna* sent arrows into the ground near his head, and *Bhīṣma*, thus, rested his head on a pillow of arrows





Bhishma falls

Bhīṣma Parva contd...

Bhīṣma spoke of his decision to leave his body in *uttarāyaṇa*. He expressed his desire to be cremated along with the arrows on his body as he did not want them to be removed. He was suffering from the torments of thirst in addition to the pain caused by the pierced arrows. He turned to *Arjuna* and asked for water. *Arjuna* invoked the deity of clouds and shot a sharp arrow at a spot from where a thin stream of sweet and cool water sprang out and fell into *Bhīṣma*'s lips. Admiring *Arjuna*'s skill, *Bhīṣma* appealed to *Duryodhana* from his death-bed to give up the war. But *Duryodhana* would not lend his ears for any peace. *Bhīṣma* asked everyone to leave him undisturbed till *uttarāyaṇa*. The warriors left for their camps.

When *Bhīṣma* was alone, *Karṇa* went to him and prostrating before him, repented for his hatred towards his grandfather. *Bhīṣma* was moved by *Karṇa*'s tears. Extending his affectionate hand, he revealed to *Karṇa* that he was *Kaunteya* and asked him to join the *Pāṇḍavas*. *Karṇa* told *Bhīṣma* that he knew about the tragic truth of his life and added that he was indebted to *Duryodhana* in the same way as *Bhīṣma* was and was determined to die for him. *Bhīṣma* knowing *dharma* well, blessed *Karṇa* to perform the duty of a *kṣatriya*. *Karṇa* asked *Bhīṣma* not to reveal the secret of his being a *Pāṇḍava* to anyone. *Bhīṣma* assured him that he would not tell anyone except *Duryodhana* so that he may know before his death how great was *Karṇa*'s love for him. *Karṇa* returned to his tent with peace, knowing that *Bhīṣma* loved him





Drona installed as the Commander-in-chief

Droṇa Parva contd...

Droṇa's attacks claimed countless lives on the *Pāṇḍava* side. At one point, seeing *Arjuna* away from *Yudhiṣṭhira*, *Droṇa* advanced fast towards *Yudhiṣṭhira* to achieve his goal. A direct fight ensued between *Droṇa* and *Yudhiṣṭhira*. More commanders came to support *Yudhiṣṭhira* but they were no match for *Droṇa*. *Droṇa* was close to capturing *Yudhiṣṭhira* when suddenly *Arjuna's* chariot appeared driven by *Kṛṣṇa*.

Arjuna was furious at his teacher's indiscriminate support to *Duryodhana's* wicked plans. The battlefield was soon enveloped with arrows that seemed to pour out of *Arjuna's* *Gāṇḍīva*. *Arjuna* outshone his teacher and *Droṇa*, beaten by his student, retreated. The sun had set and the day's fight ended. *Arjuna* won everyone's admiration in the *Pāṇḍavas'* camp, while *Duryodhana* was deeply dissatisfied with the day's events.

Droṇa once again told *Duryodhana* that unless *Arjuna* was distracted away from him, there was no way of capturing *Yudhiṣṭhira*. *Suśarmā* offered to fight *Arjuna* with his five brothers in order that *Droṇa* may achieve his purpose. These brothers belonged to *Trigarta* country and were known as *saṁśaptakas*, as they were bound together by an oath. They swore with fire as witness that they would not retreat from the battlefield and that they would either kill *Arjuna* or be killed by him.

The twelfth day of war began. The *saṁśaptakas* had accosted *Arjuna* in the southern end of the battlefield. Their army was big and strong, and arranged in a crescent formation. *Arjuna* placed *Satyajit*, King *Drupada's* brother, along with his army, in charge of protecting *Yudhiṣṭhira* and proceeded towards the *saṁśaptakas*.



I. Father and Son

These fathers and sons were all great warriors. Match the father to the son by placing the number of the father in the space by his son.

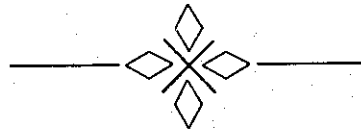
FATHER	SON
1. <i>Kṛṣṇa</i>	_____ <i>Ghaṭotkaca</i>
2. <i>Arjuna</i>	_____ <i>Aśvatthāmā</i>
3. <i>Bhīma</i>	_____ <i>Pradyumna</i>
4. <i>Droṇa</i>	_____ <i>Abhimanyu</i>
5. <i>Virāṭa</i>	_____ <i>Dhṛṣṭadyumna</i>
6. <i>Nakula</i>	_____ <i>Vṛṣasena</i>
7. <i>Karṇa</i>	_____ <i>Śatānīka</i>
8. <i>Śakuni</i>	_____ <i>Uttarakumāra</i>
9. <i>Drupada</i>	_____ <i>Ulūka</i>

Droṇa Parva contd...

The *samśaptakas* had come prepared to die. A fierce battle took place between them and *Arjuna* and *Arjuna's Gāṇḍīva* caused death everywhere. At one point his chariot was enveloped in darkness by the opponents' rain of arrows targeted at him. Even *Kṛṣṇa* could not see *Arjuna*. *Arjuna* realised that he could no longer delay the use of divine missiles. He sent his *Vāyuvāstra* that caused a sudden gale in the battlefield. The arrows and the army were swept away like dry leaves.

While *Arjuna* was preoccupied with the *samśaptakas*, *Droṇa* proceeded to attack *Yudhiṣṭhira* with his army. *Dhr̥ṣṭadyumna* intercepted *Droṇa* but the latter avoided him, and proceeded towards *Yudhiṣṭhira*. He routed the *Drupada* army that was protecting *Yudhiṣṭhira* and killed *Satyajit* with his arrows. *Śatānīka*, *Virāṭa's* brother, also met with the same fate and so did King *Kṣema*, *Dr̥ḍhasena* and *Vasudāna*. No one could face *Droṇa's* challenge. *Droṇa* came close to capturing *Yudhiṣṭhira* like the previous day, but as had been suggested by *Arjuna*, *Yudhiṣṭhira* withdrew his chariot from *Droṇa* and escaped from him. With *Yudhiṣṭhira* safe, the *Pāṇḍava* army fought bravely and caused great damage to the *Kaurava* army.

Seeing *Bhīma* in front, King *Bhagadatta* came to face him on his majestic elephant *Supratīka*. He created panic in the *Pāṇḍava* army by sending arrows in all directions. The elephant *Supratīka* had the strength of ten thousand elephants and trampled thousands of warriors under its feet. It broke the chariots of *Bhīma*, *Abhimanyu* and *Sātyaki*. They miraculously escaped death. *Bhīma* who had knowledge of elephants, got underneath *Supratīka's* body and tenderly stroked it. It became wild and began to swirl around like a potter's wheel. *Bhīma* then ran out and escaped.



II. Find out about Drona in the word game.

Look for the words listed below up, down, across and diagonally.

Drona

archer

unfair

Aśvatthāmā

brāhmaṇa

revenge

Kṛpa

anger

teacher

A	T	E	C	E	K	D	A	O	N	Q
U	N	F	D	I	R	E	A	H	R	R
L	A	G	B	T	P	T	N	W	E	S
U	G	F	E	L	A	E	A	T	H	T
N	R	A	A	R	I	A	M	A	C	U
F	E	R	H	S	V	C	H	N	R	V
A	S	V	A	T	T	H	Ā	M	Ā	T
I	H	T	N	R	E	E	R	S	R	Y
R	M	T	O	U	N	R	B	R	B	A
R	I	A	R	E	V	E	N	G	E	B
S	S	M	D	M	G	T	P	I	C	C

Droṇa Parva contd...

Not seeing *Bhīma* around the elephant, the *Pāṇḍava* soldiers raised cries that *Bhīma* had been crushed by *Supratīka*. Hearing the shouts, *Yudhiṣṭhira* sent *Drupada's* army to fight *Bhagadatta*. *Bhagadatta* routed the army and killed King *Daśārṇa* and *Ruciparvā*. *Yudhiṣṭhira* himself attacked *Bhagadatta* but his attacks were of no avail. *Arjuna* who had by now almost annihilated the *Trigartas*, heard the shouts for help and rushed towards *Bhagadatta*.

Arjuna's arrival instilled confidence in the *Pāṇḍava* army. *Kṛṣṇa* manoeuvred his chariot skilfully to avoid *Supratīka's* attacks while *Arjuna* faced *Bhagadatta*. *Arjuna* sent arrows that broke *Bhagadatta's* bow, quiver and armour. The warriors wore powerful armour on them and aimed arrows so as to hit the joints and other parts where protection was weak. As *Arjuna* skilfully broke *Bhagadatta's* armour, the latter invoked *Vaiṣṇavāstra*, to kill *Arjuna*. Every one paused with bated breath fearing the consequence. As the missile was released, *Kṛṣṇa* stood up and absorbed it into his chest. *Arjuna* was upset at *Kṛṣṇa's* action as he felt *Kṛṣṇa* had broken his oath of not handling any weapon. *Kṛṣṇa* told *Arjuna* the secret of the missile and assured him that since it belonged to him he had rightfully taken it back. Soon *Arjuna* killed *Supratīka* and *Bhagadatta* with powerful arrows.

The fall of the gigantic elephant caused grief in *Arjuna* as he wanted to kill *Bhagadatta* without slaying the elephant. *Arjuna* knew *Bhagadatta* to be his father's friend and a noble soul. Circumambulating his dead body, he paid his last respects to him.

Arjuna now faced *Śakuni's* brothers *Vṛṣaka* and *Acala*. With one arrow he killed both of them. *Śakuni* burning with rage, attacked *Kṛṣṇa* and *Arjuna* using his tricks. He simultaneously sent varieties of weapons towards *Arjuna*. *Arjuna* using his divine missiles nullified all of them. *Śakuni* had to give up the fight and retreat.



II. Find out about Droṇa in the word game.

Look for the words listed below up, down, across and diagonally.

Droṇa

archer

unfair

Aśvatthāmā

brāhmaṇa

revenge

Kṛpa

anger

teacher

A T E C E K D A O N Q
U N F D I R E A H R R
L A G B T P T N W E S
U G F E L A E A T H T
N R A A R I A M A C U
F E R H S V C H N R V
A S V A T T H Ā M Ā T
I H T N R E E R S R Y
R M T O U N R B R B A
R I A R E V E N G E B
S S M D M G T P I C C

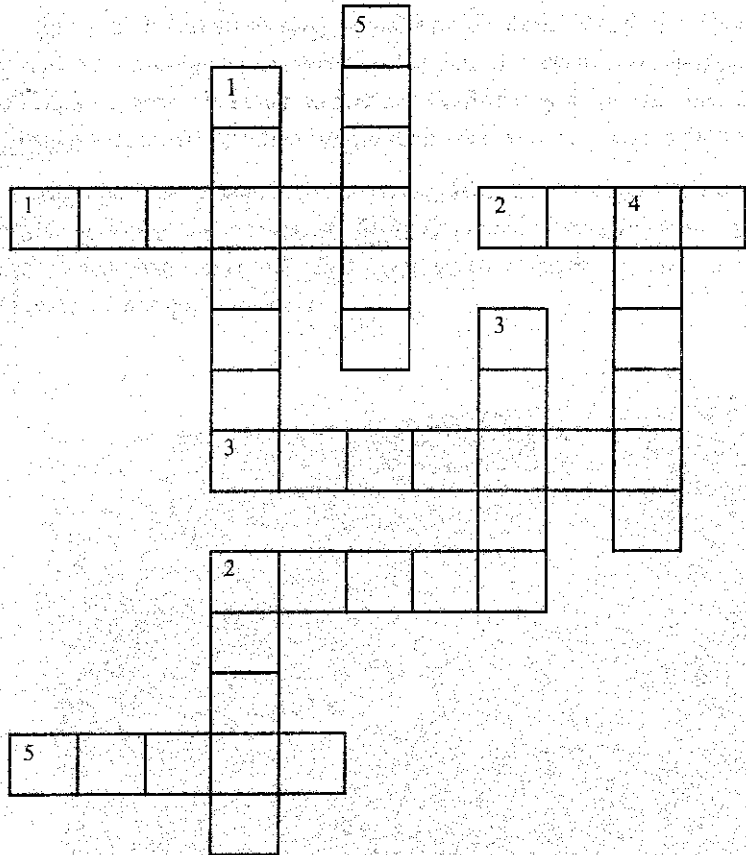
III. Crossword Puzzle

ACROSS

1. The opposite of just.
2. *Kṛṣṇa*'s colour, which is like the sky.
3. *Kṛṣṇa*'s nephew and *Arjuna*'s student.
4. As sharp as a k_____.
5. After *Bhīṣma*, the commander-in-chief of the *Kaurava* army.

DOWN

1. The *Pāṇdavas* and the *Kauravas* were related as _____.
2. Another name for *Rādheya*.
3. A synonym for "courageous" is _____ (hint: It rhymes with the word cave.)
4. The opposite of fair.
5. The opposite of ugly.



Drona Parva contd...

Arjuna then fought with *Karṇa*. *Karṇa*'s *Āgneyāstra*, emitting fire, was met by *Arjuna*'s *Vāruṇāstra*, which put off the fire. They were soon joined by others and they fought till sunset. *Droṇa* had once again failed in his attempts, while *Arjuna* had led the *Pāṇḍavas* to victory that day.

Obsessed upon getting what he wanted, *Duryodhana* went to *Droṇa*, and in his frustration, accused him for not capturing *Yudhiṣṭhira*. He refused to see the efforts *Droṇa* had put forth in the battlefield. *Droṇa* explained to him why he could not succeed in his efforts. He made a promise to *Duryodhana* that the next day he would get one important *mahārathi* of the *Pāṇḍava* army killed if *Arjuna* could be kept at a distance. (A *mahārathi* is a warrior who can fight alone against ten thousand soldiers). *Droṇa* added that he would arrange his army in the *cakra-vyūha* which nobody from the *Pāṇḍava* army knew how to break. *Duryodhana* went back satisfied.

The next day, the surviving *saṁsaptakas* led by *Susarmā* again challenged *Arjuna* and lured him away to the southern end of the battlefield. *Droṇa* wrought havoc in the *Pāṇḍava* army. *Yudhiṣṭhira* did not know how to deal with the situation, as the *Kaurava* army was well protected by *cakra-vyūha*. He knew that only four persons *Abhimanyu*, *Arjuna*, *Kṛṣṇa* and *Pradyumna* could break the *cakra-vyūha*. He called *Abhimanyu* and unwillingly placed the responsibility of breaking the *vyūha* on his young shoulders.

Abhimanyu who was just sixteen years old, was happy to have been entrusted with such a great responsibility and agreed to break the *vyūha*. When *Arjuna* taught *Abhimanyu* the technique of breaking the *cakra-vyūha* he had warned him of the danger of the *vyūha* opening and closing up. *Abhimanyu* informed *Yudhiṣṭhira* that he did not know how to come out of the *vyūha*. *Yudhiṣṭhira* assured him that the army would closely follow him behind and enter the *vyūha* with him through the opening made by him.





Abhimanyu is killed in an unrighteous battle

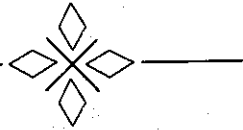
Droṇa Parva contd...

Abhimanyu ascended the chariot and mounted an attack on the *Kaurava* army. Resisting the counter attack, he successfully entered the *vyūha* while *Droṇa* stood dazed, astonished at the valour of the young warrior. The *Pāṇḍava* commanders who had followed *Abhimanyu* were unable to enter the *vyūha* as it was quickly sealed by *Jayadratha*. *Jayadratha* had acquired a boon from Lord *Śiva* because of which no one could defeat him except *Kṛṣṇa* and *Arjuna*. The *Pāṇḍavas* feared for *Abhimanyu*'s life, but stood helpless unable to defeat *Jayadratha*.

Abhimanyu fought valiantly and killed many warriors. Most of the *Kaurava* commanders had to beat a hasty retreat. He killed the son of *Aśmaka*, made *Śalya* unconscious and killed his brother. *Droṇa*'s army ran helter-skelter. *Droṇa* was all praise for the young *Abhimanyu*. *Duryodhana* disgusted with *Droṇa*'s attitude, asked *Duśśāsana* to fight *Abhimanyu*. *Abhimanyu* made *Duśśāsana* defenceless with his arrows, and broke *Karṇa*'s bow. Single-handedly, he victoriously faced the *Kaurava* army.

Abhimanyu continued with his spate of destruction and soon *Vatsatīya*, *Satyāśravā*, *Rukmaratha*, *Vṛndāraka*, *Brhadbala* (king of Kosala) and *Aśvaketu* (son of *Magadha* king) lost their lives. *Duryodhana*, who came to face *Abhimanyu*, could not stand his valour for long. Even as *Duryodhana* stood watching, *Lakṣmaṇa*, his son, was killed by *Abhimanyu*. Furious with the tragedy that struck him, *Duryodhana* ordered the killing of *Abhimanyu*.

Karṇa asked *Droṇa* how to go about it as none of them could match *Abhimanyu*'s valour. *Droṇa* told *Karṇa* that *Abhimanyu* could never be killed so long as he had the bow and armour on him. He suggested knocking off his bow first. He also revealed that this could never be done facing *Abhimanyu*. The *Kauravas* now began to violate the rules of war.



IV. Maze

Help *Bhīma* get into the *cakra-vyūha* to save *Abhimanyu* from the *Kaurava* attack.



Drona Parva contd...

Karna then performed the most dastardly act. Unnoticed by *Abhimanyu*, he went behind him and stealthily cut off his bow. *Kṛtavarmā* then killed *Abhimanyu*'s horses while *Kṛpācārya* slew his two charioteers. *Abhimanyu* took his sword but *Droṇa* cut it into pieces with another arrow. Defenceless and weaponless, *Abhimanyu* was attacked simultaneously by six *mahārathis*. *Abhimanyu* condemned *Droṇa* for having blotted the righteous war. He turned towards *Karna* and derided him for his ignominious act, adding that his action did not befit his nobility and chivalry that he had heard from his father. He thought for a moment, how fate had deprived him of the opportunity to share his wonderful feats with his father. He did not have the time to think any more. He had to brush his emotions aside and fight with whatever was available.

He took hold of the wheel of his chariot and whirled it around like the disc of Lord *Viṣṇu*. He challenged the *mahārathis* to confront him one by one and fight with him. But they did not listen. With the wheel in his hand, he rushed towards *Droṇa* to fling it at him. But the wheel was instantly broken by the many arrows coming from different directions. Taking a mace lying on the ground, he fought and made *Aśvatthāmā* flee for his life. He, then, challenged *Duśśāsana*'s son for a combat. Both fell on the ground, and *Abhimanyu* tired by his lone ordeal throughout the day, could not get up immediately. *Duśśāsana*'s son jumped up and hit *Abhimanyu*'s head with his mace. *Abhimanyu* died on the spot.

The noble souls in the *Kaurava* army were aggrieved at the cruel murder of *Abhimanyu*. *Yuyutsu*, *Dhṛtarāṣṭra*'s son, threw his weapon in disgust and withdrew from the war. From the shouts of victory on the *Kaurava* side, *Yudhiṣṭhira* and others came to know of the tragic end of *Abhimanyu*. *Yudhiṣṭhira* was sunk in deep sorrow. His sorrow intensified as he felt solely responsible for *Abhimanyu*'s death.



V. Who Am I ?

1. I am the King of *Madra Deśa* _____.
2. I narrate the happenings at *Kurukṣetra* to *Dhṛtarāṣṭra* _____.
3. I became the commander the chief of *Kaurava* Army after the fall of *Bhīṣma* _____.
4. I am *Ambā* reborn _____.
5. I am born with *kavaca* and *kuṇḍala* _____.
6. I have decided to leave my body in *uttarāyana* _____.
7. I was simultaneously attacked by six *mahārathis* _____.
8. I am the charioteer of *Arjuna* _____.

Droṇa Parva contd...

Arjuna had, after a long battle, defeated the *samśaptakas* and was returning. He was unaware of the tragic events on the battlefield. As he returned to the camp, he sensed that some calamity had taken place. The frightening silence in the camp only increased his fears. As he entered *Yudhiṣṭhira's* tent, heads hung low in shame and tearful eyes greeted him. *Yudhiṣṭhira* broke the silence by revealing the sad news and added that he was to blame as he had caused *Abhimanyu's* death. *Arjuna* lamented for long over the loss of his dear child. *Kṛṣṇa* tried to console him.

Gaining some strength, *Arjuna* listened in detail, about the gruesome event from *Yudhiṣṭhira*, *Bhīma* and *Sahadeva*. Unable to bear the thought of the cruelty endured by his brave son, *Arjuna* fainted. When he was revived, he made a vow to kill *Jayadratha* by sunset the next day, failing which, he vowed to immolate himself. The vow brought life in the *Pāṇḍava* camp and the thoughts of revenge lifted their sorrow away.

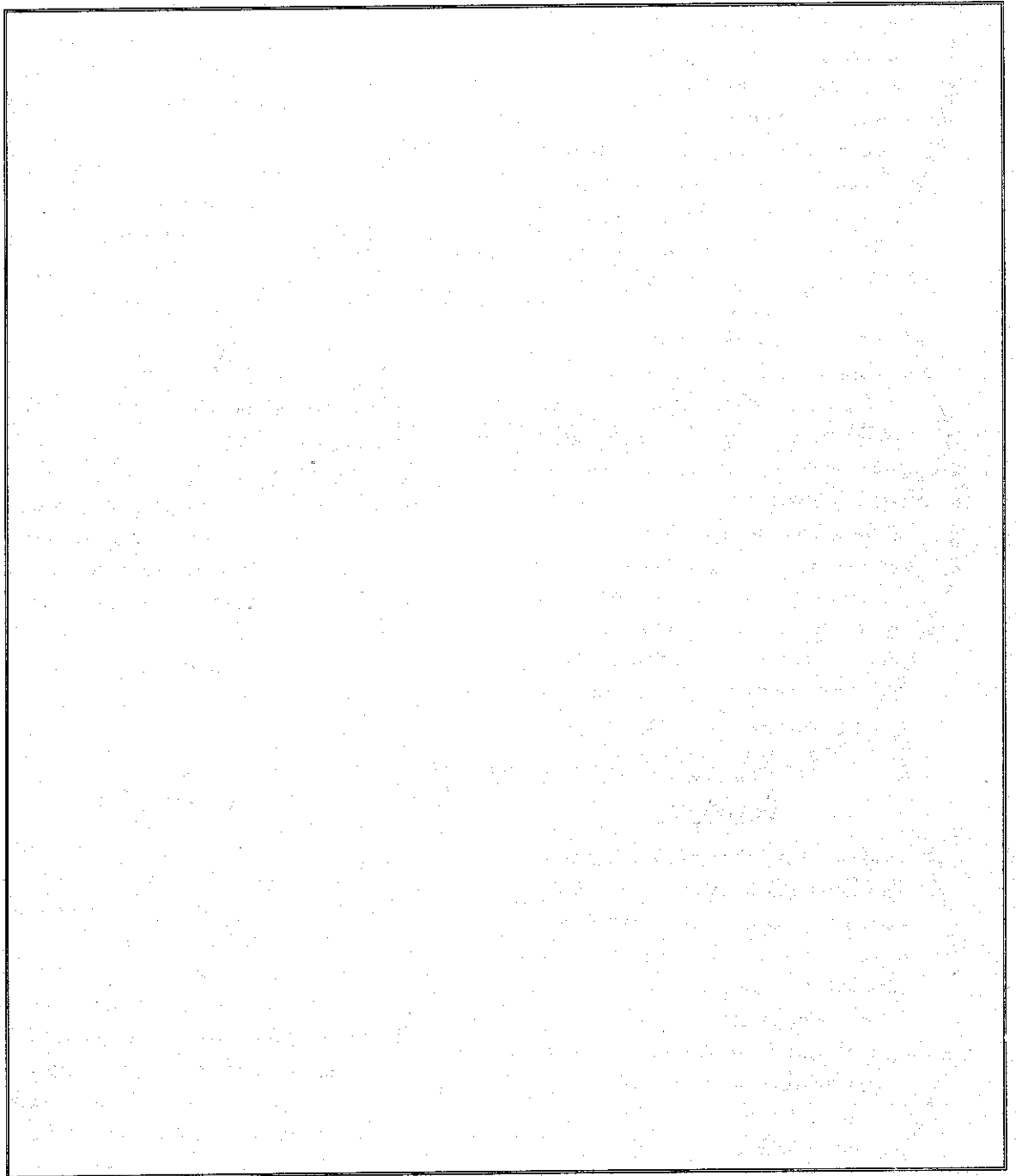
Arjuna twanged his *Gāṇḍīva* and *Kṛṣṇa* blew his *Pāñcajanya*. The *Kauravas* heard this but did not know what it meant. Soon they got the news about *Arjuna's* vow. *Jayadratha* was panic-stricken. He told *Duryodhana* that he would run away to his country and escape the death that was awaiting him at the battlefield. *Duryodhana* allayed his fears and assured full protection for him. *Droṇa*, too, offered to do everything at his command to save *Jayadratha's* life.

The *Kauravas'* war strategies for the fourteenth day were aimed at protecting *Jayadratha* at any cost. The army was arranged accordingly in the *padma-garbha-śakata-vyūha*, a combination of wheel and lotus formations. The front half of the army was in *śakata-vyūha* while the back half was in *padma-vyūha*. In the middle of the *padma-vyūha*, there was a *sūcī-mukha-vyūha*, a needle formation.



VI. Imagination at Work!

Draw a *vyūha* of your choice.



Droṇa Parva contd...

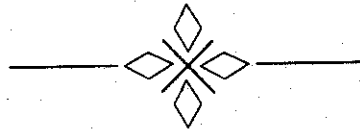
Jayadratha was placed at the rear end of the needle formation. The backhalf was guarded by great fighters like *Śalya* and *Karṇa* at prominent points. *Droṇa* was leading in the front-line of the *padma-vyūha*, while *Duryodhana*'s brother, *Durmarṣaṇa* guarded the *śakata-vyūha*. *Arjuna* would have to face all the formidable opponents before reaching *Jayadratha*. *Droṇa* thought that even if *Arjuna* succeeded in defeating all the warriors, he would not be able to meet his time deadline of killing *Jayadratha* by sunset.

Kṛṣṇa was concerned about *Arjuna*'s vow as he knew of *Droṇa*'s arrangements of the army formation. *Arjuna*, however, was confident of breaking the defences with ease. Keeping *Sātyaki* in charge of protecting *Yudhiṣṭhira*, *Arjuna* marched ahead.

Durmarṣaṇa challenged *Arjuna* at the entrance of the *śakata-vyūha*. It was a child's play for *Arjuna* to deal with *Durmarṣaṇa* and he entered the *śakata-vyūha*. *Duśśāsana* resisted *Arjuna*'s advances with his elephant army. *Arjuna* routed the army in no time, and reached the periphery of the *padma-vyūha*.

Droṇa did not allow him to move forward. *Arjuna*'s respect for *Droṇa*, his *guru*, had not been affected by the previous day's incidents. But, for *Droṇa*, it was battlefield and as he fought with *Arjuna*, *Arjuna* fought back fiercely. *Kṛṣṇa* reminded *Arjuna* of the limited time they had on hand, and asked him to bypass *Droṇa*. *Arjuna* circumambulated *Droṇa* and taking leave of his *guru*, sped towards *Jayadratha*.

Kṛtavarmā, *Sudakṣiṇa* and *Śrutāyudha* restrained his march. *Droṇa*, too, pursued him. *Arjuna* withstood *Droṇa*'s arrows by his *Brahmāstra*. *Kṛtavarmā* was defeated in a duel and *Sudakṣiṇa* was overpowered easily. *Śrutāyudha* committed the suicidal act of hurling his divine mace at *Kṛṣṇa*, which rebounded on him and killed him, as the mace should not have been aimed at some one who did not wield any weapon.



VII. Word Search

Yudhisṭhira had certain dharmic qualities. Find his qualities listed below in the word search. Look up, down, across and diagonally.

compassion

just

courageous

noble

caring

calm

righteous

generous

sensitive

S	U	O	E	T	H	G	I	R	N	S
U	T	L	A	E	M	I	O	O	O	E
O	N	M	L	N	T	P	I	U	B	N
E	M	L	N	E	Q	S	S	R	L	S
G	B	A	G	E	S	M	A	L	E	I
A	E	C	J	A	J	U	S	T	P	T
R	L	U	P	S	T	L	M	N	R	I
U	P	M	R	K	A	R	G	N	I	V
O	O	G	E	N	E	R	O	U	S	E
C	N	G	N	I	R	A	C	S	N	R

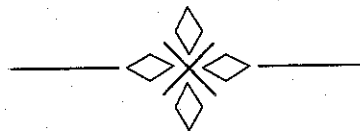
Drona Parva contd...

Arjuna killed two more warriors, *Śrutāyu* and *Acyutāyu*, and created a panic in the *Kaurava* army. He had now advanced in the *padma-vyūha*. *Duryodhana* approached *Drona* and asked him to check *Arjuna*'s progress. *Drona* gave a special armour to *Duryodhana* and sent him back to fight *Arjuna*.

With the special armour on him, *Duryodhana* stopped *Arjuna* at the entrance to *sūcī-mukha-vyūha*. *Arjuna* knew the secrets of the special armour and invoked *Mānavāstra* for breaking the armour. As the arrow was about to be released, *Aśvatthāmā* knowing *Arjuna*'s intentions, countered the *Mānavāstra* with another arrow and broke it. *Arjuna* could not use the *astra* a second time as per the restrictions associated with the *astra*. *Arjuna* then sent shafts aimed at the weak spots of *Duryodhana*'s armour and sent him reeling back. *Arjuna* had now come close to *Jayadratha*.

The *Kaurava* commanders like *Karṇa*, *Śalya*, *Bhūriśravas* and others who were protecting *Jayadratha* attacked *Arjuna* simultaneously. It was a fight between eight *mahārathīs* and their armies against *Arjuna*.

In the main section of the battlefield, *Yudhiṣṭhira* had a narrow escape in his fight with *Drona*. *Ghaṭotkaca* encountered *Alambuṣa* and killed him. In the meanwhile, *Yudhiṣṭhira* heard the sound of *Pāñcajanya*, but it was not followed by *Arjuna*'s twanging of the *Gāṇḍīva*. *Yudhiṣṭhira* concluded *Kṛṣṇa* needed support for *Arjuna* and asked *Sātyaki* to leave immediately with his army. *Sātyaki* was in a dilemma. Placing the responsibility of protecting *Yudhiṣṭhira* on *Bhīma*, *Sātyaki* sped towards *Arjuna*.



VIII. Fill in the blanks using the following words.

<i>Dhr̥ṣṭadyumna</i>	<i>Droṇa</i>	<i>Jayadratha</i>	<i>Abhimanyu</i>
<i>Pāṇḍavas</i>	<i>cakra-vyūha</i>	anger	<i>astra</i>
<i>mahārathika</i>	<i>vyūha</i>	unhappy	eighteen

1. The *Mahābhārata* war lasted for _____ days.
2. The war was fought between the _____ and the *Kauravas*.
3. After *Bhīṣma*, _____ was the commander of the *Kaurava* army.
4. *Abhimanyu* only knew how to get into the _____ but not how to get out of it.
5. *Arjuna* vowed to kill _____ before sunset.
6. *Duryodhana* was always _____ in spite of *Droṇa*'s best efforts.
7. *Yudhiṣṭhira* felt responsible for _____'s death.
8. An _____ is a divine weapon presided over by a god.
9. A _____ is an army formation.
10. A _____ is the highest title given to a warrior.

Drona Parva contd...

Sātyaki followed the tactics of his *guru Arjuna*, in dealing with *Drona*. After fighting for a while, then admitting defeat, he went around *Drona* and hurried away from him. *Drona* angry with *Sātyaki* chased him. But *Sātyaki* moved fast. He, then, defeated *Kṛtavarmā* and passed him. *Drona* returned with *Duryodhana* and his brothers, and impeded his progress. *Sātyaki* routed all of them. He was unconquerable on that day. *Duśśāsana* came to fight him. *Sātyaki* spared his life as *Bhīma* had vowed to kill him, and proceeded further.

In the meanwhile, *Drona* killed many other warriors including *Brhathṣatra*; *Dhr̥ṣṭaketu*, son of *Śiśupāla*; *Sahadeva*, son of *Jarāsandha*; and *Kṣatradharmā*, son of *Dhr̥ṣṭadyumna*. *Yudhiṣṭhira* could not face *Drona*'s fury. He was also worried about *Arjuna*'s safety. Since he did not see any sign of *Arjuna* and *Sātyaki*, he asked *Bhīma* to find out what had happened. Requesting *Dhr̥ṣṭadyumna* to protect *Yudhiṣṭhira*, *Bhīma* set out to carry out the task.

Bhīma did not pay any respects to *Drona* like *Arjuna* and *Sātyaki*. He directly charged on him. Destroying his horses, chariot and charioteer and leaving him behind defenceless, *Bhīma* marched ahead. He saw *Arjuna* and roared like a lion to signal *Yudhiṣṭhira* and relieve him of his worries.

The *Kauravas* were desperately trying to prevent the support of *Bhīma* and *Sātyaki* to *Arjuna*. *Karna* challenged *Bhīma*. A terrible fight broke out between the two of them. Thirty two brothers of *Duryodhana* were killed by *Bhīma*, when they came for *Karna*'s help. *Karna* finally succeeded in overpowering *Bhīma*, but as he had promised not to kill any son of *Kuntī* other than *Arjuna*, he spared *Bhīma*'s life.



IX. A. Check the Correct Answer:

Duryodhana's nature was predominantly Dharmic Adharmic

B. Complete the crossword puzzle with the words listed below:

arrogant

skillful

jealous

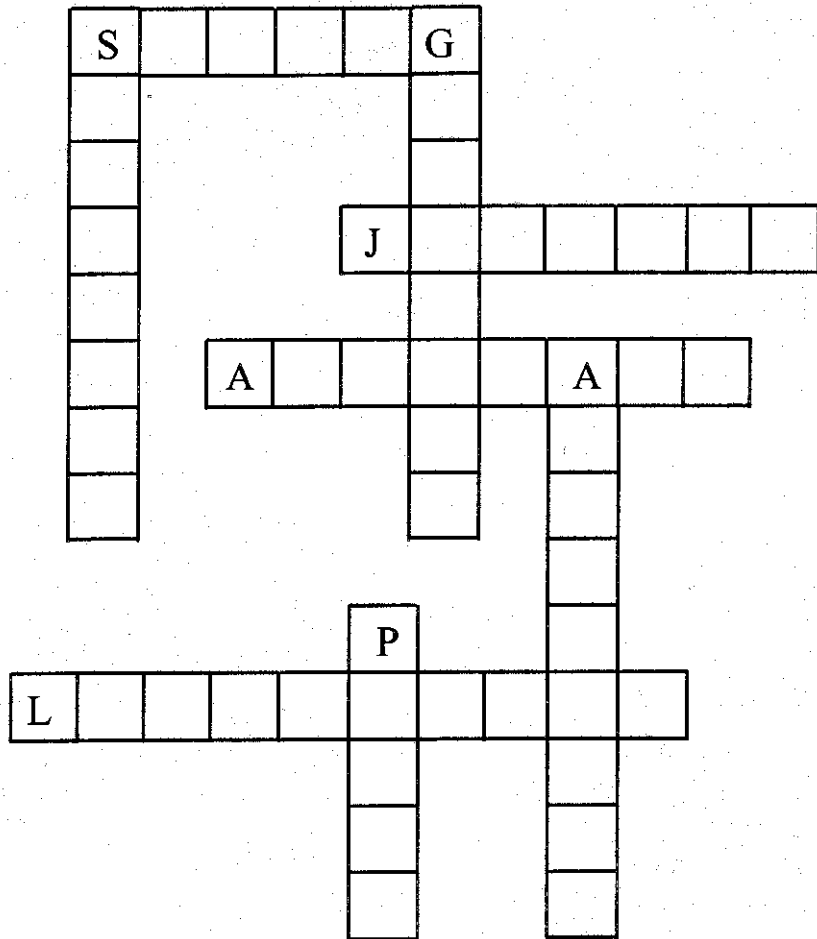
generous

strong

ambitious

leadership

proud



Drona Parva contd...

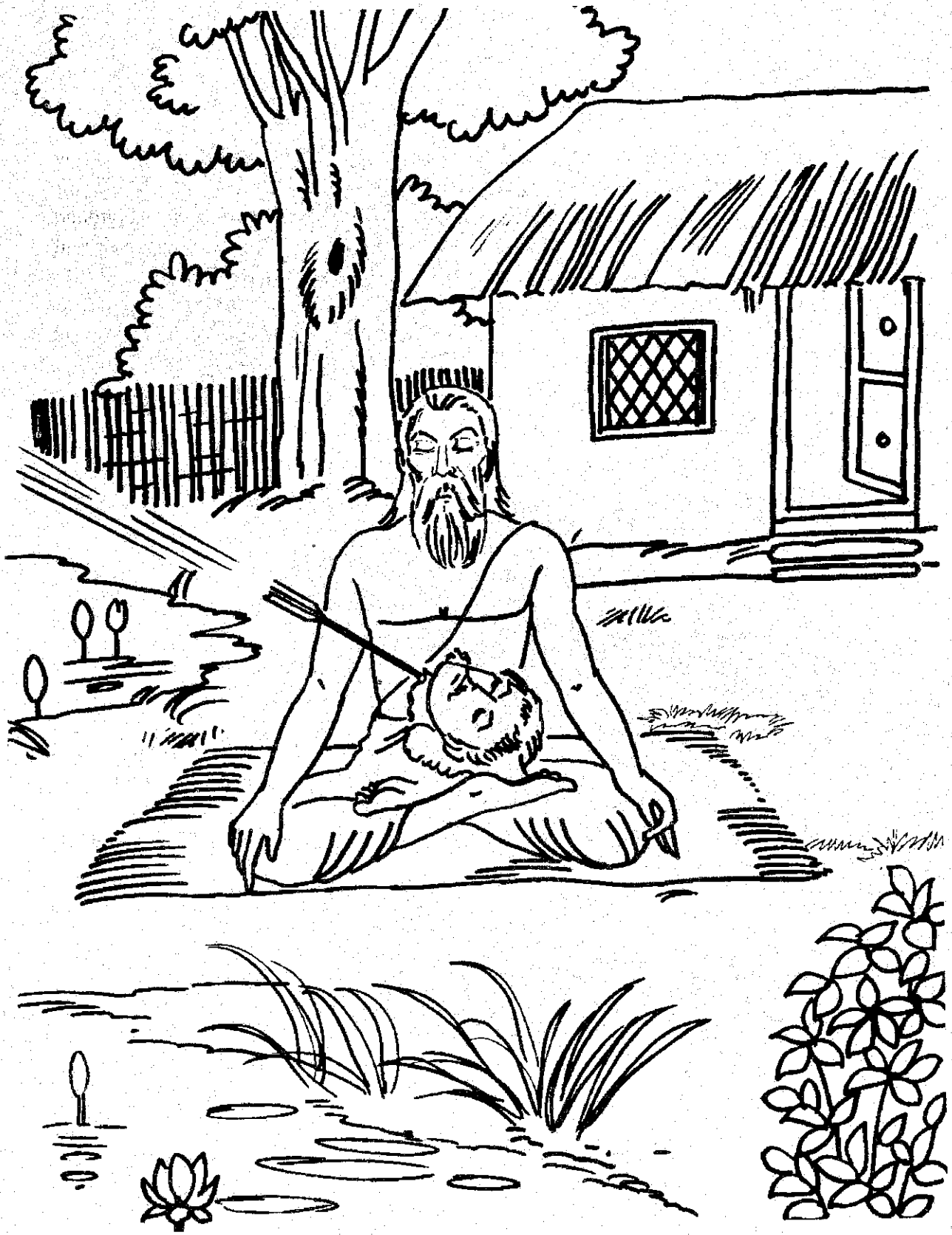
Sātyaki's chariot was blocked by *Bhūriśravas*. The two of them had a history of an old family feud. *Bhūriśravas* was waiting to avenge the insult from *Sātyaki's* family. *Sātyaki* was tired. *Bhūriśravas* gained an edge over him and hit hard. *Sātyaki* fell on the ground. With sword in his right hand and foot on his chest, *Bhūriśravas* lifted *Sātyaki's* hair with his left hand to sever his head. *Kṛṣṇa* demanded *Arjuna's* interference. *Arjuna* had been reluctant to break the rules of war. Now seeing the violation on the part of *Bhūriśravas* in stepping on a fallen opponent, *Arjuna* sent a sharp arrow and cut off the right hand of *Bhūriśravas*. *Bhūriśravas* criticised *Arjuna* for his shameful act. *Arjuna* retorted pointing out the wrong committed by him and the disgraceful acts of the *Kaurava* commanders in killing *Abhimanyu*.

Bhūriśravas saw the truth of *Arjuna's* words and decided to end his life through yoga and sat in meditation. *Sātyaki*, who had pulled himself together by this time, got up and rushing towards *Bhūriśravas* cut off his head before *Arjuna* or *Kṛṣṇa* could stop him.

Arjuna now directly attacked *Jayadratha*. Many commanders of the *Kaurava* army were supporting *Jayadratha*. *Karna* was drawn away by *Sātyaki* in a fight. The sun was about to set. *Kṛṣṇa* knew that *Jayadratha*, who himself was a great fighter, could not be killed before sunset. He used his *Māyā* and with his disc covered the disc of the sun. Darkness instantly enveloped the battlefield.

Jayadratha looked up at the sky. *Kṛṣṇa* asked *Arjuna* to shoot *Pāśupata* missile at once, as the sun had not yet set. *Arjuna* sent his *Pāśupatāstra* at *Jayadratha* who was taken off guard. *Jayadratha's* head was severed from the body and as it was falling down, *Kṛṣṇa* asked *Arjuna* to carry the head in the air on his arrows and drop it on the lap of *Jayadratha's* father.





Jayadratha's head falls on his father's laps

Droṇa Parva contd...

Arjuna did accordingly. He sent a series of arrows which prevented the fall of the head and carried it to the lap of *Vṛddhakṣatra* who was absorbed in his evening worship on the outskirts of *Kurukṣetra*. When *Vṛddhakṣatra* got up, the head on his lap, rolled on the ground and *Vṛddhakṣatra*'s head split into thousand pieces in keeping with his own curse.

At the time of *Jayadratha*'s birth, a heavenly voice had informed that an illustrious warrior would cut off his head on a battlefield. Distressed at the news, *Vṛddhakṣatra* cursed that any one who rolled his son's head on the ground would have his head split into thousand pieces. Thus *Jayadratha* and his father together reached the abode of Lord *Yama*.

The darkness soon lifted and the sun shone brightly as before and moments later it set. *Arjuna* then withdrew his *Pāśupatāstra* by reciting an incantation. By the end of the day, *Sātyaki* and *Arjuna* had destroyed seven *akṣauhiṇīs* of the *Kaurava* army.

Duryodhana began to realise the fact that *Arjuna* was truly invincible. But it was too late. He was already sunk neck-deep in the war. *Droṇa* continued the fight through the night. In the pre-midnight battle, *Bhīma* killed *Bāhlika*, grandfather of *Bhūriśravas*. *Bāhlika* was the oldest warrior in the war. *Bhīma* also killed twelve more brothers of *Duryodhana*. *Sātyaki* killed *Somadatta*, *Bhūriśravas*'s father, while *Karna* killed *Ghaṭotkaca*.

The fight between *Karna* and *Ghaṭotkaca* was significant. As *Karna* was attacking the *Pāṇḍava* army with his arrows, *Kṛṣṇa* asked *Ghaṭotkaca* to fight with *Karna*, overriding *Arjuna*'s desire to fight him. A fierce fight took place between the two of them. *Ghaṭotkaca* killed *Alāyudha*, a powerful *rākṣasa*, who came to help *Karna*. He sent a missile that killed all the horses of *Karna*'s chariot and *Karna* had to stand on the ground. *Karna* saw all his divine missiles were getting exhausted.

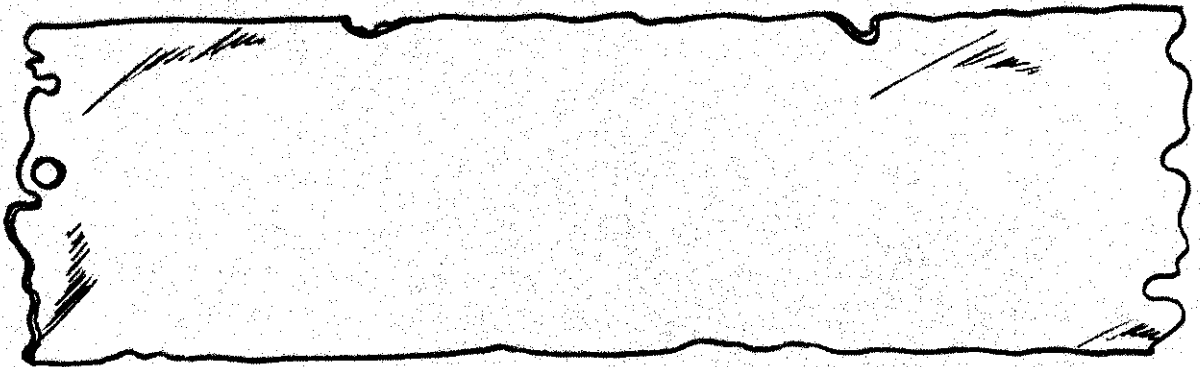


X. Torn Tales

I am Channa, a reporter for “*Mahābhārata News*”. Daily I write down my report and read it out through a town carrier at different parts of the city, so that people in the kingdom know what is happening. I had first written my report on a palm leaf when an arrow ripped right through it. Please help me rewrite it.

This is the news bulletin
As per his vow the great archer
Kṛṣṇa used his disc
Pāśupatāstra to kill

from *Kurukṣetra* for today.
Arjuna killed *Jayadratha* before sunset
and covered the Sun. *Arjuna* used the
him.



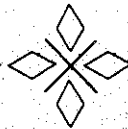
Droṇa Parva contd...

The retreating *Kaurava* warriors requested *Karṇa* to use *Śakti* and kill *Ghatotkaca* and thus save the army from total destruction. *Karṇa* was left with no choice but to use the *Śakti* which he had reserved for *Arjuna*. *Karṇa* was sad that he was parting with this weapon forever and with tears flowing down his eyes, he released it. *Ghatotkaca* saw the *Śakti* and ran away expanding his body to a huge size. The weapon hit his chest and felled him flat on the *Kaurava* army. One *akṣauhīni* of the *Kaurava* army got crushed under his dead body. *Duryodhana* was happy at the fall of *Ghatotkaca*. He did not realise the loss this was to bring for him. *Kṛṣṇa* was greatly relieved that *Arjuna* was now safe. *Bhīma* was sad at the death of his son and so were others as *Ghatotkaca* was a favourite child of the *Pāṇḍavas*.

The fight continued beyond midnight. As everyone was overpowered by sleep, *Arjuna* addressed the armies to rest for a while and continue the fight after the moon rise.

The warriors took rest on the battlefield. The moon arose in the east. *Duryodhana* went to *Droṇa* and accused him of partiality towards the *Pāṇḍavas*. *Droṇa* was sad to see *Duryodhana* deride him constantly. He remembered his past as to how he had come to *Hastināpura* to train the young princes in order that he could take his revenge against *Drupada*. Unknowingly, he had got trapped in the family feud. He was disgusted with his life.

Duryodhana chose to divide the army into two divisions. Leaving one division with *Droṇa* for doing whatever he desired to do with it, *Duryodhana* took the other division. This act of *Duryodhana* deeply hurt *Droṇa*. The divided army led by *Droṇa* and *Duryodhana* proceeded to the battlefield.





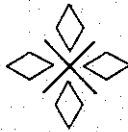
Droṇa Parva contd...

The fifteenth day of the war had begun. *Droṇa* was all rage that day. He killed *Virāṭa*, *Drupada* and *Drupada's* three grandsons, instilling fear in the *Pāṇḍava* army. *Dhr̥ṣṭadyumna* vowed to kill *Droṇa* that day.

The fight between *Duryodhana* and *Sātyaki* was memorable as both of them had been close to each other in their younger days. *Duryodhana* cursed himself for fighting with *Sātyaki*. With thoughts of the past that kept racing into his mind, *Duryodhana's* eyes swelled with tears. *Sātyaki* too, was undergoing the same emotional strain. Finally, *Sātyaki* defeated *Duryodhana* and left the scene hurriedly never to face *Duryodhana* again in a fight.

Droṇa went about killing the *Pāṇḍava* forces indiscriminately. None could dare to even look at him. *Kṛṣṇa* told *Arjuna* that *Droṇa* could never be killed by anyone. He suggested that the only way to bring about his end was to inform him that *Aśvatthāmā* had been killed in a fight. *Kṛṣṇa* added that once *Droṇa* heard this news in his grief, he would drop his weapon and could then be killed easily. *Arjuna* did not like this idea but *Yudhiṣṭhira* accepted it though reluctantly. There was an elephant by the name of *Aśvatthāmā* in their army which belonged to *Indravarmā* of *Mālava*. *Bhīma* killed it at once with his mace and keeping in mind the elephant *Aśvatthāmā* shouted that *Aśvatthāmā* was killed.

Droṇa was shocked for a moment, but soon pulled himself together thinking that nobody could kill *Aśvatthāmā*. His killing spree continued unabated. The *saptar̥ṣis*, the seven great sages, appeared before him and appealed to him to drop his weapons and desist from the killings, as it did not befit a *brāhmana* like him. *Droṇa* thought over their statements and the sight of *Dhr̥ṣṭadyumna*, further invoked indifference in him.



XI. Word Game

You have heard these words often. Mark their correct meaning.

1. RIGHTEOUS kind ethical courageous
2. ARROGANT humble proud deceitful
3. WISDOM action ignorance knowledge
4. ASTRA missile bow chariot
5. PṚTHVĪ earth water land
6. KAVACA crown bow chest armour
7. KUNḌALA earrings conch bracelet
8. AGNI land air fire
9. INVINCIBLE invisible cowardly unbeatable
10. BOON curse blessing drum
11. KṢĀTRIYA priest warrior *sannyāsi*
12. PRASĀDA sweet name blessing

XI. Word Game

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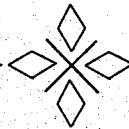
1. RIGHTEOUS ___ kind ___ ethical ___ courageous
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10. BOON ___ curse ___ blessing ___ drum
11. KṢATRIYA ___ priest ___ warrior ___ *sannyāsī*
12. PRASĀDA ___ sweet ___ name ___ blessing

Droṇa Parva contd...

Wanting to know about the veracity of *Aśvatthāmā*'s death, he asked *Yudhiṣṭhira*, who was known for his truthfulness. *Bhīma* had informed *Yudhiṣṭhira* about the killing of the elephant *Aśvatthāmā* and about his informing *Droṇa* of *Aśvatthāmā*'s death. *Kṛṣṇa* advised *Yudhiṣṭhira* that speaking a lie to save others' life was not wrong. Prompted by *Kṛṣṇa*'s words, *Yudhiṣṭhira* said aloud that *Aśvatthāmā* was killed, murmuring the fact that it was an elephant. Until then, *Yudhiṣṭhira*'s chariot had been moving four inches above the ground and had never touched the earth. He had been above everyone till then, because of his righteous conduct. After he uttered this lie, his chariot hit the ground and he became one among others.

When *Droṇa* heard *Yudhiṣṭhira*'s words, he felt paralysed with sorrow. He saw *Dhr̥ṣṭadyumna* approaching him and again tried to fight. Slowly he regained his energy and a fierce fight took place between the two. *Droṇa* aimed the deadly *Vaitasmika* arrows at *Dhr̥ṣṭadyumna* who was very close to him in proximity. These arrows were meant for killing an opponent at close range. There was no way *Dhr̥ṣṭadyumna* could save himself. *Sātyaki* who was around to protect *Dhr̥ṣṭadyumna*, knew about these arrows and sent ten arrows which cut *Droṇa*'s *Vaitasmika* arrows, thus saving *Dhr̥ṣṭadyumna*'s life.

Bhīma approached *Droṇa* and lashed out at him. He belittled *Droṇa* for his sinful acts and asked him why he was continuing his act of destruction when his son had already died, and there was none to inherit the wealth that he wanted to accumulate through the victory. *Droṇa* realised the truth of *Bhīma*'s words. He instantly dropped his weapons and taking leave of *Duryodhana*, *Karṇa* and *Kṛpācārya* sat in meditation on the floor of his chariot. As he sat motionless, *Dhr̥ṣṭadyumna* advanced towards him and severed his head with his sword. A light emanated from the body and ascended to the heavens. *Arjuna* was very unhappy with *Yudhiṣṭhira* and *Dhr̥ṣṭadyumna* for their unrighteous killing of *Droṇa*.





Drona falls

Drona Parva contd...

Aśvatthāmā came to know of his father's death. He was wild at *Yudhiṣṭhira* and *Dhr̥ṣṭadyumna*. He attacked them with his divine missiles. Invoking the *Nārāyaṇāstra*, he aimed it at the *Pāṇḍava* army and released it. Instantly, there were thousands of arrows with burning tips and thousands of burning metal discs scattered in the sky by the missile, directed towards the armies of the *Pāṇḍavas* and *Pāṅcāla*. *Yudhiṣṭhira* was taken aback.

Kṛṣṇa told *Yudhiṣṭhira* how to escape from the *Nārāyaṇāstra*. He asked all the warriors to keep their weapons aside and prostrate before the great *astra*. Everyone did so except *Bhīma* who did not want to respect a missile sent by *Aśvatthāmā*. All the arrows and discs in the sky descended on him and attacked him. With great efforts *Kṛṣṇa* and *Arjuna* saved *Bhīma*. This *astra* could not be sent a second time by *Aśvatthāmā* as it would rebound.

Aśvatthāmā was challenged by *Arjuna* for a duel. *Aśvatthāmā* sent his *Āgneyāstra* which was quenched by *Arjuna* with his *Brahmāstra*. Depressed, *Aśvatthāmā* went away and sat alone grieving over the ineffectiveness of his weapons. *Vyāsa* came and revealed to him that it was impossible for him to destroy *Arjuna* and *Kṛṣṇa* as they were *Nara* and *Nārāyaṇa*, incarnations of Lord *Viṣṇu*. He asked *Aśvatthāmā* to give up the grief and face the war the next day.

The fifteenth day battle ended with both sides retiring to their camps. The atmosphere was gloomy in the *Kaurava* camp and *Duryodhana* was more unhappy than ever before.



KARNA PARVA

This section covers the war events on the sixteenth and seventeenth days when *Karṇa* was the commander-in-chief of the *Kaurava* army.

In the *Kaurava* camp, as proposed by *Aśvatthāmā*, *Duryodhana* asked *Karṇa* to be the commander-in-chief of the army. *Karṇa* willingly consented and led the *Kaurava* army on the sixteenth day of the war.

Bhīma killed King *Kṣemadhūrta* at the beginning of the battle while *Sātyaki* killed *Vinda* and *Anuvinda* who belonged to *Kekaya-deśa*. *Nakula* and *Karṇa* fought a long battle and finally, *Karṇa* defeated *Nakula* and humiliated him. Except for *Karṇa*'s valour, there were no major incidents in the battlefield on the sixteenth day.

Duryodhana did not speak a single word against *Karṇa* in the camp, even though he noticed that *Karṇa* did not kill *Nakula* when he could have done it easily. This was because his love for *Karṇa* was total and unsuspecting of any foul play. It was unlike his treatment to *Bhīṣma* and *Droṇa*. *Karṇa* went to *Duryodhana* late night and told him that he would kill *Arjuna* in the next day's battle if he survives the fight. He mentioned how *Arjuna* was blessed with a charioteer who did the right thing at the right time and kept the chariot at the proper place all the time. He felt that if *Śalya*, whom he considered as a better charioteer than *Kṛṣṇa*, could drive his chariot then he would definitely be able to kill *Arjuna*.

That night, haunted by his past, *Karṇa* could not sleep. He knew this could very well be the last night of his life. His mind was full of memories, memories of pain, whether they reminded him of being snubbed as a *sūta-putra*, or of the curses upon him, or of the ill-fate of fighting his brothers. He was ready to die to redeem himself from the life of pain.

I. Quiz on Rādheya

Mark the best answer.

1. *Karṇa's* special quality was that
 - a. _____ he loved animals
 - b. _____ he was a great giver
 - c. _____ he was respectful

2. He was called a *sūta-putra* because
 - a. _____ he was the son of a king
 - b. _____ he was a *kṣatriya*
 - c. _____ he was the son of a charioteer

3. He was grateful to *Duryodhana*
 - a. _____ for saving his life
 - b. _____ for making him a king
 - c. _____ for finding his brothers

4. Though *Karṇa* was dharmic, he fought for the *Kauravas* because
 - a. _____ he hated the *Pāṇḍavas*
 - b. _____ he was loyal to *Duryodhana*
 - c. _____ he wanted to be the king

5. He promised his mother *Kuntī* that
 - a. _____ he would kill all the *Pāṇḍavas*
 - b. _____ he would kill only *Arjuna*
 - c. _____ he would die

Karṇa Parva contd...

The next morning, *Duryodhana* went to *Śalya* and pleaded with him to be *Karṇa*'s charioteer. *Śalya* felt insulted by *Duryodhana*'s request. Being a renowned *kṣatriya* king and a *mahārathi*, he could not accept the request to be a charioteer and that too for a *sūta-putra*. Furthermore, he could not stand *Duryodhana* praising *Karṇa* any more than what he deserved. Unable to bear the insult, he got up and began to walk out on *Duryodhana*.

Duryodhana knew the art of manipulating people; he stood before him with folded hands praising him as one who could even win *Karṇa*, *Arjuna* and *Kṛṣṇa*. He added that he wanted *Karṇa* to have a charioteer who was even superior to *Kṛṣṇa* and there was no such person on earth other than *Śalya*. Pleased to hear the words of praise showered on him in the presence of other noble men, *Śalya* agreed to *Duryodhana*'s request. However, *Śalya* added that he would never tolerate four types of behaviour: self-criticism, self-praise, decrying of others and fool-hardiness; and that if *Karṇa* exhibited any of them, he would censure him.

Karṇa, now driven by *Śalya*, proceeded to the war-front eager to face *Arjuna*, his arch enemy. *Śalya*, remembering his promise to *Yudhiṣṭhira* before the war began, started dampening *Karṇa*'s enthusiasm by praising *Arjuna* and abusing *Karṇa*. *Śalya*'s words hurt *Karṇa* deeply. *Karṇa* pleaded with *Śalya* to remain silent.

Exhibiting his skills, *Karṇa* began devastating the *Pāṇḍava* army. *Yudhiṣṭhira* came to defend his forces. *Karṇa* was initially hurt by *Yudhiṣṭhira*'s arrows. Later, he broke *Yudhiṣṭhira*'s bow and armour. The arrows now caused bleeding on *Yudhiṣṭhira*'s body. *Karṇa* touched *Yudhiṣṭhira*'s feet with the tip of his bow as a mark of inflicting defeat on *Yudhiṣṭhira* and asked him to retire. *Yudhiṣṭhira* returned humiliated like *Nakula*.

II. Word Search

Find the qualities that describe *Karna* in this word game. Look up, down, across and diagonally.

generous
sacrificer

proud
sensitive

unlucky
noble

good
loyal

R	M	P	R	O	U	D	B	D
E	R	B	O	P	N	S	B	W
C	L	O	Y	A	L	E	A	R
I	N	B	D	E	U	N	C	P
F	P	L	O	R	C	S	I	E
I	A	E	O	N	K	I	C	X
R	G	E	G	S	Y	T	L	D
C	P	R	K	P	L	I	A	S
A	L	T	S	L	P	V	S	K
S	U	O	R	E	N	E	G	R

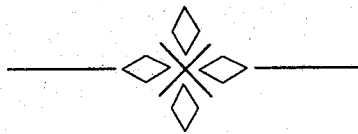
Karna Parva contd...

Angry at the insults to his elder brother, *Bhīma* attacked *Karna* and engaged him in a fierce battle. He sent a powerful arrow that hit *Karna* like a lightning and *Karna* fainted on his chariot. *Bhīma* proceeded to cut his tongue which had insulted his brother. *Śalya* advised *Bhīma* to leave *Karna* alone as *Arjuna* had vowed to kill him. *Karna*, recovering himself, got up to fight *Bhīma*. Six brothers of *Duryodhana* supported him. *Bhīma* killed all of them. By this day, he had even lost count of *Duryodhana*'s brothers that he had so far killed.

Yudhiṣṭhira came to fight with him again and *Karna* wounded him severely. *Yudhiṣṭhira* had to retire to his camp. He lay on his bed with excruciating pain all over his body. He was displeased with *Arjuna*'s way of fighting. He had wanted *Arjuna* to kill *Karna* the previous day, but it had not happened. On the other hand, he saw *Arjuna* getting angry with *Dhr̥ṣṭadyumna* for killing *Droṇa*. With physical pain and distress, he was emotionally fragile.

Not seeing *Yudhiṣṭhira* in the battlefield and being told about *Yudhiṣṭhira*'s return to the camp wounded, *Kṛṣṇa* and *Arjuna* came to see him. *Yudhiṣṭhira* thought that *Arjuna* had come in the middle of the war to convey the news of *Karna*'s death. He asked *Arjuna* how he had killed *Karna*. *Arjuna* replied that he had not yet got the right opportunity to kill him.

Yudhiṣṭhira lost his patience and spoke harshly. *Arjuna* could not bear to hear him and in a fit of anger arose to kill his brother. *Kṛṣṇa* intervened and restrained *Arjuna*. *Yudhiṣṭhira* regretted what had happened and embraced his brother affectionately. *Arjuna* vowed to kill *Karna* that day or be killed in the battlefield. *Yudhiṣṭhira* blessed him that he would succeed in killing *Karna* and bid him to take leave of him.



III. Unscramble these words and complete each sentence.

1. U T N K Ī

Karṇa's real mother was _____.

2. A R Y Ū S

Karṇa's real father was _____.

3. A Y A V I J

Karṇa's bow was called _____.

4. Ā N G D A Ī V

Arjuna's bow was called _____.

5. A Y Ś L A

Karṇa's charioteer was _____.

6. A G Ņ A

Karṇa was king of _____.

7. S L K L I U F L

He was a _____ archer.

8. Ā D H R Ā

_____ was his adopted mother.

Karna Parva contd...

Arjuna proceeded towards *Karna*. However, in the fight that ensued, *Arjuna* and *Karna* did not meet. Instead, *Bhīma* and *Duśśāsana* faced each other. *Bhīma* had been waiting for thirteen years to redeem his oath of drinking *Duśśāsana*'s blood and plait *Draupadī*'s dishevelled hair with his blood. Both *Bhīma* and *Duśśāsana* were great fighters and carried deep hatred for each other.

After a long duel, *Bhīma* hit *Duśśāsana* hard with his mace. As *Duryodhana*, *Karna* and *Kṛpācārya* helplessly watched, *Bhīma* caught hold of *Duśśāsana* by his neck and threw him down. He cut the right arm that had dragged *Draupadī* to the assembly and threw it before the *Kauravas*. Then ripping open *Duśśāsana*'s chest with his sword, he took the blood that began to gush out in his hands. It was too cruel an act for *Karna* to watch and *Śalya* drove him away from the scene. *Duryodhana* grieved for his dear brother.

Vṛṣasena, *Karna*'s son, advanced towards *Bhīma* when *Arjuna* intervened. He fought with *Vṛṣasena* and killed him with a sharp arrow. *Bhīma*, in the meanwhile, killed ten more brothers of *Duryodhana*. *Karna* was overwhelmed by the successive tragedies of *Duśśāsana*'s and his son's death. Overcome by sorrow and anger, he went towards *Arjuna* for a duel. A powerful fight ensued between *Arjuna* and *Karna*.

They first shot arrows at each other which were followed by divine missiles. Each one neutralised the other's missile effectively. *Arjuna* sent the *Āgneyāstra*, that emitted fire, while *Karna* neutralised it with the *Vāruṇāstra*, that showered rains and quenched the fire. *Arjuna* dispelled the clouds by his *Vāyuvāstra*, and used his *Aindrāstra* that showered arrows all over the *Kaurava* army. *Karna* invoked *Bhārgavāstra*, given by his *guru* *Paraśurāma*, and caused more harm than that caused by *Aindrāstra*.





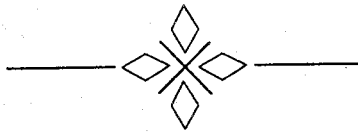
Bhima and the fallen Duśśāsana

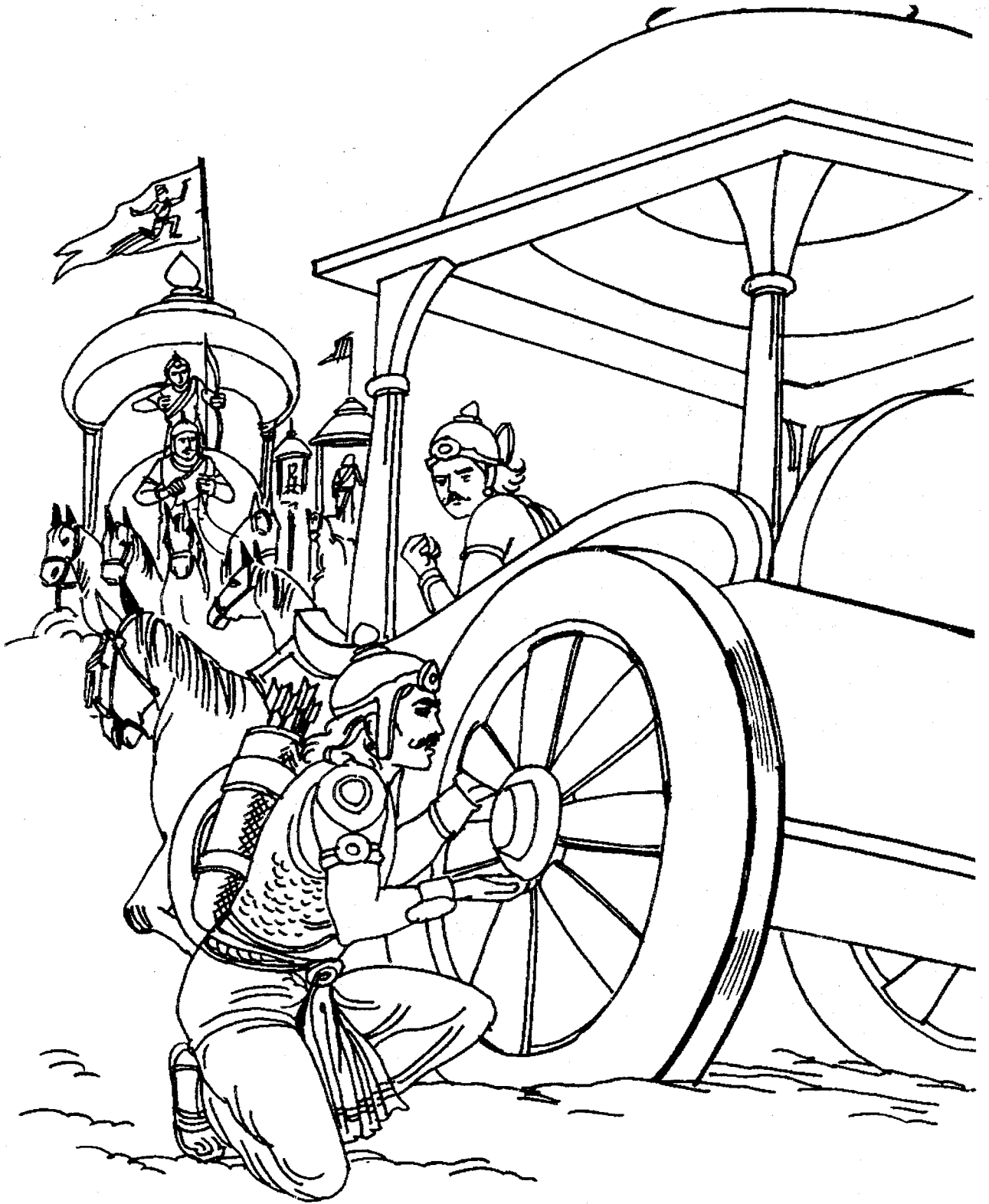
Karṇa Parva contd...

Bhīma taunted *Arjuna* for not displaying his full potential. *Kṛṣṇa*, too, reminded him to use the great *astras* he knew. *Arjuna* sent *Brahmāstra* and covered the battlefield with arrows emanating from the *astra*. *Karṇa* countered the *Brahmāstra* too. *Yudhiṣṭhira* came to know about the duel between the two and managed to reach the battlefield to see the great fight. The *devas* also witnessed the same from the heavens.

Then *Karṇa* broke *Arjuna*'s bow, but the latter instantly replaced it. *Karṇa* repeated this act eleven times and each time, *Arjuna* replaced it so quickly that *Karṇa* admired his brother's skills. *Karṇa* took his last missile, the *Nāgāstra* and aimed at *Arjuna*'s neck. *Śalya* warned *Karṇa* to send a corrective missile and change the aim of the *Nāgāstra* to his chest instead. *Karṇa* was so self-confident of never missing his target, that he did not accept *Śalya*'s suggestion. Everyone including *Karṇa* thought that *Arjuna* would fall dead. But only the crown of *Arjuna* got knocked off his head. In time, *Kṛṣṇa* made his horses kneel down and pressed the chariot to go five inches down into the ground. *Karṇa* was astonished to see the *astra* missing his target. *Kṛṣṇa*'s astuteness saved *Arjuna*'s life and destroyed *Karṇa*'s hopes forever.

The unfailing curses on *Karṇa* began working. As luck would have it, the ground under the left wheel of *Karṇa*'s chariot gave in. He was mentally fighting against time. *Karṇa* wanted to send the *Brahmāstra*, but could not remember the incantations. He was sad that the *kṣatriya-dharma* he followed all these years had deserted him at the crucial moment in his life.





Karna attempts to lift the wheel

Karna Parva contd...

He descended from the chariot in order to set it right by pulling out the left wheel. He asked *Arjuna* to wait as it was wrong to fight an opponent who was on the ground without weapons. *Kṛṣṇa* retorted by recalling all the wrong deeds committed by him such as his support for dice game, the insults to *Draupadī*, and shooting the arrow from behind *Abhimanyu* in order to cut the bow of the young lad. *Karna* saw his participation in all these crimes as being due to a single motive which was to please *Duryodhana*. He hung his head in shame as he had no answer for *Kṛṣṇa*'s words. His attempts to lift the wheel failed and he quickly climbed the chariot to counter *Arjuna*'s arrows. He was struggling between the wheel and arrows alternately.

At one time, he sent a powerful arrow that stunned *Arjuna* who fainted for a moment. *Karna*, making use of the time available, came down to try his hands at the wheel once again. *Arjuna* took divine missile *Añjalikā* and aimed at *Karna*, who was stranded near the wheel. The arrow severed *Karna*'s head, to the joy of the *Pāṇḍava* warriors. *Duryodhana* wept bitterly at the loss of his dearest friend. It was mid-day, but the fight came to a standstill as *Duryodhana* was sunk in sorrow.

Late that night, *Duryodhana* went to the battlefield to have a look at *Karna*'s body. He broke down at the sight of his form and ran to his grandfather *Bhīṣma* for solace. *Bhīṣma* revealed the secret of *Karna* being a *Kaunteya*. *Duryodhana* was shocked at this truth and was overwhelmed by *Karna*'s love and loyalty towards him. He was determined to join *Karna* in the other world. He decided to go ahead with the war and die in the battlefield so that he could also reach *Karna*. He walked back to his tent eager to continue the fight.



ŚALYA PARVA

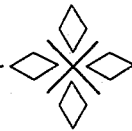
This section deals with the events on the last day of the war.

Having successfully killed the great warriors who were considered invincible, the *Pāṇḍavas* slept happily for the first time, dreaming of their victory the next day. In the *Kaurava* camp, *Kṛpācārya* approached *Duryodhana* and requested him to make peace with the *Pāṇḍavas*. *Duryodhana* stuck to his position of fighting the war to the finish. He did not see any other means of reaching the heavens other than by getting killed in the battlefield. A *kṣatriya*'s death on the battlefield was considered to take him to *vīra-svarga*, heaven gained by warriors. *Duryodhana* went ahead with the preparations for the next day's battle. As suggested by *Aśvatthāmā*, he made *Śalya* the commander-in-chief of the army.

The *Pāṇḍavas* and the *Kauravas* arrayed their forces in the battlefield the next day. The *Kauravas* decided to avoid single combats with the *Pāṇḍavas* henceforth. In keeping with the war strategy, *Śalya* arranged the army in *Sarvatobhadra-vyūha*, a formation that gave protection on all sides. In the absence of their heroes, the *Kaurava* forces could not withstand the attack of the *Pāṇḍava* army. *Nakula* killed the three surviving sons of *Karṇa*, viz., *Citrasena*, *Suśeṇa* and *Satyasena*. *Yudhiṣṭhira* fought valiantly on that day. After killing *Drumasena* and *Candrasena*, he challenged *Śalya*. Both fought fiercely. *Yudhiṣṭhira* finally killed *Śalya* with his *Śakti* which was presided over by Lord *Subrahmanya*.

Sātyaki killed King *Śālva* while *Duryodhana* destroyed *Cekitāna*. *Bhīma* killed the remaining brothers of *Duryodhana*. *Nakula* and *Sahadeva* killed *Śakuni*'s son, *Ulūka* and *Śakuni* respectively. Finally only four warriors remained out of the eleven *akṣauhīnīs* of the *Kaurava* army. They were *Aśvatthāmā*, *Kṛpācārya*, *Kṛtavarmā* and *Duryodhana*.

Duryodhana was not ready for any more fight on that day and feared for the safety of his life. Eighteen days ago, he had eleven *akṣauhīnīs* of army at his command. Seeing his plight, he ran away with his only remaining weapon, the mace. He had learnt the art of remaining under water for a long time. He decided to hide himself in the *Dvaipāyana* lake nearby.





Duryodhana decides to hide himself in the lake

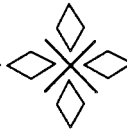
Śalya Parva contd...

He met *Sañjaya* on his way. *Sañjaya* used to visit the battlefield during the day and narrate the events to *Dhṛtarāṣṭra* at night. *Duryodhana* told *Sañjaya* of his plan to remain inside the water for a day and cool himself. He sent a message to his father through him that he was not interested in living any more and that he might not meet his father again. He sought his father's forgiveness for all the suffering he had caused and sent his respects to his mother. During the war, *Duryodhana* had visited his mother every day before going to the battlefield to seek her blessings. Then, taking leave of *Sañjaya*, *Duryodhana* hid himself under the water.

Aśvatthāmā, *Kṛpācārya* and *Kṛtavarmā* searching for *Duryodhana* reached the lake and called out for him. *Aśvatthāmā* assured him of victory and asked him to come out and fight. *Duryodhana* replied from inside that he did not have the confidence to face the *Pāṇḍavas* and that he would fight them the next day after resting his limbs and cooling his burning body.

Later, *Yudhiṣṭhira* finding out about *Duryodhana's* whereabouts, came to the lake with his brothers. *Yudhiṣṭhira* challenged *Duryodhana* to come out and fight them. He asked him not to be a coward by hiding himself in the lake. *Duryodhana* replied that he was under the water to cool his blazing body and not out of fear of the *Pāṇḍavas*. He continued that he was not interested in the kingdom bereft of his close people and asked *Yudhiṣṭhira* to take it and enjoy it. *Yudhiṣṭhira* retorted that *Duryodhana* did not have the right to gift the kingdom nor would he, as a *kṣatriya*, accept any gift from *Duryodhana*. He said he would rightfully claim it after killing *Duryodhana* in a fight.

Yudhiṣṭhira's words hurt him and he came out and challenged the *Pāṇḍavas* for a fight. *Yudhiṣṭhira* gave him even the choice of the mode of fighting. *Duryodhana* said that he would meet them one by one with his mace in which mode of fight he was good. *Bhīma* came forward to face him with his mace.





Duryodhana and Bhīma in a mace fight

Śalya Parva contd...

They were arch enemies. *Bhīma* was also highly skilled in mace fight. Nobody could decide from their fight as to who was superior. *Balarāma*, *Kṛṣṇa*'s elder brother, who was their teacher in the use of mace, arrived at the scene after his pilgrimage, when he heard about the mace fight between *Bhīma* and *Duryodhana*.

Kṛṣṇa signalled to *Bhīma* to fulfill his vow of breaking *Duryodhana*'s thighs. Soon after, *Bhīma* gave a deadly blow on *Duryodhana*'s thighs and broke them. *Duryodhana* fell on the ground writhing in agony. He was terminally wounded. His life would ebb away any time. *Bhīma* compounded his crime of hitting below the naval region against the accepted rules, by stepping on his head and dancing on his body. *Yudhiṣṭhira* stopped him and reprimanded him for this unkindly act of anger against his cousin.

Duryodhana accused *Kṛṣṇa* of unfair tactics in killing *Droṇa* and *Karṇa* and abused him using harsh words. *Kṛṣṇa* replied him suitably. He pointed out that his greed for power drove him to do endless crimes leading to the destruction of himself, his brothers and millions of others. *Balarāma* objected to *Bhīma* hitting *Duryodhana*'s thighs and sprang at *Bhīma* with the plough in his hand. *Kṛṣṇa* stopped him and tried to reason with him. But *Balarāma* could not reconcile with *Kṛṣṇa*'s arguments and left for *Dvārakā* in displeasure.

Having won the war, the *Pāṇḍavas* were supposed to enter the *Kaurava* camp and spend the night there, according to the rules of the war. When *Arjuna*'s chariot reached the camp, *Kṛṣṇa* asked *Arjuna* to step down first along with his *Gāṇḍīva* and the arrows. *Kṛṣṇa*, then, got off from it. *Hanumān*, who had been sitting on the flag, all this time, immediately disappeared from sight. To the surprise of everyone, all of a sudden, the chariot went up in flames, along with the white horses. *Kṛṣṇa* then explained that the chariot, presented to *Arjuna* by Lord *Agni* during the *Khāṇḍavavana* fire, would have been burnt long ago as it had been hit by many divine missiles, but for *Kṛṣṇa*'s protection. Now, that the chariot had served its purpose, *Kṛṣṇa* had made the *saṅkalpa* that it could burn and it did.





Arjuna's chariot burns after the war

Śalya Parva contd...

Yudhiṣṭhira requested *Kṛṣṇa* to go to *Hastināpura* immediately and pacify queen *Gāndhārī* who in her grief over *Duryodhana*'s death could curse the *Pāṇḍavas*. *Dhṛtarāṣṭra* was a picture of woe. *Gāndhārī* was shattered by her sorrow. *Kṛṣṇa* consoled *Gāndhārī* pointing out how he and the *Pāṇḍavas* had tried all the possible ways to avoid the war. He further added that *Yudhiṣṭhira* was very much aggrieved over *Duryodhana*'s death. *Gāndhārī* got some relief with the gentle words of *Kṛṣṇa*.

Saṅjaya came back to *Duryodhana* to see him again. *Duryodhana* requested *Saṅjaya* to inform *Aśvatthāmā*, *Kṛpācārya* and *Kṛtavarmā* about how he was brutally knocked down. He asked *Saṅjaya* to inform them that *Duryodhana* wanted to see them. The three warriors soon arrived at the scene. *Duryodhana* managed to say a few words to them with great difficulty. *Aśvatthāmā*, was very angry with the *Pāṇḍavas* and decided to avenge the death of *Droṇa* and *Duryodhana*. He vowed that he would kill the *Pāṇḍavas* that night. *Duryodhana* was very happy to hear the affectionate words of *Aśvatthāmā*. Fighting for his life, he kept up his spirit and sent *Aśvatthāmā* to fight the *Pāṇḍavas* with the support of *Kṛpācārya* and *Kṛtavarmā*, after symbolically coronating *Aśvatthāmā* as the commander-in-chief.



Śalya Parva contd...

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I. Fill in the blanks using the following words.

Pāṇḍavas

wins

eighteenth

Lord *Kṛṣṇa*

die

Mādrī

Śalya

mace

Balarāma

1. The *Mahābhārata* war ended on the _____ day.
2. The _____ won the war.
3. _____ helped the *Pāṇḍavas* win the war.
4. The last commander of the *Kaurava* army was _____.
5. *Duryodhana* wanted to _____ like a true *kṣatriya*.
6. *Bhīma* killed *Duryodhana* in a _____ fight.
7. _____ was *Kṛṣṇa*'s elder brother.
8. *Śalya* was the brother of _____.
9. Truth always _____.

II. Circle the right reason.

1. *Balarāma* got angry with *Bhīma* after the latter's fight with *Duryodhana* because
 - a. *Bhīma* hit *Duryodhana* below the navel region which was against the rules of mace fight.
 - b. *Balarāma* had hatred for *Bhīma*.
 - c. *Kṛṣṇa* supported *Bhīma* in the fight.

2. *Śalya*, *Pāṇḍavas*' uncle, joined the *Kauravas* because
 - a. he thought that the *Kauravas* would win the war.
 - b. he was against the *Pāṇḍavas*.
 - c. he was tricked into taking their side by *Duryodhana*.

3. *Duryodhana* hid himself in the lake because
 - a. he wanted to rest for a night and cool off his burning limbs struck by arrows.
 - b. he wanted to perform penance under the waters.
 - c. it was very hot outside.

4. *Arjuna*'s chariot, though hit by great missiles, did not burn because
 - a. the chariot was fire-proof.
 - b. Lord *Kṛṣṇa* willed it to be so.
 - c. it was presented by Lord *Agni*.

5. *Duryodhana* lost his life in the war because
 - a. his army was smaller than the *Pāṇḍava*'s army.
 - b. his commanders deserted him.
 - c. he did not seek Lord's grace.

AFTER THE WAR

This section describes the subsequent events that followed the war, as given in the last nine *parvas* of the *Mahābhārata*.

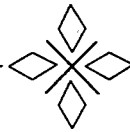
Sauptika Parva

On their way to the *Pāṇḍava* camp, *Aśvatthāmā*, *Kṛpācārya* and *Kṛtavarmā* rested under a banyan tree for the night. *Aśvatthāmā* was sleepless. He saw an owl noiselessly landing on a tree and destroying the crows which were sleeping in their nests. This sight planted a wicked idea in *Aśvatthāmā*'s mind to kill the *Pāṇḍavas* while they were asleep. He woke up *Kṛpācārya* and *Kṛtavarmā* in the middle of the night and told them of his plan. They were horrified to hear this and dissuaded *Aśvatthāmā* from committing the crime. But *Aśvatthāmā* was adamant and finally, *Kṛpācārya* and *Kṛtavarmā* reluctantly supported him.

The three warriors reached the *Pāṇḍavas*' camp in the cover of darkness. While *Kṛpācārya* and *Kṛtavarmā* guarded the entrance, *Aśvatthāmā* carried out the massacre. But unknowingly he killed the five sons of *Draupadī* instead. *Dhṛṣṭadyumna*, *Uttamaujas*, *Yudhāmanyu* and *Śikhaṇḍī* were also killed in their sleep. *Kṛpācārya* set fire to the camp from the three sides. They rushed to the dying *Duryodhana* and *Aśvatthāmā* narrated his inhuman deeds to him. Pleased with *Aśvatthāmā*, *Duryodhana* breathed his last.

The *Pāṇḍavas* who were sleeping in another camp came to know of the ruthless killings from *Dhṛṣṭadyumna*'s charioteer, who was the lone survivor. Their grief knew no end. *Draupadī*'s happiness at the destruction of *Duśśāsana* and *Duryodhana* had hardly lasted for a day and she again fell into deep sorrow.

Draupadī asked *Bhīma* to disgrace *Aśvatthāmā* by depriving him of his crest jewel which was his prized possession. *Bhīma* left immediately in search of *Aśvatthāmā* and located him near *Kurukṣetra*. *Kṛṣṇa* was concerned for *Bhīma*'s safety and setting out with *Arjuna* soon caught up with him. Seeing *Bhīma* and *Arjuna* with *Kṛṣṇa*, *Aśvatthāmā* sent a blade of grass with the invocations of *Brahma-śiras astra* in order to destroy the *Pāṇḍava* race. *Kṛṣṇa* informed *Arjuna* about it, when *Arjuna* sent the same *Brahma-śiras* to counter the other.



I. Quiz on Lord Kṛṣṇa

Mark true or false.

1. Lord *Kṛṣṇa* was an *avatāra*
_____ True _____ False
2. Lord *Kṛṣṇa* helped the *Pāṇḍavas* because they were not righteous.
_____ True _____ False
3. The Lord takes an incarnation to uphold *dharma*.
_____ True _____ False
4. Lord *Kṛṣṇa* saved *Arjuna* several times from powerful *astras*.
_____ True _____ False
5. Lord *Kṛṣṇa* was *Karna's* charioteer.
_____ True _____ False
6. The *Kauravas* and Lord *Kṛṣṇa* were cousins.
_____ True _____ False
7. The *Pāṇḍavas* could have won the war without Lord *Kṛṣṇa*.
_____ True _____ False
8. Lord *Kṛṣṇa* fought for *dharma*.
_____ True _____ False

After the War contd...

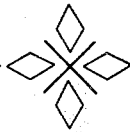
Vyāsa and *Nārada* came in between the two *astras* and held them in their hands with their *tapaśśakti*, power of penance. Had the two *astras* collided, it would have caused great destruction in the world. The sages asked *Arjuna* and *Aśvatthāmā* to recall the *astras*. *Arjuna* recalled it while *Aśvatthāmā* could not do so, as he had gained *pāpa* due to his crimes. The sages made him part with his crest jewel and permitted him to direct his *astra* to act against the unborn children in the wombs of the women of the *Pāṇḍava* family.

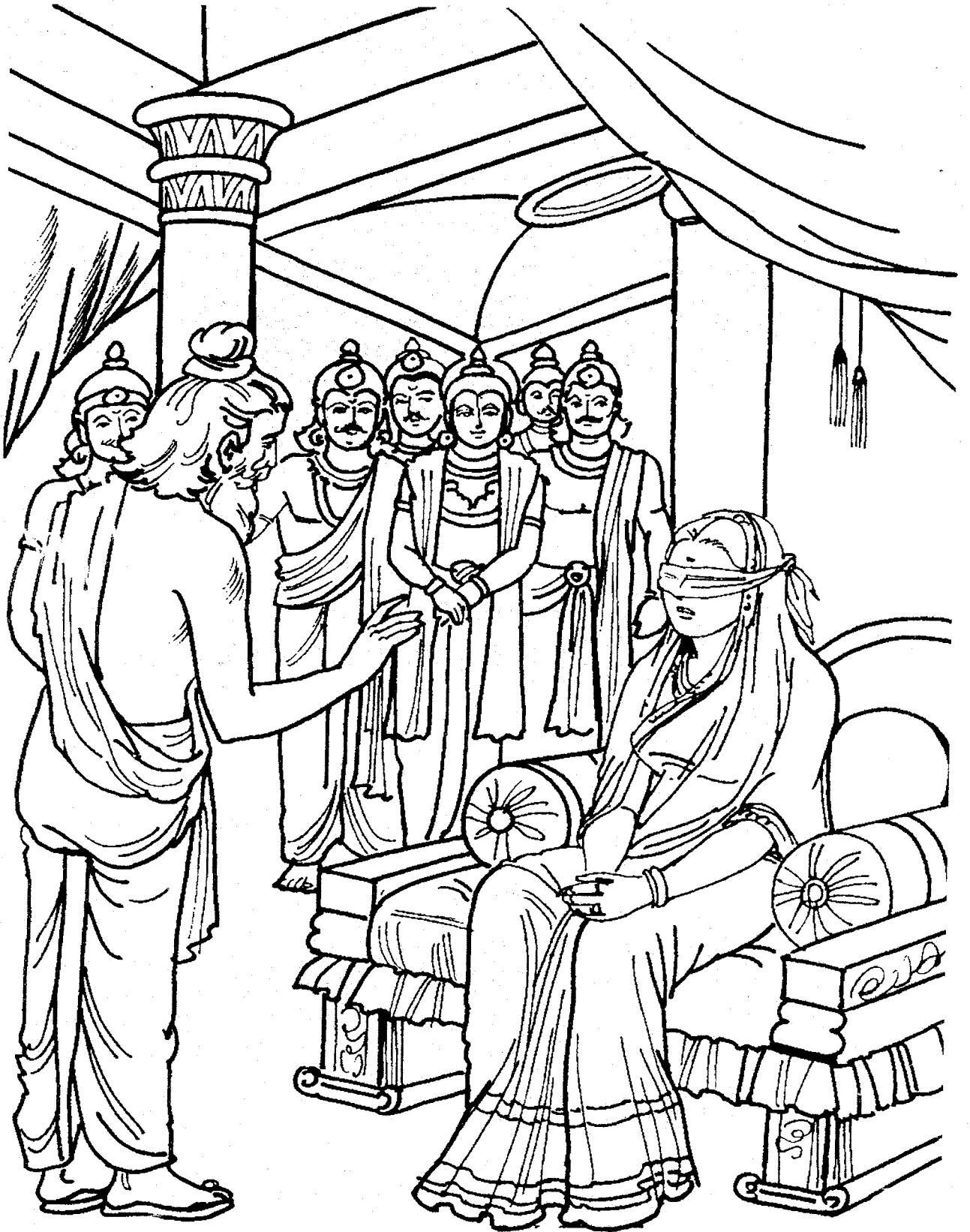
Kṛṣṇa annoyed at *Aśvatthāmā*, promised to save the child in the womb of *Uttarā*, *Abhimanyu*'s wife and cursed *Aśvatthāmā* that even though he would live long, he would not be loved by any one. *Draupadī*, consoled at seeing the jewel, adorned the crown of *Yudhiṣṭhira* with it. The *Pāṇḍavas* left for *Hastināpura* to meet *Dhṛtarāṣṭra*.

Strī Parva

Vidura and *Vyāsa* comforted *Dhṛtarāṣṭra* in the palace. The king proceeded to the battlefield to oversee the final rites of his sons. The wailing widows of the dead warriors followed the king to have a last look at the bodies of their beloved. *Kṛtavarmā* and *Kṛpācārya* met the king on the way and narrating the post-war events, left the scene out of fear of the *Pāṇḍavas*. The *Pāṇḍavas* came to know that the king had left for the battlefield and went there to meet him.

Kṛṣṇa, foreseeing the king's anger and sorrow, brought with him, an iron image of *Bhīma* which *Duryodhana* used to handle during his wrestling practices. When *Dhṛtarāṣṭra* extended his arms to embrace *Bhīma*, *Kṛṣṇa* pushed *Bhīma* aside and placed the metal statue before him. Venting out all his anger and hatred for *Bhīma*, *Dhṛtarāṣṭra* tightly embraced *Bhīma*. The statue was crushed to pieces. *Kṛṣṇa* immediately clarified to *Dhṛtarāṣṭra* that *Bhīma* was safe and removed his grief over *Bhīma*'s death. With *Kṛṣṇa*'s grace, *Dhṛtarāṣṭra*'s mind thus gained peace.





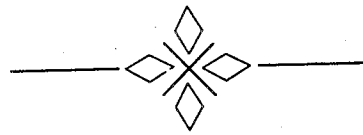
Vyāsa consoles Gāndhārī

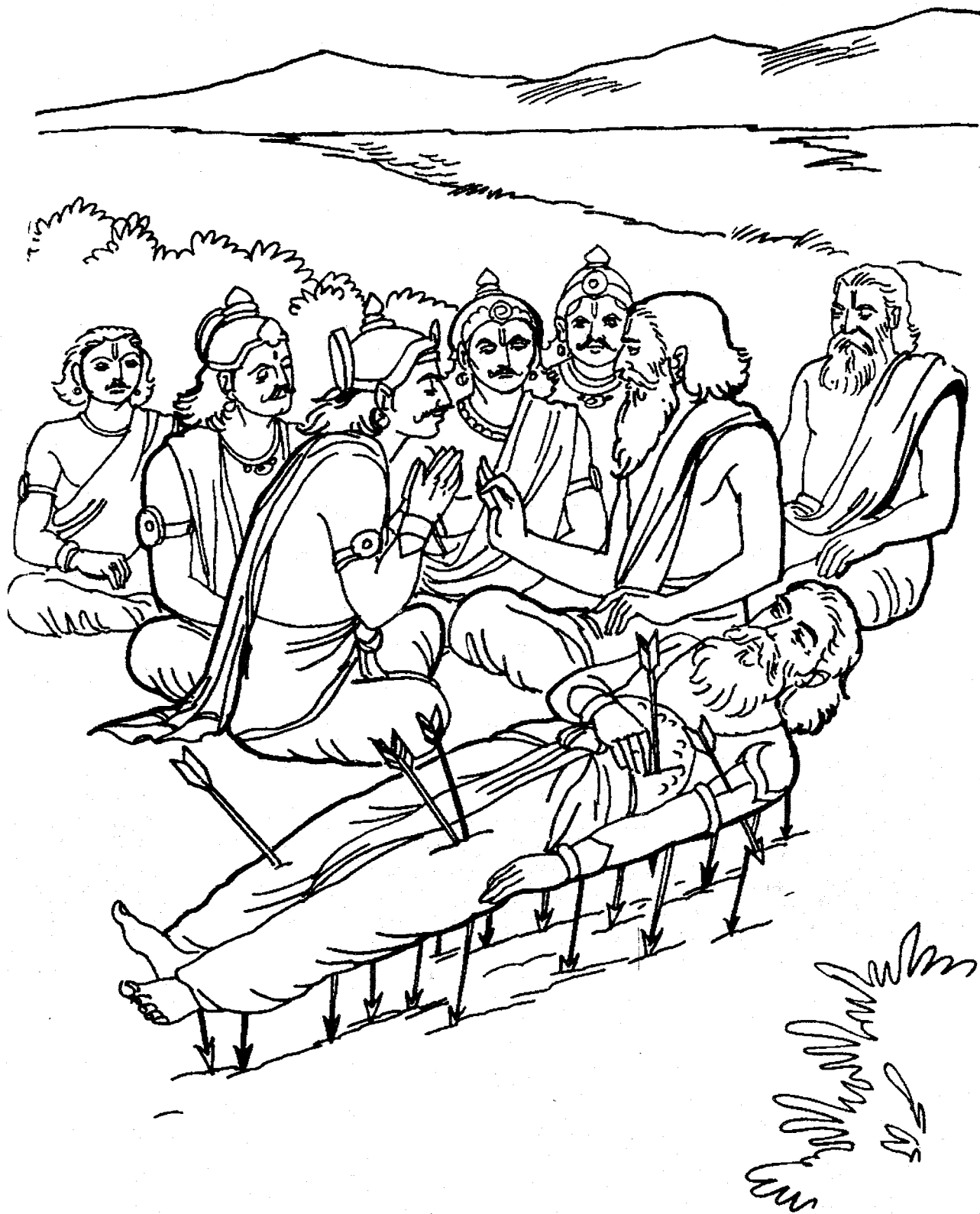
After the War contd...

The *Pāṇḍavas* went to see *Gāndhārī* along with *Kṛṣṇa*. *Vyāsa* hurried to the palace knowing the damage *Gāndhārī* could cause to the *Pāṇḍavas*, and pacified her. *Gāndhārī* was angry with *Bhīma* for his cruel acts against his brothers, *Duśśāsana* and *Duryodhana* at the time of killing them. *Bhīma* explained to her that he was obliged to fulfill the oaths he had taken during the impassionate moments, but he had not sipped even a drop of *Duśśāsana*'s blood. He sought *Gāndhārī*'s forgiveness for his actions. *Gāndhārī*'s anger now turned towards *Yudhiṣṭhira*, but recalling *Vyāsa*'s words, she controlled herself. She turned her face away when *Yudhiṣṭhira* touched her feet for her blessings.

The *Pāṇḍavas* then met *Kuntī* after a lapse of thirteen years. She embraced them affectionately. The scars of the war on their bodies brought her tears of joy as she shared their victory. All of them left for the battlefield along with *Gāndhārī*. The air was filled with the pathetic wails of the bereaved women. *Gāndhārī* lamented over the death of her near and dear ones. She lost her composure at seeing the magnitude of destruction on the battlefield. She held *Kṛṣṇa* responsible for the ruin of the *Kuru* clan as he had failed to prevent the war. She cursed that the *Yādava* clan would also fight among themselves in a similar manner and destroy their race. *Kṛṣṇa* smiled at her and accepted the curse.

After the completion of the obsequies of the slain king *Duryodhana* and other great heroes, the *Pāṇḍavas* offered water mixed with rice and sesame seeds for all the departed souls. Revealing *Karṇa*'s identity to *Yudhiṣṭhira*, *Kuntī* asked him to perform the obsequies for *Karṇa*. *Yudhiṣṭhira* was shocked and deeply aggrieved at the injustice done to them by *Kuntī*, whose silence of secrecy had cost them their brother's life. He cursed the woman race that henceforth they would never be able to keep any secret in their hearts.





Yudhishthira receives teachings

After the War contd...

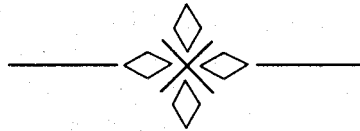
Śānti Parva

The *Pāṇḍavas* stayed on the banks of *Gaṅgā* for a month and mourned their losses. *Yudhiṣṭhira*'s appreciation for *Karṇa* increased immensely as he recollected the past. He thought of how noble *Karṇa* was - not wanting the *Pāṇḍavas* to know about a truth that he knew would hurt them. The truth about *Karṇa*'s life and his sufferings had touched the deep recesses of his heart.

Yudhiṣṭhira lost interest in ruling the kingdom or enjoying the royal prosperity. He wanted to take to forest life. His brothers and *Draupadī* reminded him of his duties as a *kṣatriya* house holder and a king, and insisted that he take up the rulership of *Hastināpura*. The association and the teachings of the sages such as *Vyāsa* and *Nārada* during the one month period assuaged *Yudhiṣṭhira*'s feelings of depression.

The *Pāṇḍavas* returned to *Hastināpura* and *Dhṛtarāṣṭra* crowned *Yudhiṣṭhira* as the king and *Bhīma* was made crown prince while Arjuna became the commander of the army and in-charge of foreign affairs. *Vidura* was his defence minister. *Nakula* and *Sahadeva* were in charge of maintaining the army and security of the king respectively. *Sañjaya* was appointed to manage the treasury.

The next morning, before assuming his duties, *Yudhiṣṭhira* went to seek the blessings of *Bhīṣma* along with *Kṛṣṇa* and others. *Kṛṣṇa* asked *Bhīṣma* to give his wisdom on worldly and spiritual matters to *Yudhiṣṭhira*. *Bhīṣma* covered topics such as *rāja-dharma*, duties of a king; *āpad-dharma*, rule in times of adversity; and *mokṣa-dharma*, the nature of self and the means of self discovery.



After the War contd...

Anuśāsana Parva

Bhīṣma continued his instructions on other topics which included duties of people belonging to different *varṇas* and *āśramas*; disciplines in *āhāra*, food; values such as *dāna*, charity and *ahiṃsā*, noninjury; and instructions on life after death and truth of living.

Sages *Brhaspati* and *Nārada* also gave advice to *Yudhiṣṭhira*. *Kṛṣṇa* narrated the glories of Lord *Śiva* through the story of *Upamanyu* and recited *Śiva-sahasranāma*, a hymn containing one thousand names of Lord *Śiva* as uttered by *Upamanyu*. Later, *Bhīṣma* taught *Viṣṇu-sahasranāma*, a hymn containing one thousand names of Lord *Viṣṇu*, to *Yudhiṣṭhira*.

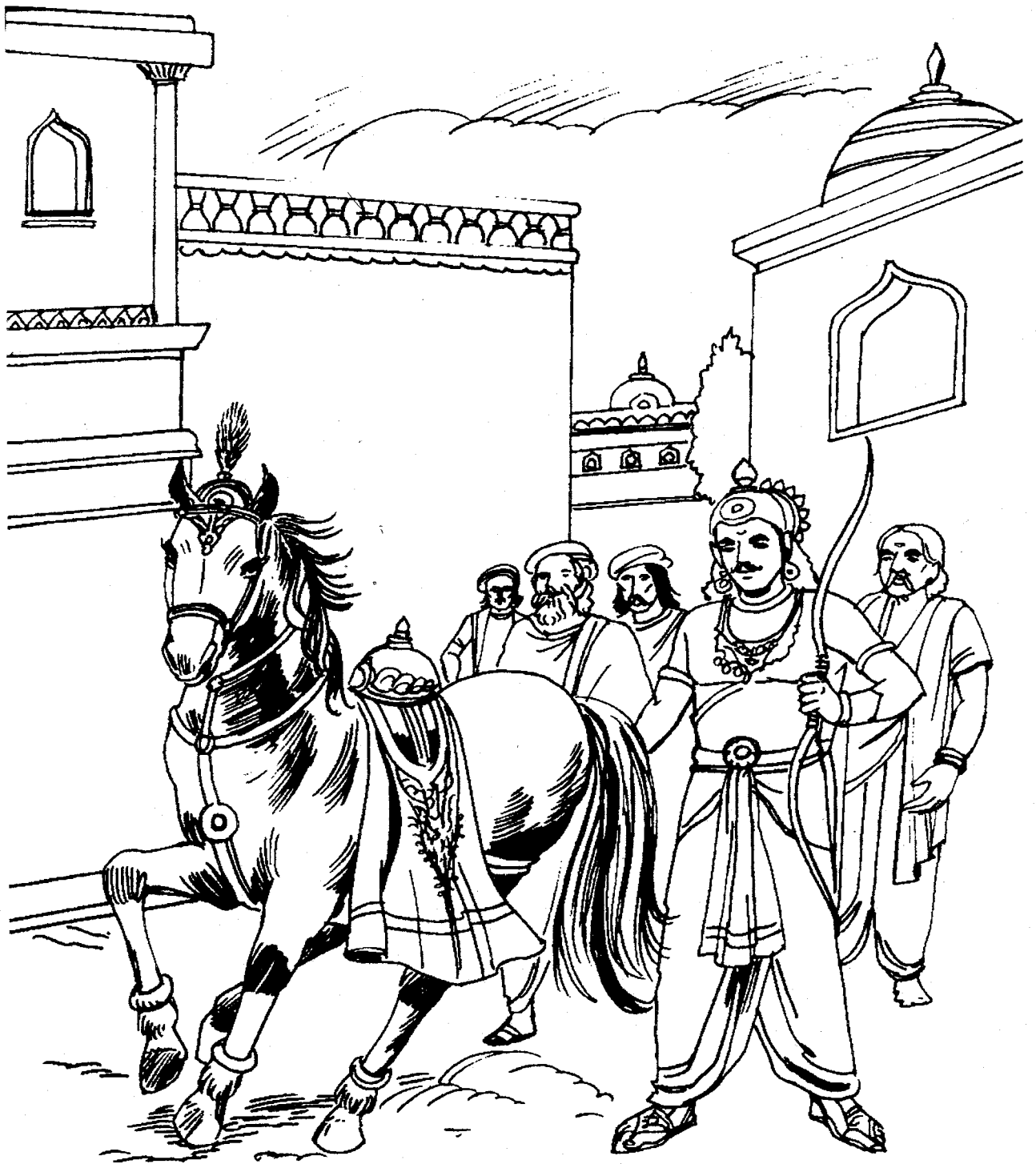
After the instructions were over, the *Pāṇḍavas* and *Kṛṣṇa* took leave of *Bhīṣma*. At the onset of *uttarāyaṇa*, the northern solstice, the *Pāṇḍavas* with all the members of the family went back to *Bhīṣma* to pay their last respects. *Bhīṣma* worshipped Lord *Kṛṣṇa* with flowers and had the vision of the Lord's cosmic form before his death. *Yudhiṣṭhira* and others returned to *Hastināpura* after completing the funeral rites.

Āśvamedhika Parva

Kṛṣṇa and *Arjuna* lived together for sometime re-living the pre-exile days and enjoying each other's company. One day, *Kṛṣṇa* decided to return to *Dvārakā* and be with his parents. He informed *Arjuna* but the latter could not think of separation from him and broke into tears. He asked *Kṛṣṇa* to teach him the *Gītā* again as he felt that the teaching given earlier was not enough for him to contain his sorrow. The Lord taught *Arjuna* again and this teaching is known as *Anu Gītā*. *Kṛṣṇa* then took leave of the *Pāṇḍavas* and *Draupadī*, and left for *Dvārakā*.

Vyāsa once visited *Yudhiṣṭhira* and asked him to perform the *āśvamedha-yajña*. *Yudhiṣṭhira* agreed to it and proceeded with the preparations. *Kṛṣṇa* came to *Hastināpura* sufficiently early, as it was time for *Uttarā* to give birth to her still born child. *Kṛṣṇa* gave life to the child by his divine touch and named him *Parīkṣit*.

Arjuna started on a *dig-vijaya*, conquest of the four quarters. A sacrificial horse was let free and *Arjuna* followed it. After conquering all the kings on earth who challenged the horse's run, and collecting taxes from them, *Arjuna* returned victorious with the horse. The sacrifice was performed on a grand scale similar to the *Rājasūya* sacrifice done earlier.



Arjuna follows the Aśvamedha horse set free

After the War contd...

Āśramavāsika Parva

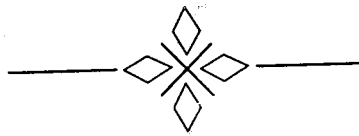
Yudhiṣṭhira, his brothers and *Draupadī* served *Dhṛtarāṣṭra* and *Gāndhārī* with love and respect. For fifteen years they all lived together happily and peacefully in the palace. But *Dhṛtarāṣṭra* could not forget the past and memories of *Duryodhana* haunted him now and then. *Bhīma* also did not miss any opportunity to taunt him in subtle ways. *Dhṛtarāṣṭra* and *Gāndhārī* decided to take to a life of austerities in the forest for the rest of their lives. Reluctantly, *Yudhiṣṭhira* agreed to it. *Kuntī* and *Vidura* also accompanied *Dhṛtarāṣṭra* and *Gāndhārī*. They all stayed in *Śatayūpa āśrama* in *Kurukṣetra*. In the course of time, *Vidura*, emaciated due to fasting, passed away, while the others died in a forest fire. The *Pāṇḍavas* grieved the loss of all the elders in their family for a long time.

Mausala Parva

It was the thirty-sixth year of *Yudhiṣṭhira*'s rule. In *Dvārakā*, one day *Kṛṣṇa* set out with all his people to *Prabhāsa-tīrtha* to perform the annual worship of Lord *Śaṅkara*. In their merriment that followed the worship, the *Yādavas* lost hold of themselves due to intoxication.

Kṛṣṇa silently watched the turn of events. *Sātyaki*, in his intoxicated mood, insulted *Kṛtavarmā* for his dastardly action of killing *Draupadī*'s sons. *Kṛtavarmā* retorted at him, reminding him of the *Bhūriśravas* incident. *Sātyaki* in his anger, cut off *Kṛtavarmā*'s head. The fight assumed larger proportions. The weeds growing along the sea-shore turned into iron maces as they were picked up by the *Yādavas*. In a short period of time all the *Yādavas* who had come to *Prabhāsa* fought and killed each other, wiping out the entire clan of *Yādavas*. *Balarāma* sat on the sea-shore in meditation, and cast off his body.

Kṛṣṇa sent a message to *Arjuna* through *Dāruka*, his charioteer, about the impending deluge of *Dvārakā* by the sea waters and asked *Arjuna* to shift the residents of *Dvārakā* to *Hastināpura*. *Kṛṣṇa* then, sitting under a tree, absorbed in himself, waited for his time to drop the mortal body. Soon after, a hunter mistakenly sent an arrow at *Kṛṣṇa* which killed him. The Lord, thus having fulfilled the purpose of his incarnation, left for his abode.





Yudhiṣṭhira is crowned the king

After the War contd...

Mahāprasthāna Parva

Arjuna carried out *Kṛṣṇa*'s instructions. Now mother *Kuntī* and *Kṛṣṇa* having left the world, the *Pāṇḍavas* had no desire to lead a royal life. The influence of time was strongly felt by them. *Yudhiṣṭhira* crowned *Parīkṣit* as the king of *Hastināpura*. He also installed *Vajra*, the grandson of *Kṛṣṇa*, as the ruler of *Indraprastha* with the surviving *Yādavas* as his citizens. He entrusted the administrative responsibilities to *Yuyutsu* until the young *Parīkṣit* grew up. Taking leave of *Subhadra*, the *Pāṇḍavas* and *Draupadī* left on a pilgrimage.

Proceeding towards the north, they crossed the *Himālayas* on their journey. Enroute to *Meru*, *Draupadī* fell dead first and was followed by *Sahadeva*, *Nakula*, *Arjuna* and *Bhīma* at consecutive intervals. *Indra* came with his chariot to take *Yudhiṣṭhira* with him. He told *Yudhiṣṭhira* that the others had already reached the heavens and that he would be taken to the heaven in his human form.

Svargārohaṇa Parva

In the heavens, *Yudhiṣṭhira* was surprised to find *Duryodhana* while his brothers and *Draupadī* were nowhere to be seen. He asked to be taken to his brothers and *Draupadī*. He was obliged and taken to hell. *Yudhiṣṭhira* chose to stay in hell with his brothers as he did not care for a heaven without his brothers and *Draupadī*.

He asked *Indra* about the reasons for this ill treatment being meted out to his brothers and *Draupadī*. *Indra* explained that everyone in his/her life had performed right and wrong actions. Among them those who had performed more of wrong actions, first enjoyed heaven and then underwent the suffering in hell, while others exhausted the suffering in hell first and then remained in heaven for a long time.

As all his brothers and *Draupadī* had done some wrong in their life, they had to undergo the suffering first. *Yudhiṣṭhira*, who had lied in order to see *Droṇa* killed, had to pass through the hell first to see his brothers and *Draupadī*. Now that they were freed of their sins, they would all go to heaven. While *Duryodhana* and the people in his evil schemes went to hell, the *Pāṇḍavas* went to heaven and enjoyed the fruits of their dharmic life for eternal years.



II. Fix the mix-up:

A. Vow or Curse? Circle one. (V = Vow; C = Curse)

1. ... to drink *Duśśāsana*'s blood. V C
2. ... to forget at the critical time the chants necessary for the use of divine missiles. V C
3. ... to lose their capacity to keep secrets. V C
4. ... to remain unmarried for life. V C
5. ... to save the life of *Abhimanyu*'s son. V C
6. ... to live for ever without being loved by anyone. V C
7. ... to spare the lives of the *Pāṇḍavas* except that of *Arjuna*. V C
8. ... to become a eunuch and live in the midst of women. V C
9. ... to kill *Jayadratha* before the sunset on the fourteenth day of the war. V C
10. ... to ruin themselves by fighting with each other. V C

B. Who cursed whom in the curses mentioned in game A. Pair up the names given below:

Kṛṣṇa

Womankind

Arjuna

Yādava clan

Yudhiṣṭhira

Urvaśī

Karṇa

Aśvatthāmā

Gāndhārī

Paraśurāma

WHO CURSED?

WHOM?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

