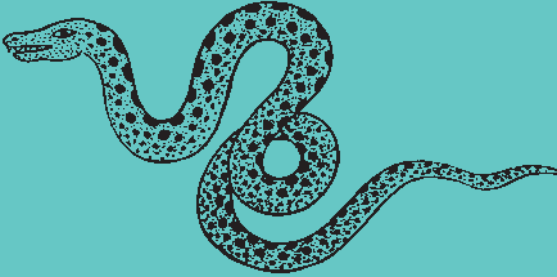


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Maha·bhárata
Book Five
Preparations for War
Volume Two



Translated by
KATHLEEN GARBUTT

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY PRESS & JJC FOUNDATION

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MAHĀBHĀRATA

BOOK FIVE

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VOLUME TWO

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2008

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188-196

SHIKHÁNDINI BECOMES SHIKHÁNDIN

DURYODHANA uvāca:

188.1 **K**ATHAM ŚIKHAṆḌĪ, Gāṅgeya,
kanyā bhūtvā purā tadā
puruṣo 'bhūd, yudhi śreṣṭha?
tan me brūhi, pitā|maha.

BHĪṢMA uvāca:

bhāryā tu tasya, rāj'ēndra, Drupadasya mahī|pateḥ
mahiṣī dayitā hy āsīd, a|putrā ca, viśāṃ pate.
etasminn eva kāle tu Drupado vai mahī|patiḥ
apaty'ārthe, mahā|rāja, toṣayām āsa Śaṅkaram.
asmad|vadh'ārthaṃ niścītya tapo ghoram samāsthitaḥ,
«rte kanyām, mahā|deva, putro me syād! iti» bruvan.
188.5 «bhagavan, putram icchāmi Bhīṣmaṃ praticikīrṣayā!»
ity ukto deva|devena «strī|pumāṃs te bhaviṣyati.
nivartasva, mahī|pāla, n' āitaj jātv anyathā bhavet.»
sa tu gatvā ca nagaram bhāryām idam uvāca ha:
«kṛto yatno mayā, devi, putr'ārthe tapasā mahān†
'kanyā bhūtvā pumān bhāvī, iti' c' ōkto 'smi Śambhunā.
punaḥ punar yācyamāno 'diṣṭam, ity' abravīc Chivaḥ;
'na tad|anyac ca bhavitā, bhavitavyaṃ hi tat tathā.»
tataḥ sā niyatā bhūtvā ṛtu|kāle manasvinī
patnī Drupada|rājasya Drupadam praviveśa ha.
188.10 lebhe garbham yathā|kālam vidhi|dṛṣṭena karmaṇā
Pārśatasya, mahī|pāla, yathā māṃ Nārado 'bravīt.
tato dadhāra sā devī garbham rājīva|locanā;
tām sa rājā priyām bhāryām Drupadaḥ, Kuru|nandana,
putra|snehān mahā|bāhuḥ sukham paryacarat tadā.

DURYÓDHANA said:

HOW DID SHIKHÁNDIN, born originally as a girl, then 188.1
become a man, son of the Ganges, greatest fighter
in war? Tell me, grandfather.

BHISHMA replied:

Lord of kings and earth, King Drúpada's beloved queen had no sons. During this time King Drúpada appeased Shánkara for the sake of children, great sovereign, and, resolved upon my destruction, he practiced horrifying asceticism and prayed, "Great god, may I have a son rather than a daughter! Blessed lord, I want a son to take revenge upon 188.5
Bhishma!"

But he was told by the god of gods, "You will have a child who is male and female. Go back, earth-protector, for it will certainly not be otherwise." So he went back to his city and told his wife: "I have made great effort for a son though asceticism, my queen, and Shambhu told me that I will have a daughter who will become a man. I begged Shiva over and over again, but he said, 'It is fated. What must be will be just so, and not otherwise.'"

The spirited wife of King Drúpada purified herself properly when her time came, and went to Drúpada. She con- 188.10
ceived a child by Párshata, king, at the proper time in the manner prescribed by custom, so Nárada told me. The lotus-eyed queen bore her child in the womb, and long-armed King Drúpada happily fussed over his dear wife, descendant of the Kurus, out of affection for his son.

sarvān abhiprāya|kṛtān bhāry” ālabhata, Kaurava,
 a|putrasya sato rājño Drupadasya mahī|pateḥ.
 yathā|kālaṃ tu sā devī mahiṣī Drupadasya ha
 kanyāṃ pravara|rūpāṃ tu prājāyata, nar’|ādhipa.
 a|putrasya tu rājñāḥ sā Drupadasya manasvinī
 188.15 khyāpayām āsa, rāj’|éndra, «putro hy eṣa mam’ êti» vai.
 tataḥ sa rājā Drupadaḥ pracchannāyā, nar’|ādhipa,
 putravat putra|kāryāṇi sarvāṇi samakārayat,
 rakṣaṇaṃ c’ âiva mantrasya mahiṣī Drupadasya sâ
 cakāra sarva|yatnena, bruvāṇā putra ity uta,
 na ca tām veda nagare kaś cid anyatra Pārṣatāt.

śraddadhāno hi tad vākyam devasy’ âcyuta|tejasah,
 chādayām āsa tām kanyāṃ, pumān iti ca so ’bravīt.
 jāta|karmāṇi sarvāṇi kārayām āsa pārthivaḥ
 puṃvad vidhāna|yuktāni; Śikhaṇḍ” îti ca tām viduḥ.
 188.20 aham ekas tu cāreṇa, vacanān Nāradasya ca,
 jñātavān deva|vākyena, Ambāyās tapasā tathā.

BHĪṢMA uvāca:

189.1 CAKĀRA YATNAṀ Drupadaḥ sutāyāḥ sarva|karmasu,
 tato lekhy’|ādiṣu tathā, śilpeṣu ca, paraṃ|tapa;
 iṣv|astre c’ âiva, rāj’|éndra, Droṇa|śiṣyo babhūva ha.
 tasya mātā, mahā|rāja, rājānaṃ vara|varṇinī
 codayām āsa bhāry”|ārthaṃ kanyāyāḥ putravat tadā.
 tatas tām Pārṣato dṛṣṭvā kanyāṃ samprāpta|yauvanām
 striyaṃ matvā tatas cintām prapede saha bhāryayā.

Káurava, the wife of sonless King Drúpada, the lord of earth, had her every wish granted, and when the time came, Drúpada's goddess queen gave birth to a beautiful daughter, lord of men. Sonless King Drúpada's spirited wife announced that her child was a son, lord of kings. King Drúpada, O lord of men, arranged to have all the necessary ceremonies for sons performed for his secret daughter as though she were a son, and Drúpada's wife protected her counsels, making every effort and proclaiming that her daughter was in fact a son. And no one in the city, barring Párshata, knew that the child was a girl. 188.15

Trusting in the word of the eternally glorious god, the king concealed his daughter and claimed she was male. The king had all the proper and customary birth rites for a boy performed, and people knew her as Shikhándin. I alone knew, through a spy, Nárada's words, the god's words, and Amba's asceticism. 188.20

BHISHMA continued:

DRÚPADA TOOK trouble over every matter concerning his daughter, such as writing and so on and the arts, enemy-scorcher, and she was even a pupil of Drona's in archery, lord of kings. The child's flawlessly complexioned mother, great sovereign, urged the king to see about getting a wife for his daughter, as though she were a boy. Then, when Párshata saw that his daughter was reaching full maturity, it dawned on him that she was, in fact, a woman; and he and his wife became anxious. 189.1

DRUPADA uvāca:

kanyā mam' êyaṃ saṃprāptā yauvanam sōka|vardhini;
mayā pracchādītā c' êyaṃ vacanāc chūla|pāṇinaḥ.

BHĀRY" ōvāca:

189.5 na tan mithyā, mahā|rāja, bhaviṣyati kathañ cana;
trailokya|kartā kasmādd hi vṛthā vaktum ih' ārhati?
yadi te rocate, rājan, vaksyāmi. śṛṇu me vacaḥ.
śrutv" êdānīm prapadyethāḥ svām matim, Pṛṣat'|ātmaja.
kriyatām asya yatnena vidhivad dāra|saṃgrahaḥ.
bhavitā tad|vacaḥ satyam, iti me niścītā matiḥ.

tatas tau niścayaṃ kṛtvā tasmin kārye 'tha daṃpatī
varayām cakratuḥ kanyām Daśārṇ'|ādhipateḥ sutām.
tato rājā Drupado rāja|siṃhaḥ
sarvān rājñāḥ kulataḥ sannisāmya
Dāśārṇakasya nṛ|pates tanū|jām
Śikhaṇḍine varayām āsa dārān.

189.10 Hiraṇyavarm" êti nṛpo yo 'sau Dāśārṇakaḥ smṛtaḥ,
sa ca prādān mahī|pālaḥ kanyām tasmai Śikhaṇḍine,
sa ca rājā Daśārṇeṣu mahān āsīt su|durjayaḥ
Hiraṇyavarmā dur|dharṣā, mahā|seno, mahā|manāḥ.
kṛte vivāhe tu tadā sā kanyā, rāja|sattama,
yauvanaṃ samanuprāptā sā ca kanyā Śikhaṇḍinī.

kṛta|dāraḥ Śikhaṇḍī ca Kāmpilyaṃ punar āgamat.
tataḥ sā veda tām kanyām kañ cit kālam striyaṃ kila.
Hiraṇyavarmaṇaḥ kanyā jñātvā tām tu Śikhaṇḍinīm,
dhātṛiṇām ca sakhinām ca vṛḍḍayānā nyavedayat
kanyām Pañcāla|rājasya sutām tām vai Śikhaṇḍinīm.

DRÚPADA said:

My daughter has matured into a woman, increasing my grief, and I have concealed her at the command of Shiva who carries his trident in hand.

HIS WIFE replied:

It can in no way whatsoever be wrong, great king, for why would the creator of the three worlds speak deceitfully? If it pleases you, king, I will speak. Listen to what I have to say, and when you have heard it you should then do what you think right, son of Príshata. Let our child's marriage duly and carefully be arranged. The god's words will come true. I am sure of it in my heart. 189.5

So, when those two, the master and mistress of the house, had made up their minds on this task, they chose the maiden daughter of the king of Dashárna. Lion-like King Drúpada found out about the lineages of all kings, and chose the daughter of the king of Dashárna to be Shikhándin's bride.

Now, the Dashárnaka king was called Hiránya-varman, and the earth-protector bestowed his daughter upon Shikhándin. King Hiránya-varman was a mighty king in the Dashárna lands: invincible, unassailable, possessed of an enormous army, and high-minded. Once the marriage had taken place, greatest of kings, the girl reached full maturity, as did the lady Shikhándini. 189.10

Once he had married, Shikhándin returned once more to Kampílya, and the wife, so they say, found out after a while that her husband was in fact a woman. When the daughter of Hiránya-varman realized that Shikhándin was in fact Shikhándini, she ashamedly revealed to her nurses

- 189.15 tatas tā, rāja|śārdūla, dhātryo Dāśārnīkās tadā
 jagmur ārtiṃ parāṃ preṣyāḥ, preṣayām āsur eva ca.
 tato Daśārnī|ādhipateḥ preṣyāḥ sarvā nyavedayan
 vipralambhaṃ yathā|vṛttam; sa ca cukrodha pārthivaḥ.
 Śikhaṇḍy api, mahā|rāja, puṃvad rāja|kule tadā
 vijahāra mudā yuktaḥ, strītvam n' āiv' ātirocayan.
 tataḥ katipay'āhasya tac chrutvā, Bharata|rṣabha,
 Hiraṇyavarmā, rāj'ēndra, roṣād ārtiṃ jagāma ha.
 tato Dāśārnīako rājā tīvra|kopa|samanvitaḥ
 dūtaṃ prasthāpayām āsa Drupadasya niveśanam.
 189.20 tato Drupadam āsādyā dūtaḥ Kāñcanavarmaṇaḥ
 eka ek'|āntam utsārya raho vacanam abravīt:

«Dāśārnī|rājo, rājams, tvām idaṃ vacanam abravīt,
 abhiṣaṅgāt prakupito, vipralabdhas tvayā, 'n|agha:

«avamanyase māṃ, nṛ|pate, nūnaṃ dur|mantritaṃ tava,
 yan me kanyāṃ sva|kany'ārthe mohād yācitavān asi!
 tasy' ādya vipralambhasya phalaṃ prāpnuhi, dur|mate!
 eṣa tvāṃ sa|jan'āmātyam uddharāmi! sthiro bhava!» »

BHĪṢMA uvāca:

- 190.1 EVAM UKTASYA dūtena Drupadasya tadā, nṛpa,
 corasy' ēva gṛhītasya na prāvartata bhārātī.
 sa yatnam akarot tīvraṃ sambandhiny anumānane,
 dūtair madhura|saṃbhāṣair «na tad ast' īti» saṃdīśan.

and friends that the child of the Panchála king was in fact a girl, Shikhándini. Tiger-like king, the Dashárnika nurses were then extremely distressed, and they sent word of the subterfuge. 189.15

The messengers all explained the whole deception, just as it had occurred, to the Dashárna king; and he became furious. For his part, O great king, Shikhándin happily behaved like a man in the royal palace, and did not overly highlight his womanhood. But when Hiránya-varman heard a few days later, bull of the Bharatas, he was terribly afflicted with fury, lord of kings.

The Dashárnaka king, filled with acute rage, assigned a messenger to Drúpada's house. Hiránya-varman's messenger approached Drúpada alone, and, taking him aside, he said these words privately: 189.20

"The Dashárna king has been deceived by you and is furious about his humiliation, so he sends this message to you, sinless sovereign:

'You have insulted me, king, and I surely received bad advice from you, for you foolishly begged me for my daughter for the sake of what turns out to be your own daughter! Now reap the fruit of your subterfuge, wicked-minded man! I will annihilate you and your family and advisors! Be ready!'"

BHISHMA continued:

ADDRESSED BY the messenger in this way, Drúpada didn't say a word, king, as though he were a thief caught red-handed. Instead, he made a great effort to conciliate his relation by sending sweet-speaking messengers to assure him 190.1

sa rājā bhūya ev' ātha jñātvā tattvam ath' āgamat,
kany" ēti Pāñcāla|sutam tvaramāṇo viniryayau.

tataḥ saṃpreṣayām āsa mitrāṇām a|mit' |āujasām
duhitur vipralambham taṃ dhātrīṇām vacanāt tadā.

190.5 tataḥ samudayaṃ kṛtvā balānām rāja|sattamaḥ,
abhiyāne matiṃ cakre Drupadaṃ prati, Bhārata.
tataḥ saṃmantrayām āsa mantribhiḥ sa mahī|patiḥ
Hiraṇyavarmā, rāj' |ēndra, Pāñcālyam pārhivam prati.

tatra vai niścitam teṣām abhūd rājñām mah" |ātmanām:
«tathyaṃ bhavati ced etat, kanyā, rājañ, Śikhaṇḍinī,
baddhvā Pañcāla|rājānam ānayaṣyāmahe gr̥ham
anyam rājānam ādhāya Pañcāleṣu nar' |ēsvaram
ghātayaṣyāma nṛ|patiṃ Pāñcālam sa|Śikhaṇḍinam.»

190.10 tat tad" ānṛtam ājñāya punar dūtān nar' |ādhipaḥ
prāsthāpayat Pārṣatāya, «nihanm' |ti sthīro bhava!»

BHĪṢMA uvāca:

sa hi prakṛtyā vai bhītaḥ, kilbiṣī ca nar' |ādhipaḥ,
bhayaṃ tīvram anuprāpto Drupadaḥ pṛthivī|patiḥ.
viśṛjya dūtān Dāsārṇe Drupadaḥ śoka|mūrccitaḥ
sametya bhāryām rahite vākyam āha nar' |ādhipaḥ
bhayena mahat" āviṣṭo, hṛdi śokena c' āhataḥ
Pāñcāla|rājo dayitām mātaram vai Śikhaṇḍinaḥ:

«abhiyāsyati mām kopāt sambandhī su|mahā|balaḥ
Hiraṇyavarmā nṛ|patiḥ karṣamāṇo varūthinīm!

190.15 kim idānīm kariṣyāvo mūḍhau kanyām imām prati?
Śikhaṇḍī kila putras te kany" ēti pariśaṅkitaḥ.

that it was not true. But when the king had the truth confirmed again—that the Panchála prince was in fact a girl—he set out in a hurry.

He sent word to his immeasurably energetic friends about the subterfuge played upon his daughter, trusting the testimony of her nurses. Then, raising his troops, the greatest of kings resolved to attack Drúpada, O Bhárata, and King Hiránya-varman debated with his advisors over means with which to deal with the Panchála king, lord of kings. 190.5

Finally the high-souled kings came to a decision: “If Shikhándin really is a girl, king, then we will tie up the Panchála king and lead him home. We will install another king to be lord over the Panchálas, and we will kill the Panchála king and Shikhándin.”

When he was made aware of their true decision, the lord of men sent messengers to Párshata once more, saying, “I will kill you! Be ready!” 190.10

BHISHMA continued:

Since King Drúpada was both fearful by nature and, in this instance, culpable, the lord of earth was exceptionally scared. King Drúpada, stupefied by grief, sent messengers to Dashárna, and meeting his wife privately the Panchála king, filled with great fear and crushed by the grief in his heart, said to his dear wife, the mother of Shikhándin:

“My incredibly powerful in-law, King Hiránya-varman, is marching against me in fury, dragging an army with him! What will we do about this girl now, fools that we are? Rumor has it that it is suspected that your son Shikhándin is really a girl. Apparently Hiránya-varman, with his allies, 190.15

iti sañcintya yatnena sa|mitraḥ sa|bal'ânugaḥ
 «vañcito 'sm' îti' manvāno mām kil' ôddhartum icchati!

kim atra tathyaṃ, su|śroṇi, mithyā kiṃ? brūhi, śobhane.
 śrutvā tvattaḥ śubhaṃ vākyam saṃvidhāsyaṃy ahaṃ tathā.
 ahaṃ hi saṃśayaṃ prāpto, bālā c' êyam Śikhāndinī,
 tvam ca, rājñi, mahat kṛcchraṃ saṃprāptā, vara|varṇini.

sā tvam sarva|vimokṣāya tattvam ākhyāhi pṛcchataḥ;
 tathā vidadhyāṃ, su|śroṇi, kṛtyam āśu, śuci|smite.

190.20 Śikhaṇḍini ca mā bhais tvam, vidhāsye tatra tattvataḥ
 kṛpay" āhaṃ, var'|ārohe, vañcitaḥ putra|dharmataḥ;
 mayā Dāsārṇako rājā vañcitaḥ sa mahī|patiḥ.
 tad ācakṣva, mahā|bhāge, vidhāsye tatra yadd hitam.»

jānatā hi nar'|êndreṇa khyāpan'|ārthaṃ parasya vai
 prakāsaṃ coditā devī pratyuvāca mahī|patim.

BHĪṢMA uvāca:

191.1 TATAḤ ŚIKHAṆḌINO mātā yathā|tattvam, nar'|ādhipa,
 ācacakṣe, mahā|bāho, bhartre kanyāṃ Śikhaṇḍinīm.

«a|putrayā mayā, rājan, sa|patnīnām bhayād idam
 kanyā Śikhaṇḍinī jātā puruṣo vai niveditā.
 tvayā c' âiva, nara|śreṣṭha, tan me prīty" ânumoditam,
 putra|karma kṛtaṃ c' âiva kanyāyāḥ, pārthiva'|rṣabha.
 bhāryā c' oḍhā tvayā, rājan, Dāsārṇ'|ādhipateḥ sutā,
 mayā ca pratyabhihitam deva|vāky'|ārtha|darśanāt,

forces, and followers, is utterly convinced and wants to kill me, believing that he has been tricked!

What is true and what is false, shapely-hipped lady? Tell me, beautiful lady. When I have heard your fine words I will implement your advice. I am certainly in danger, and so too is the child Shikhándini. You, my queen, are also plunged into great misfortune, flawlessly complexioned lady.

Tell me the truth when asked, so that everyone may escape their doom. I will do what must swiftly be done, shapely-hipped and sweet-smiling lady. Don't worry about Shikhándin, for I will act upon the truth of the matter, and with compassion. I was deceived by means of the lawful rights performed for a son, shapely-hipped lady, and so I inadvertently deceived the Dashárnaka king and earth-lord. So tell me, noble lady, how I may act for the good.” 190.20

Though the lord of men did, in fact, know, he urged her publicly in order to denounce someone else. The queen answered the king.

BHISHMA CONTINUED:

SHIKHÁNDIN'S MOTHER told her husband the precise truth about her daughter Shikhándin, long-armed lord of men. 191.1

“Since I had no sons, king, and I was afraid of the other wives, I had it made known that Shikhándin of dubious gender was a boy, though she was born a girl. You approved this because you loved me, greatest of men, and the rituals for a son were performed on a daughter, bull-like king. You married her to the Dashárna king's daughter, and I ap-

«kanyā bhūtvā pumān bhāv” ity» evaṃ c’ āitad upekṣitam.»

191.5 etac chrutvā Drupado Yajñasenaḥ
sarvaṃ tattvaṃ mantravidbhyo nivedya
mantraṃ rājā mantrayām āsa, rājan,
yathālyuktaṃ rakṣaṇe vai prajānām.
sambandhakaṃ c’ āiva samarthya tasmin
Dāsārṇake vai nṛ|patau, nar’|ēndra,
svayaṃ kṛtvā vipralambhaṃ yathāvan
mantr’|āik’|āgro niścayaṃ vai jagāma.

sva|bhāva|guptaṃ nagaram āpat|kāle tu, Bhārata,
gopayām āsa, rāj’|ēndra, sarvataḥ samalaṃkṛtam,
ārtiṃ ca paramām rājā jagāma saha bhāryayā
Dāsārṇa|patinā sārḍhaṃ virodhe, Bharata’|rṣabha.
«kathaṃ sambandhinā sārḍhaṃ
na me syād vighraho mahān?»

iti sañcintya manasā
devatām arcayat tadā.

191.10 taṃ tu drṣṭvā tadā, rājan, devī deva|paraṃ tadā
arcāṃ prayujñānam atho, bhāryā vacanam abravīt:
«devānām pratipattiś ca satyaṃ sādhu|matā satām.
kim u duḥkh’|ārṇavaṃ prāpya? tasmād arcayatām gurūn,
daivatāni ca sarvāṇi pūjyantām bhūri|dakṣiṇam,
agnayaś c’ āpi hūyantām Dāsārṇa|pratiśedhane.

alyuddhena nivṛttiṃ ca manasā cintaya, prabho.
devatānām prasādena sarvaṃ etad bhaviṣyati.
mantribhir mantritaṃ sārḍhaṃ tvayā, pṛthula|locana,
purasy’ āsy’ ā|vināśāya yac ca, rājams, tathā kuru.

191.15 daivaṃ hi mānuṣ’|ōpetaṃ bhṛṣaṃ sidhyati, pārthiva,

proved it, looking to the meaning of Rudra's prophecy that the girl would become a man. I overlooked the problem."

Having heard this, King Drúpada Yajña-sena explained the entire truth of the matter to his advisors and took counsel, my king, as to the best course for the protection of his citizens. Lord of kings, he judged that the tie of kinship with the Dashárnaka king remained intact, despite the fact that he himself had cheated him, so he came to a decision, singlemindedly set on his counsel. 191.5

Though the city had natural protection for times of disaster, Bhárata, he defended it by girding it all round, lord of kings. The king and his wife fell into the deepest depression over their quarrel with the king of Dashárna, bull of the Bharatas. Drúpada worshipped the gods in his mind as he pondered how he could avoid large-scale hostilities against a relative.

As the queen watched him absorbed with the gods and busy worshipping them, his wife addressed him, king, saying: 191.10

"Good men certainly regard observances for the gods as excellent. How much more so when sunk in an ocean of troubles? Therefore worship your gurus, honor all the gods with rich rewards, and make offerings into the fire to ward off Dashárna.

Lord, ponder in your mind how to keep him back without resorting to war. Everything will turn out fine, by the grace of the gods. Large-eyed king, act according to your counsels with your advisors, to prevent the destruction of the city. Certainly, when fate is assisted by human exertion, success is great, king, but when the two are in opposition 191.15

paraspara|virodhādd hi siddhir asti na c' āitayoḥ.
tasmād vidhāya nagare vidhānaṃ sacivaiḥ saha
arcayasva yathā|kāmaṃ daivatāni, viśāṃ pate!»

evaṃ saṃbhāṣamāṇau tau dr̥ṣṭvā śoka|parāyaṇau
Śikhaṇḍinī tadā kanyā vr̥ḍit' ēva tapasvinī.

tataḥ sā cintayām āsa, «mat|kṛte duḥkhitāv ubhau
imāv, iti» tataś cakre matiṃ prāṇa|vināśane.

evaṃ sā niścayaṃ kṛtvā bhṛṣaṃ śoka|parāyaṇā
nirjagāma gṛhaṃ tyaktvā gahanaṃ nirjanaṃ vanam

191.20 yakṣeṇa' rddhimatā, rājan, Sthūṇākaraṇena pālitaṃ.

tad|bhayād eva ca jano visarjayati tad vanam.

tatra ca Sthūṇa|bhavanaṃ sudhā|mṛttika|lepanam,
lāj'ōllāpika|dhūm'|ādhyam, ucca|prākāra|toranaṃ.

tat praviśya Śikhaṇḍī sā Drupadasy' ātmajā, nṛpa,
ana|śnātā bahu|tithaṃ śarīram udaśoṣayat.

darśayām āsa tāṃ yakṣaḥ Sthūṇo mār̥dava|saṃyutaḥ,
«kim artho 'yaṃ tav' āraṃbhah? kariṣye. brūhi mā|ciraṃ!»

«a|śakyam, iti» sā yakṣaṃ punaḥ punar uvāca ha.

«kariṣyām' iti» vai kṣipraṃ pratyuvāc' ātha guhyakaḥ.

191.25 «dhan'|ēśvarasy' ānucaro varado 'smi, nṛp'|ātmaje,

a|deyam api dāsyāmi. brūhi yat te vivakṣitaṃ.»

tataḥ Śikhaṇḍī tat sarvaṃ akhileṇa nyavedayat
tasmai yakṣa|pradhānāya Sthūṇākaraṇāya, Bhārata.

to each other then there is assuredly no success. Therefore, worship the gods as much as you wish, lord of earth; but also act appropriately in the best interest of the city with your advisors!”

When the maiden Shikhándini saw her parents talking, filled with grief, the austere girl was ashamed. Thinking it was her fault that they were both miserable, she made up her mind to end her life. With her decision made, she was greatly occupied with her grief, and she left her home and went to the dense, uninhabited forest.

It was protected by a rich *yaksha* named Sthuna·karna, 191.20 king, and people deserted the forest for fear of him. Sthuna’s house stood there, smeared with whitewashed clay, with a high wall and gateway, and rich with smoke from toasted rice cakes. Shikhándin, Drúpada’s daughter, entered the forest, king, and, fasting for many days, she desiccated her body.

The *yaksha* Sthuna, filled with kindness, revealed himself to the girl, saying, “What goal are you trying to achieve? I will accomplish it. Tell me immediately!” But she kept replying to the *yaksha*, time and time again, saying: “It is impossible.” The *gúhyaka* quickly insisted, “I will do it! I am 191.25 a follower of Kubéra the lord of wealth, and I am a granter of wishes, princess. I will grant the ungrantable. Tell me what you want to say.”

So Shikhándin explained everything in detail to that chief *yaksha*, Sthuna·karna, O Bhárata.



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