

RAMAYANA

PART 6



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PART 6 KISHKINDHA EPISODE

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Rama and Lakshmana resumed their journey and after crossing the Pampa Lake, they came to Mount Rishyamook. All of a sudden, a Brahmana appeared before them and spoke in a very humble voice, "You look strangers in this region. Where do you hail from?" "Why do you want to know our identity, O Brahmana? After all, what do you aim at?" retorted Lakshmana.

"I do have a purpose in knowing your identity, O Warriors! A very noble and saintly Vanara, Sugreeva by name, resides here on this hill. He has been exiled from his homeland by his powerful brother Bali, the local king. He is on bad days indeed. I want to know whether you are looking for Sugreeva," argued the Brahmana. "Certainly, O holy man! We want to see him. Can you guide us to him?" asked Ram. "Why not? I can personally escort you both to his presence, but I will do so, only when I have known fully about you," replied the Brahmana.



Rama, then, introduced himself to the Brahmana and Lakshmana related the entire story starting from Rama's exile to Sita's abduction. Then expressing his doubt, Lakshmana said, "You do not seem to be what you look. A person who has not studied the Rigveda, who hasn't practised the teachings of the Yajurveda, who has not gone through the Samveda cannot speak such a refined language. So, please be kind enough to reveal your true identity."

Hearing these words, the Brahmana folded his hands and said, "Your guess is absolutely correct, O Lakshmana. I am Hanumana, a Minister of Sugreeva and I have been sent by him to get your secret, *i.e.* to ascertain that you are his brother Bali's spies or not. So, I had to appear before you in the guise of a Brahmana." Saying so, Hanumana came to his real form and lay prostrate at Rama's feet.



Now Hanumana narrated the woeful story of Sugreeva to both the brothers and said, "Our king Sugreeva is also living in exile. His elder brother Bali did gross injustice to him. He forced him to leave his Capital, Kishkindha, and also usurped his Queen. So, Sugreeva wants to extend a hand of friendship towards you."

"All right ; lead us to your king, then," retorted Rama.

Hanumana, then, disclosed two ways that led to Sugreeva's abode. One of the ways was very long but easy while the other was very short but very difficult. Then, he seated both the brothers on his shoulders and said, "Don't be amazed, dear Lakshmana. I have a boon that enables me to change myself to whatever form I like."



Hanumana began to fly towards Mount Rishyamook with both the brothers on his shoulders. On the way, he showed them plants, laden with flowers, rapidly flowing waters of brooks, caves, chief mountain, peaks and charming valleys. Also, he showed them lakes filled with garlic-coloured waters with half-bloomed buds in them. Cranes, swans, water-fowls and several other water-birds were frolicking in water. Soft grass-eating wild deer were either grazing soft blades of grass or were resting after having eaten grass to their fill.

Here and there were seen Vanara warriors with gigantic muscular bodies.

One of them was Angad, the son of Bali. He was gazing at the movements of Hanumana with a keen sight.



Leaving Rama and Lakshmana at the abode of Sugreeva on Mount Rishyamook, Hanumana himself proceeded to Malayachal to inform Sugreeva of the arrival of both the Koshala princes. Reaching there, he said, "My Lord ! Rama, known for his indomitable courage and invincible warriorship, has reached your abode along with his brother Lakshmana. Both of them are the descendants of Ikshvaku, the Great."

Then, Hanumana came to Rama and took both the brothers to his master Sugreeva. Then, introducing them to Sugreeva, he said, "They are the sons of King Dashratha of Ayodhya. Rama is known for his dutifulness. He has come to this forest to fulfil the promise of his father. When they were staying at Panchvati in the Dandak Forest, Ravana, the ruler of Lanka, abducted Rama's wife Sita in their absence. During the course of their search for her, they have reached here and want to make friends with you."



Having heard what Hanumana had told, Sugreeva greeted both the brothers and entertained them in a befitting manner. Then, he said affectionately, "I am a mere Vanara while you are men. It is so kind of you to extend a hand of friendship towards me. I am convinced that I will be the gainer as a result of this friendly bond."

Rama felt highly delighted to hear Sugreeva's words and he embraced him. Describing his sad tale to Rama, tears welled up in Sugreeva's eyes and he said, "My elder brother Bali has turned me out of his kingdom and usurped my wife too. I am residing here in utter fright and embarrassment. So, assure me of your help so that I may be able to shed all fear and worry."



Hanuman made a fire by rubbing two pieces of stone together with a view to giving the friendship between Rama and Sugreeva a sound footing. Then worshipping the god of fire with flowers, he placed it between the two would-be friends. Rama and Sugreeva took oaths of true friendship while going round this sacred fire.

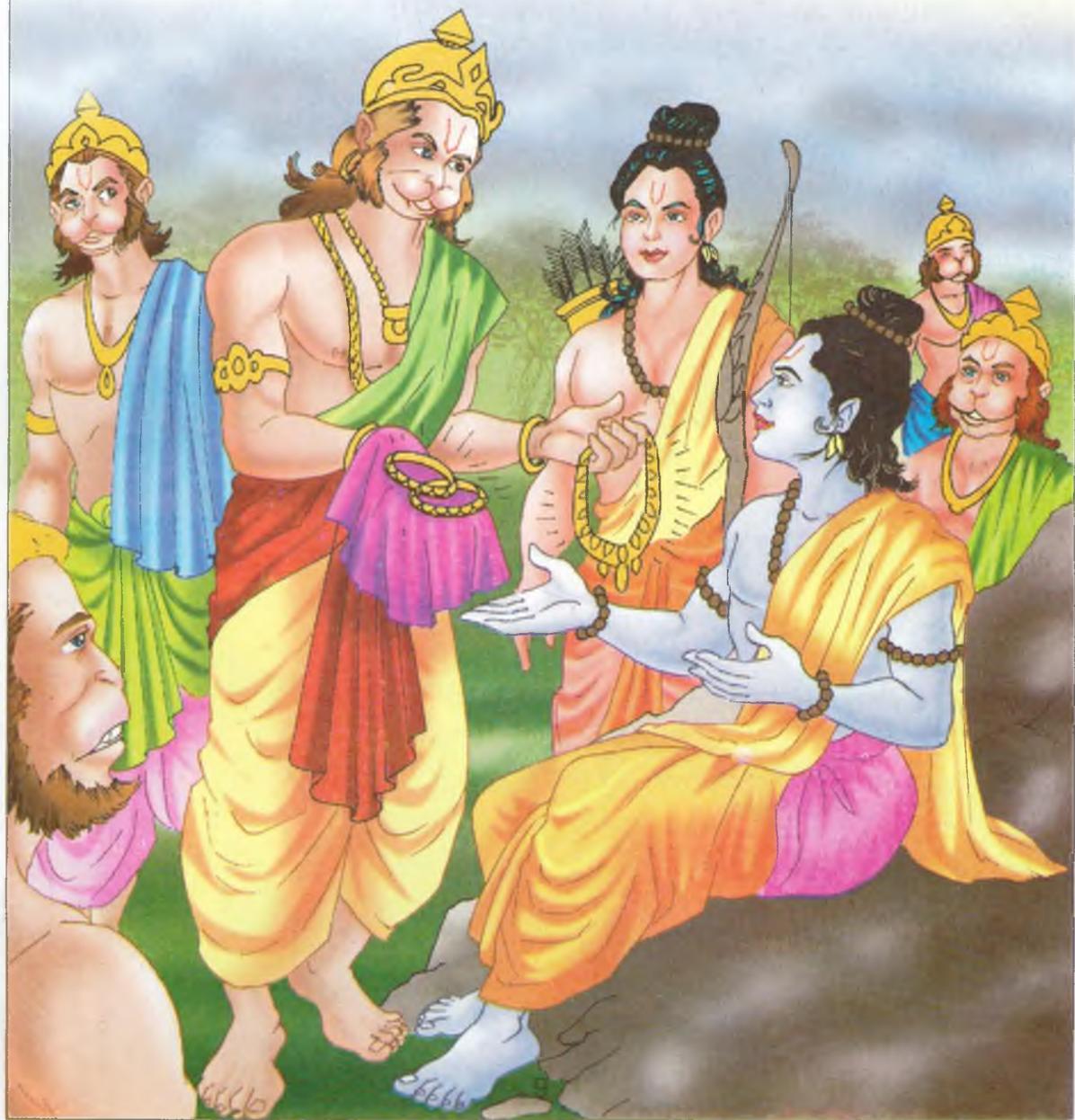
The ceremony having been performed, Sugreeva said to Rama delightfully, "We shall stand by each other through thick and thin."

Rama felt overjoyed to hear these words and said, "O King of Vanaras ! I believe that a true friend always does good to his friends. I take a pledge before this sacred fire that I shall kill Bali, the usurper of your throne and wife."

Rama's words sent a wave of bliss in Sugreeva's mind and his face bloomed like a flower.



Hearing Rama's assurance, Sugreeva said to Rama, "Friend ! Hanumana has told me your woeful story. I too take an oath to find out your Queen Sita. So, I would request you to shed the grief of separation from your spouse." Then, Sugreeva started narrating the happening of a few days back, "One day I saw that a fearful demon was carrying away a woman forcibly. Now I am convinced that she must be Sita and none else, because bewailing bitterly, she was calling out the names Rama and Lakshmana. Seeing me, she threw her ornaments they are still with me. I'll be back with them in no time." As soon as Rama and Lakshmana saw the ornaments, they recognised them.



Next day, in accordance with Rama's pledge, Sugreeva and his men made for Kishkindha and set up their camp in a dense forest near the town. Directed by Rama, Sugreeva went to Bali's place and challenged him for a duel. Though Bali beat Sugreeva in the first round of the duel, yet he did not give up because he was sure that Rama would certainly kill Bali.

Rama, standing behind a big tree, aimed at Bali again and again, but he could not succeed in shooting an arrow. So, Sugreeva badly defeated by Bali came back to Rama and said, "Friend ! Bali kept beating me and you kept looking at us. I had told you that Bali is another name for death." "Sugreeva ! both of you have so similar faces that I could not locate Bali. So, I did not shoot the arrow," retorted Rama.





Rama put a garland round Sugreeva's neck and said, "This garland will help me to locate you easily. So, I'll not be confused this time."

Sugreeva replied, "Friend ! he has come out victorious in many a battle. He always aims at a win and truly speaking, he has never seen a defeat so far. He has a flair for battles indeed."

"You are right, friend. You need not worry this time. Go once again and challenge Bali for a duel," said Rama assuringly.

Seeing Sugreeva coming towards him, Bali's eyes became red in anger and brandishing a fist, he said to Sugreeva, I will do away with you with only one blow." Saying so, he attacked Sugreeva.

Sugreeva did not lag behind. So, both the brothers got engaged into a fierce scuffle. Just then Rama shot an arrow at Bali who having been hit, fell down with a thud.

Rama accompanied by Lakshmana now went near Bali and placed his head in his lap.

Bali asked Rama, “Have you got some credit by fatally wounding me like that ? You have almost killed me in a deceptive manner. It won’t bring you any laurel. I have done you no harm. Why, after all, did you give me a death-blow ?”

Bali entrusted his son Angad and wife Tara to the care of Sugreeva and Rama before breathing his last.





After Bali's death, Sugreeva was declared king of Kishkindha and Bali's son Angad was appointed his heir-apparent. Hanuman asked Rama to participate in the auspicious ceremony but Rama refused to go to Kishkindha saying, "I cannot enter any village or town till my exile comes to an end. So, take Lakshmana with you and ask him to perform the ceremony of the Coronation."

Sugreeva, along with Angad and his five Ministers reached Kishkindha and they were received with open arms by everyone.

Then, a golden throne was placed on a stage decorated with flowers and valuable velvety sheets. Sugreeva was seated on it and Lakshmana, after putting a *tilak* on his forehead, placed the Crown on Sugreeva's head.

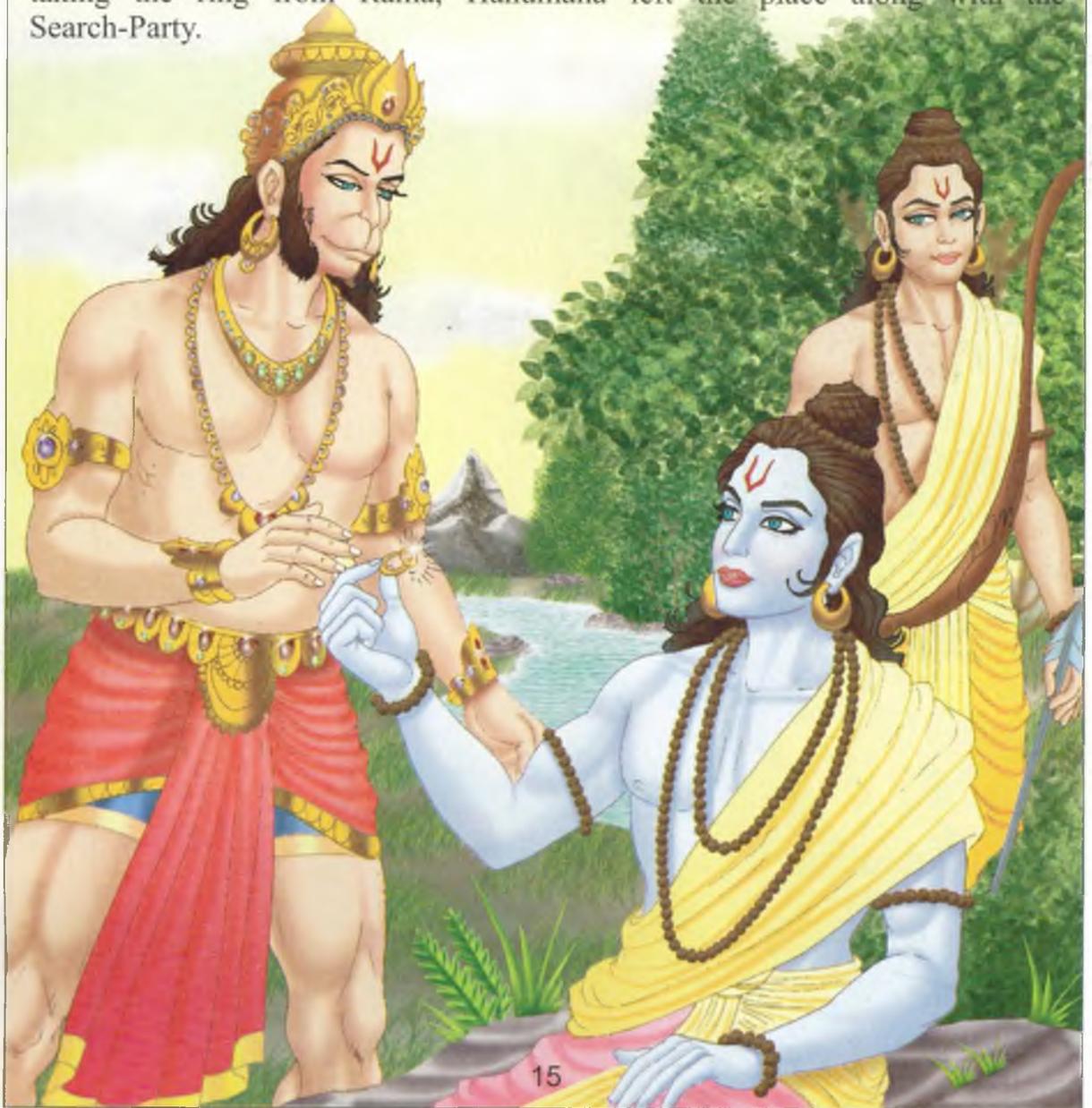
Sugreeva, having his throne restored, indulged in pleasures and forgot the promise given to Rama. Seeing this, Hanumana went to Sugreeva and reminding him of the word given by him to Rama, he said, “My Lord ! all this stately grandeur is here only because of Rama. It is a pity that you have forgotten him—your dearest friend. Be ready to fulfil your promise and help him in tracing his wife Sita.”

Sugreeva’s eyes opened and he got frightened and said, “Hanuman ! Pleasure had made me blind and I forgot my promise. Send our men in all directions so that we may find out Sita as early as possible and be able to inform Rama of it.” Hearing this Hanumana left the palace and collected a number of select men to be put on the job of tracing Sita. Then he read out to them the order of the Vanara King.



Sugreeva with all his Ministers, came to Rama. Seeing them, Rama smiled and said, "I love you like my brother Bharata, O Sugreeva. I seek your help for tracing my wife, Sita." Hearing this, Sugreeva called Sujan, Angad, Jambvant, Hanuman, Nala and Neel to him and said, "All of you must go towards the South and look for Sita everywhere." Before the Search-Party left, Rama gave his ring to Hanumana and said in a humble voice, "Take this ring. Seeing it, Sita will at once believe that you are my messenger."

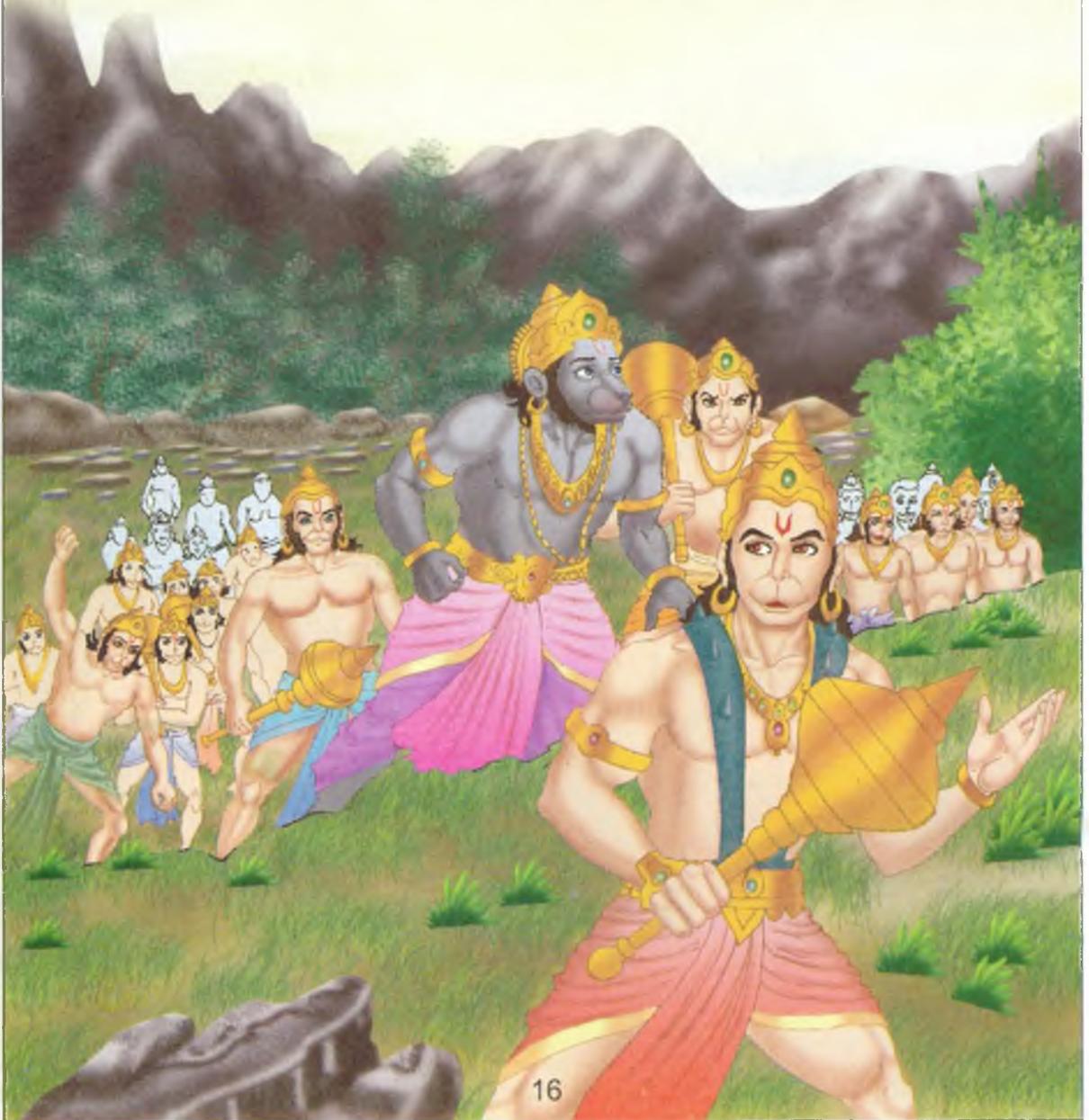
"Bless me, O Lord, so that I may be successful." Saying these words and taking the ring from Rama, Hanumana left the place along with the Search-Party.



Receiving the order of Sugreeva and getting proper instructions from Hanumana, the selected party left Kishkindha and they scattered in different directions. Each of them was enthusiastic to have the credit of tracing Sita.

Sugreeva's men began to look for Sita in forests, towns and the Capitals of various kingdoms. They had to face untold suffering in doing this hard job. But they did not lose heart.

The dense forests around the Vindhya Range were not easily penetrable. So, it was a dangerous job to cross these forests in order to get to South India.



Ordered by Sugreeva, Hanumana accompanied Angad and crossed over to South India. They conducted a thorough search for Sita, but with no result. Then suddenly, they saw Sampati, Jatayu's brother, who was sitting on the branch of a tree gazing at them.

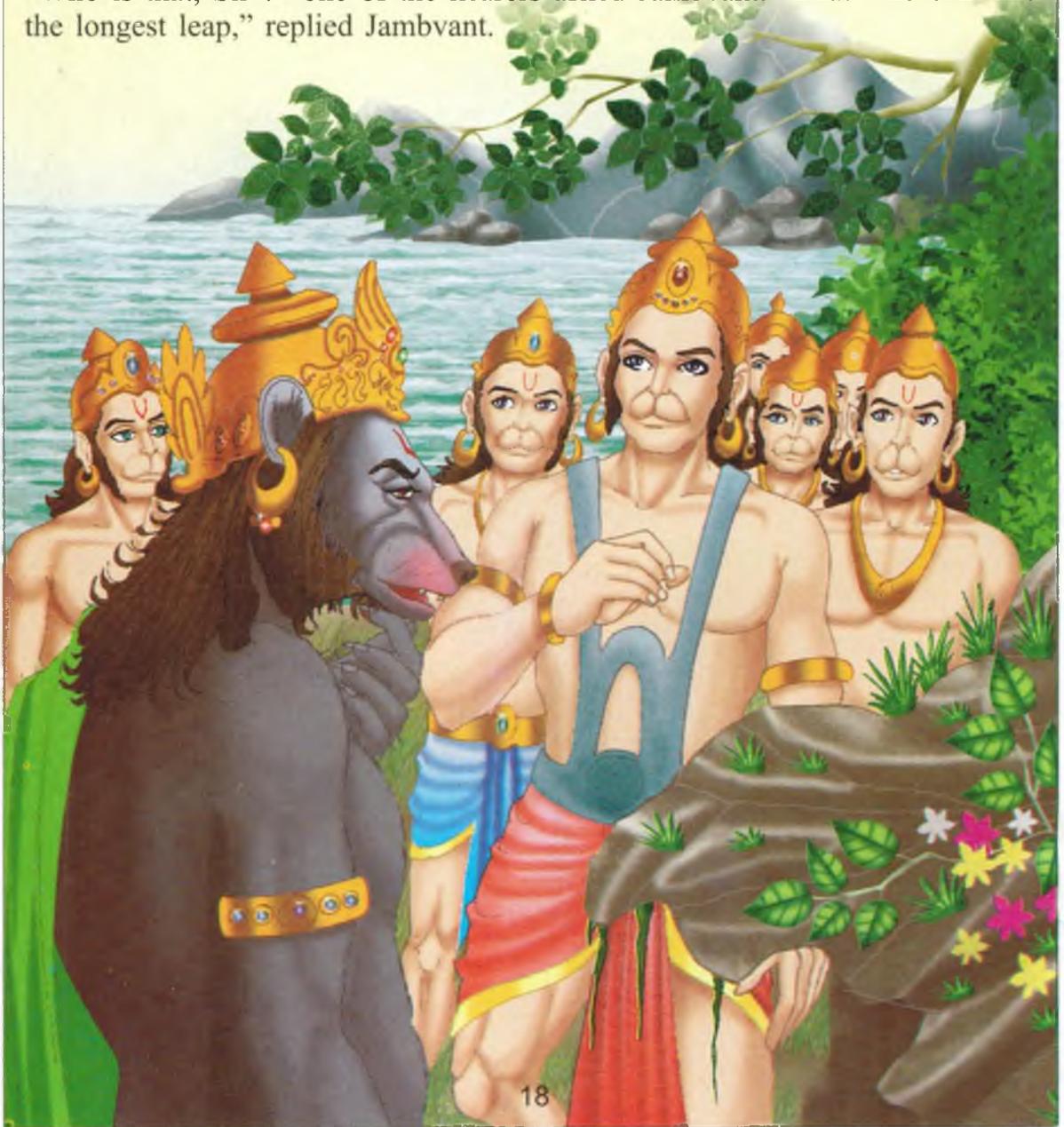
Sampati asked Hanumana, "Are you looking for Sita ? I have seen Ravana carrying her to her island—Lanka."

Having learnt this, the Search-Party advanced towards the ocean in the south. But the sight of the raging waves of the endless ocean dampened their spirits. They realised that it was almost impossible for them to cross the ocean and reach Lanka.



As mentioned above, the sight of the vast sea had thrown cold water on the spirits of the Search-Party. They all sat dejected on the sea-shore. One member of the Search-Party said, "This ocean stands between us and Lanka. How shall we cross it after all ?" "Quite impossible ! we can never cross this sea," said the other. Then Jambvant said, "We must find some way to get across the sea. I believe one of us can leap over the sea and reach Lanka to settle scores with Ravana."

"Who is that, Sir ?" one of the hearers asked Jambvant. "That who can take the longest leap," replied Jambvant.



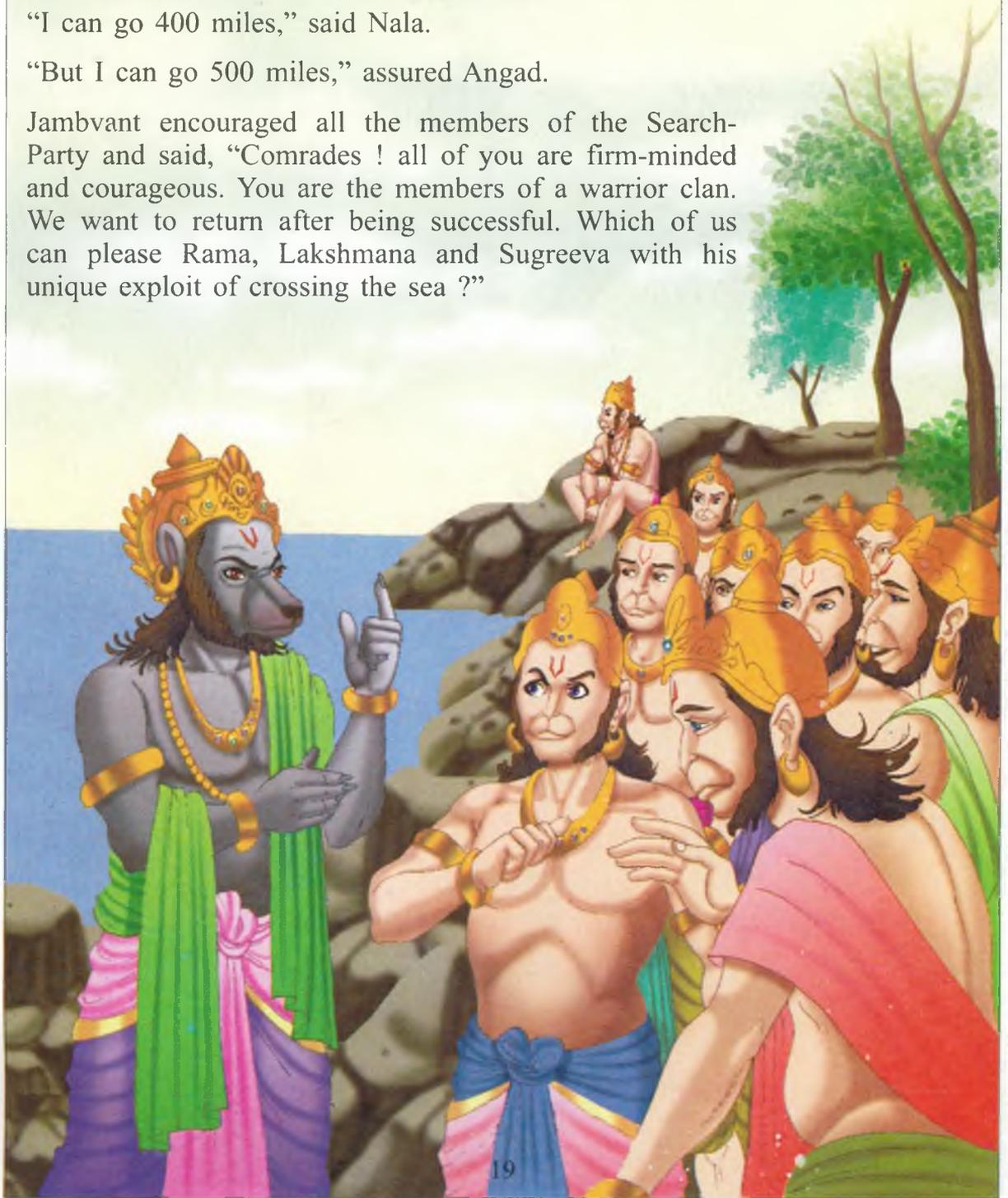
Jambvant collected all the members of the Search-Party and asked them, "Let me know how far each of you can leap."

Neel replied, "I can leap over a distance of 300 miles."

"I can go 400 miles," said Nala.

"But I can go 500 miles," assured Angad.

Jambvant encouraged all the members of the Search-Party and said, "Comrades ! all of you are firm-minded and courageous. You are the members of a warrior clan. We want to return after being successful. Which of us can please Rama, Lakshmana and Sugreeva with his unique exploit of crossing the sea ?"



But none of the Search-Party was strong enough to do the needful. Only Hanumana had the calibre to do it. So, Jambvant went to him and said, "Hanumana ! only you can do this difficult job, I believe. Why are you silent then ? Are you not aware of your capacity and strength ?"

But Hanumana kept quiet.

Jambvant once again incited Hanuman and said, "You are as strong as Sugreeva and as brilliant as Rama and Lakshmana. You are the strongest, the wisest of all the Vanaras and you are full of immense patience too. Why don't you offer yourself for the job of crossing the ocean ?"



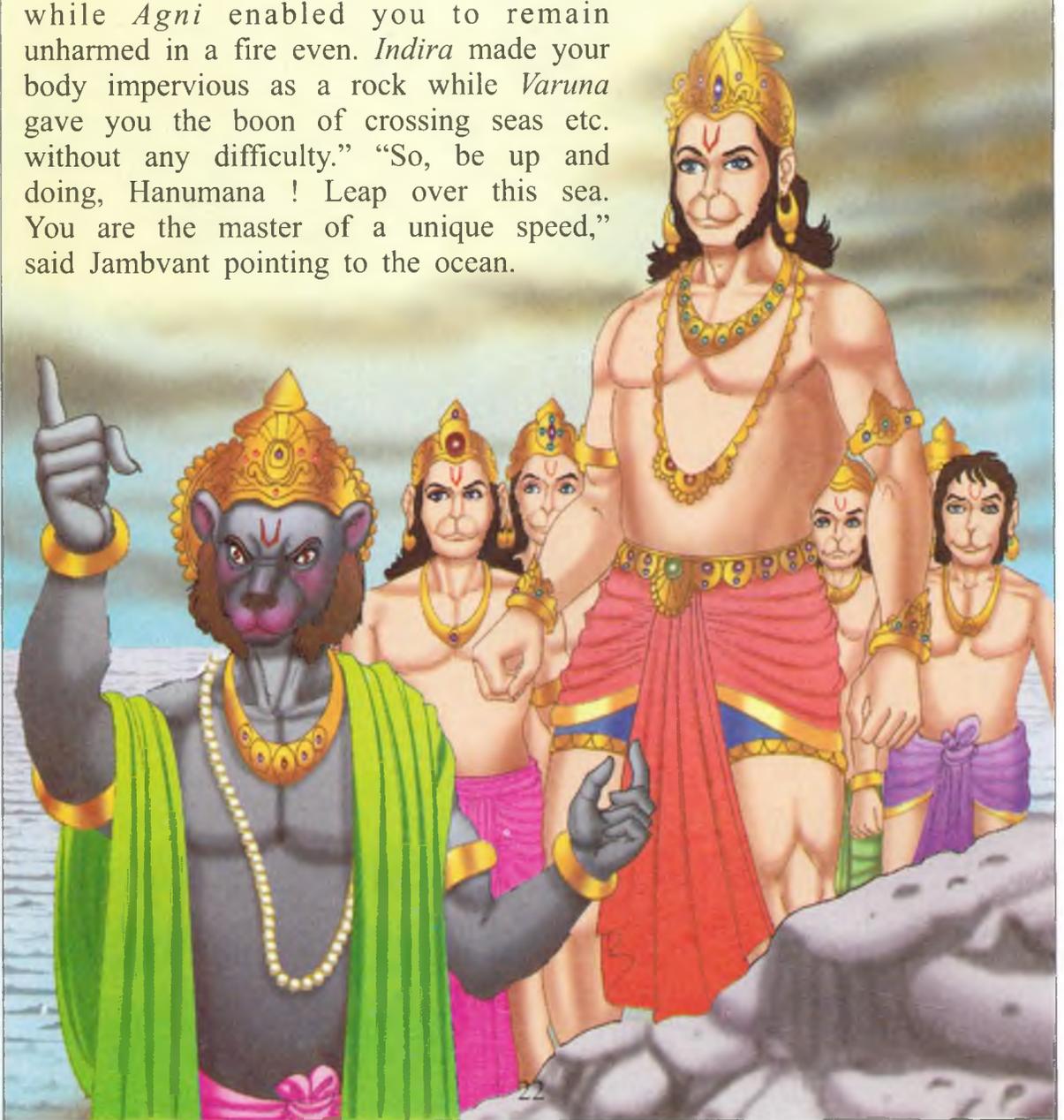


But Hanuman remained unmoved.

Jambvant then related a story of Hanuman's childhood, "Once you were playing in the lap of your mother—Anjana. Seeing the crimson coloured rising sun, you took him for a ripe fruit and jumped into the sky with a view to catching it. As soon as you spread your hand to grab the Sun, Lord Indra got enraged and he threw his Vajra at you. It made you unconscious and you fell down back on the ground. Your father—Wind-god—could not tolerate it and the wind came to a stand-still. All the three worlds were going to be finished. The gods, then, approached Lord Shiva who consoled them and suggested to them, "Let us all go to the Wind-god and request him to be kind."

“All the gods went to the Wind-god and said, “Your son swallowed the Sun and brought the winds to a halt. All the three worlds are going to finish. Be kind enough to let the winds blow so that no one dies. It is sure to bring fame to you, Sir. Not only this, we are ready to grant you a boon of your own choice.” The Wind-god agreed and said, “O gods ! bless my son so that he may possess undying fame and invincible strength and also make him a sea of wisdom as well.”

“Then, all the gods showered boons on you. *Brahma* gave you his power while *Agni* enabled you to remain unharmed in a fire even. *Indira* made your body impervious as a rock while *Varuna* gave you the boon of crossing seas etc. without any difficulty.” “So, be up and doing, Hanumana ! Leap over this sea. You are the master of a unique speed,” said Jambvant pointing to the ocean.



Hearing Jambvant's words, Hanumana got up and said, "Jambvant ! I shall fly to Lanka and return after tracing Rama's wife Sita." Saying so, Hanumana assumed a gigantic form and leapt into the sky.

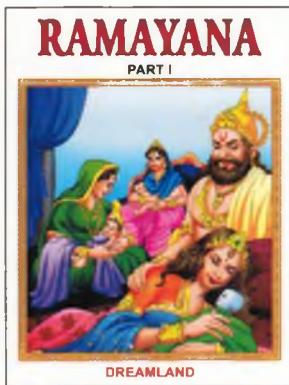
Seeing Hanumana leaping into the sky, tears welled up in Angad's eyes and he said, "We are between the devil and the deep sea. We have not been able to trace Sita. If we go back unsuccessful, King Sugreeva will behead us all."

Hearing Angad's words, all the members of the Search-Party spoke in one voice, "We will not return to Kishkindha until and unless we get some news about Sita. Hanuman has gone to Lanka to trace Sita. We must stay here and wait for him till he returns."

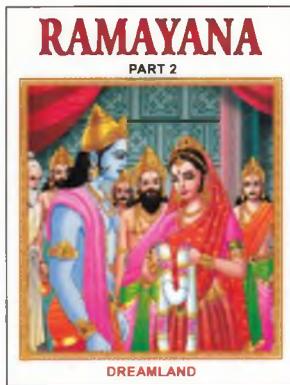


Hanuman flew at the top of his speed over the sea. Seeing his courage and speed, all the Vanaras began to dance with joy. Praising Hanuman in various ways, they began to shout in joy. They said, “O Brave Hanumana ! you have relieved us of our sorrow. We, all the members of the Search-Party, crave for your success in the mission that you have undertaken. Each of us will keep standing on one leg till you return because our safety depends on your success in tracing Sita. May you be crowned with success ! Seeing Hanuman flying fast over the sea and seeing Angad in deep sorrow, Jambvant started cheering him up through funny tales.

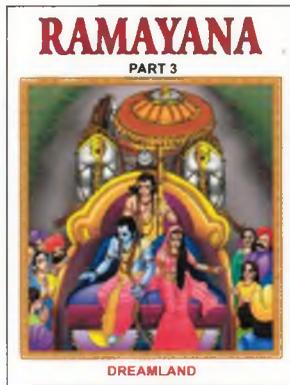




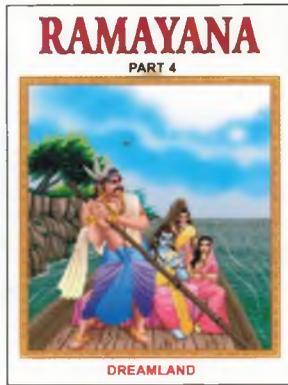
Childhood Episode-I



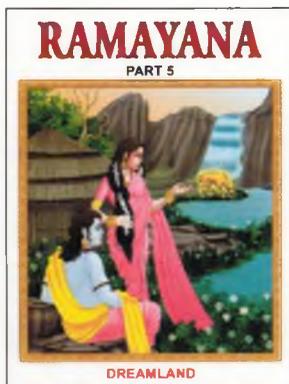
Childhood Episode-II



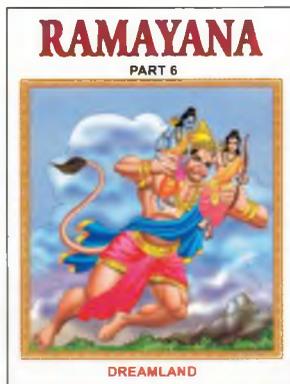
Ayodhya Episode-I



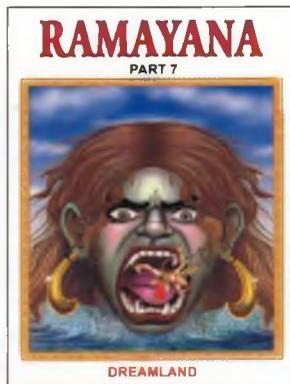
Ayodhya Episode-II



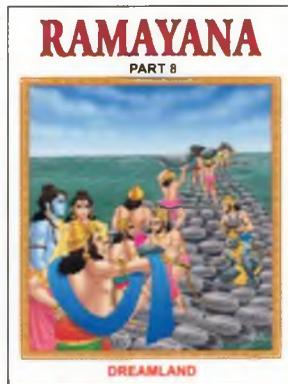
Forest Episode



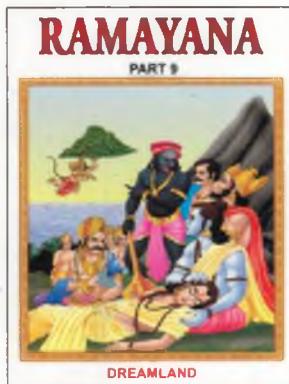
Kishkindha Episode



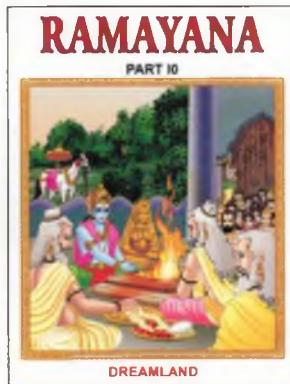
Fascinating Episode



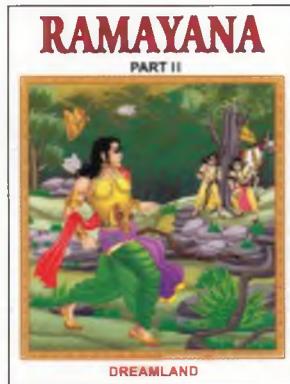
Battle Episode-I



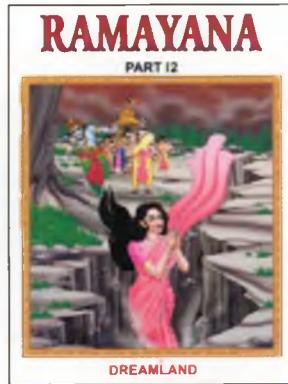
Battle Episode-II



Uttara Episode



Lava-Kusha Episode-I



Lava-Kusha Episode-II



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