

Summary of Vanaparva

There are 22 sections in this parva with 11971 verses in this parva.

1. Aranyaparva

In this section there are 10 chapters and 381 verses. Questioned by Janamejaya about the twelve year stay of the Pandavas in the forests, Vaisampayana told him that even the citizens wanted to accompany the Pandavas when the latter set out for woods. But Yudhishtira expressed his gratefulness and sent them back. After the departure of the people, the Pandavas spent that night near a big banyan tree called Pramana, on the banks of river Ganga. A few Brahmins were with them. Even though Yudhishtira did not agree, they announced that they would stay with him, and they made their own arrangements for their food and others. Yudhishtira who did not want the Brahmins to face hardships for his sake became sad. Then Saunaka, who was an expert in Samkhya and Karmayoga, advised him on ways to achieve physical and mental peace, and said that the Siddhas would attain their desired objects with the help of their power of tapas. He advised him to resort to tapas in order to realize his desires.

As Saunaka said so, Dharmaraja approached his priest Dhaumya and told him that those Brahmins wanted to stay with him. But he was unable to feed them then. And he asked for his guidance as to what he should do then. Dhaumya replied that the Sun god is the food that sustains the life of all beings. He advised him to take resort to him. Having followed his advice, Yudhishtira worshipped the Sun and obtained the inexhaustible vessel Akshayapatra from him. Then the Pandavas repaired to the Kamyaka forest along with the Brahmins and priest Dhaumya.

After the departure of the Pandavas for woods, Dhritarashtra called for Vidura and enquired of future course of action. Then the latter advised him to take the path of Dharma. But Dhritarashtra considered that the behaviour of Vidura was not helpful to his sons and chided him saying that he understood by that attitude of Vidura that he was not his advisor, as he was not giving a proper advice. He gave him the choice of either leaving them or staying with them and went inside the palace. Vidura said that the destruction of the family was certain, and went to the Pandavas. He told Dharmaraja how Dhritarashtra behaved with him and gave a piece of advice to Dharmaraja. The latter assured him that he would follow Dharma. After Vidura left him, Dhritarashtra repented and sent Sanjaya to bring him back. Vidura took leave of Dharmaraja, and went to Hastinapura. Dhritarashtra asked for his forgiveness for his rude behaviour. And addressing each other in apologetic speeches both felt themselves greatly happy.

Duryodhana was unhappy over the return of Vidura. Dussasana, Sakuni, Karna and he discussed among themselves, and having resolved to kill the Pandavas, got into their chariots, and rode out of the city together. Vyasa, who saw that through his 'divine vision' immediately arrived there, stopped them,



and went to Dhritarashtra. He persuaded the latter to restrain Duryodhana from his sinful activities. Dhritarashtra said that he himself did not like the game of dice. But confounded, he made everyone play with dice. He knew that his son Duryodhana was stupid. But he could not leave him influenced as he was by paternal affection. Then Vyasa said that it is true that a son is the best of all things and that there is nothing that is as good as a son in this world. But one has to show more concern towards a child who is in pitiable condition. Then the sons of Pandu were experiencing deep misery. He further advised him to see that Duryodhana made peace with the Pandavas if at all he desired to see that all the Kauravas lived. At the request of Dhritarashtra, Vyasa told him that sage Maitreya had met the Pandavas was coming to see them. For the sake of the peace of that family, he would advise Duryodhana. But if Duryodhana were to insult him, he would be cursed by the angry sage. Having said this as Vyasa departed, Maitreya arrived there. After being welcomed by them, he offered wise counsel to Duryodhana. At that time the latter sat slapping his thigh with his palm and scratching the ground. He was inattentive to the sage. Maitreya got angry and pronounced the curse that because of the deceit of Duryodhana a big battle would take place wherein Bhima would break his thighs with his mace. When Dhritarashtra appeased him, he said that the curse would not be effective if Duryodhana adopted peaceful measures but otherwise the curse should be faced. Then he went away. Having heard from Maitreya the news about the killing of Kirmira by Bhima, Duryodhana was disconcerted and went outside.

2. Kirmiravadha

There is one chapter and 75 verses in this section. In reply to Dhritarashtra's enquiry, Vidura narrated the episode of the killing of Kirmira. The Pandavas, having been defeated in the game of dice, while staying in the forests reached the Kamayaka forest. During that time, Kirmira, a cannibal giant obstructed their path. Bhima killed him. On hearing this, Dhritarashtra was drowned in misery.

3. Arjuanabhisamanaparva

In this section there are 26 chapters and 1053 verses. Having come to know about Pandvas' dwelling in the forest, the deeply depressed princes of Panchala and Kekaya, and also the warriors of Vrishni and Andhaka families, came to meet Yudhishtira in the woods. All of them, led by Sri Krishna arrived to meet them. Sri Krishna told them that they should defeat Duryodhana and others, and once again install Yudhishtira on the throne. He should be slain, who enjoys pleasures, having cheated others. That is eternal law. Arjuna placated Sri Krishna who was angry at the insult to the Pandavas, and spoke highly of the previous deeds of Sri Krishna. Then Sri Krishna revealed to Arjuna that they were Nara and Narayana. Those sages only had come to the earth then. They were not different. And no one could find any



difference between them. Draupadi then reported to Krishna how an attack was made on her dignity and how much she suffered, and said that on one hand he was related to her and on the other she belonged to a respectable family. Thirdly, he was her friend also. And fourthly, he was capable of protecting her. On listening this, Sri Krishna consoled her. He told Dharmaraja that had he been in Dwaraka at the time of the gambling, he would have come to the assembly even without an invitation from the Kauravas, and would have tried to stop it by pointing out its many evils. On his arrival in Dwaraka, he came to know about it from Satyaki and immediately set out to meet them. The reason for Krishna's absence in Dwaraka was explained in the Salvavadhopakhyana. Later, having taken permission from Yudhishtira, Sri Krishna, Dhristadyumna and other kings started for their own places.

From Kamyaka forest the Pandavas reached the Dwaitavana. One day sage Markandeya arrived at their hermitage as a guest. He advised them on Dharma and having taken leave from them went towards the north. On another day, in the evening when the distressed Pandavas along with Draupadi conversed with one another, Draupadi addressed Yudhishtira and said that having put them to misery, then the wicked Duryodhana might be enjoying with his friends. She was born in the house of the Dupads, and became the daughter-in-law of the Pandus. She was the sister of Dhristadyumna and the wife of the brave Pandavas. Hence it was not proper on their part to show patience towards the enemy even after observing her facing hardships in the woods then. All the beings show disrespect towards that Kshatriya who does not show his prowess when the time has come. It was then the time for them to show their valour against the Kauravas. And that was her opinion. On hearing that Yudhishtira denounced anger and extolled the virtues of patience. But Draupadi rejected his words. And he in turn replied to Draupadi in a logical way. Then she advised him to perform his duty. Bhima also supported Draupadi and encouraged Yudhishtira for a fight with the Kauravas. Dharmaraja tried to convince him. When those two were thus debating, Vyasa arrived there. He told Dharmaraja that he would bestow on him the knowledge called pratismriti, which on receiving from him, Arjuna could accomplish all his tasks. He commanded that Arjuna should go to Indra, Rudra and others to obtain divine weapons. Having said that, Vyasa imparted that knowledge to Yudhishtira and disappeared from there. According to his command, the Pandavas returned to Kamyakavana from Dwaitavana.

After some time, Yudhishtira talked to Arjuna in solitude and advised him to see Indra for getting divine weapons. Having taken his permission, Arjuna reached Indrakila and there he beheld Indra. The latter blessed him saying that he would bestow on him all the celestial weapons when he had the vision of Lord Siva. Having said that, he disappeared.

4. Kairataparva

This section contains 4 chapters and 195 verses. Arjuna performed severe penance in a solitary wood in the Himalayas in order to behold Lord



Siva. The sages apprised Siva of the penance of Arjuna. Siva promised that he would fulfill the desire of Arjuna. Later, disguised as a Kirata, he went to the forest where Arjuna had been doing his penance. Parvati and the Pramathas accompanied him. An Asura, Muka by name planned to kill Arjuna, by taking the form of a hog. Both Siva and Arjuna targeted it and killed it by shooting arrows at it. A fight ensued between the two over it. Arjuna shot hundreds of arrows that would pierce the sensitive parts at the Kirata. But all of them merged in the latter. Then they wrestled with each other. At last Arjuna, having realized that the Kirata was none other than Lord Siva fell at his feet and pleased him with eulogies. Siva was pleased and having given him the Gandivi bow, went to his own place along with Uma. Arjuna felt happy on fulfilling his desire. Kubera and other lords of the quarters appeared before him and presented to him the celestial weapons Dandastra, Varunapasa, Antardhana etc. Indra and his wife Indrani came to the peak of that mountain, sitting on the back of of Airavata elephant. Indra asked Arjuna to come to heaven to receive the celestial weapons.

5. Indralokabhigamanaparva

There are 10 chapters and 297 verses in this parva. After the regents of the quarters left, Arjuna thought of the chariot of Indra. Immediately the chariot appeared with the driver Matali. Arjuna went with Matali to Amaravati and saw his father Indra with his own eyes. Staying in his father's abode, he received instruction in the use of the weapons. He stayed there for five years at the request of Indra. On the advice of Indra, Arjuna, who became an expert in the use of the weapons, learnt music and dance from Chitrasena.

Once, having come to know that Arjuna was interested in Urvashi, Indra called Chitrasena and told him to send Urvashi to Arjuna in order to make the latter an expert in the art of courting a woman. Urvashi, on hearing from Chitrasena, the virtues of Arjuna, got attracted to him, and went to him by the order of Indra. She expressed her desire to him. Arjuna replied that he considered her honourable as a mother and she should guard him as a son. Urvashi got angry and cursed him to stay in the midst of women as a dancer, devoid of all respect. He would be called a eunuch. His behaviour also would be like that. Knowing about the curse, Indra sent for Arjuna and told him that his desire would be accomplished by that curse. He could spend his one-year period of living incognito as a dancer and eunuch, and could regain his manhood afterwards.

Once sage Lomasa, while going here and there, came to heaven to meet Indra. On seeing Arjuna, who shared the half-throne of Indra, the sage was in doubt. Indra, who understood it, said that he was his son Arjuna born from the womb of Kunti. The celebrated ancient sages Nara and Naryana were born as Arjuna and Krishna, in order to accomplish the work of the gods. Arjuna would return to the human world after killing the demons Nivata and Kavacha there. Indra requested the sage to go to Kamyakavana, meet Yudhishtira and convey him his message. His message was that Arjuna would return in a short time



after having received the weapons. Sage Lomasa met Dharmaraja in the Kamyaka woods and conveyed the message.

Dhritarashtra heard from Vyasa the story of Arjuna's journey to heaven and became depressed. Showing concern for his sons, he spoke to Sanjaya. He said that all his sons were doomed because of their misdeeds. He queried who could beat Arjuna who obtained sanctified prowess of weapons. Sanjaya replied that whatever the king spoke regarding his son was true. Arjuna pleased even Siva with his austerities and skill in archery. The Pandavas who were aggrieved at the insult meted out to Draupadi would certainly slay all your sons in battle. Dhritarashtra agreed with Sanjaya and became more saddened.

6. Nalopakhyanaparva

There are 28 chapters and 1032 verses in this parva. The Pandavas who were distressed at the absence of Arjuna who went to the abode of Indra for acquiring weapons, talked about him with Draupadi in the Kamyaka forest. Then Bhima said to Yudhishtira that at his command Arjuna, who was their very life, went to perform austerities to obtain celestial weapons. Endowed as they were with physical strength, they could kill their enemies with the help of Sri Krishna. They became miserable because of the vice of playing with dice. To live in the forests is not the duty of the Kshatriyas. Noble people who know Dharma consider a day and night as equivalent to a year. According to the word of the Veda, by observing the kricchravrata a year will be completed. Thus he should understand at the end of the thirteenth day itself thirteen years were over. Hence he must concentrate on fulfilling the dharma ordained by the Veda. Then comforting him Yudhishtira said that Bhima along with Arjuna could kill Duryodhana. There was no doubt in that. But the time to kill him had not approached yet. As Yudhishtira was saying so, sage Brihadhasva arrived there. After welcoming him with respect, Dhritarashtra told him about the incident of gambling and expressed the feeling that he was unfortunate. Then the sage narrated the story of King Nala who was more unfortunate. Damayanti chose Nala as her husband in swayamvara. Having come to know of this from Indra, Kali, who coveted her, became angry, and at the appropriate time entered into Nala. Under his influence, Nala played the game of dice with Pushkara, and being defeated went to the woods with his wife. Overcome by hunger, when he saw some birds, he threw his garment on them to make them his food. But they rose up to the sky along with the garment. Nala became distressed at his nakedness. He cut half of the garment of Damayanti, who was sleeping, covered his body, and went away leaving her there. Both of them suffered a lot later. All that was the influence of Kali. Nala, however regained his kingdom, having defeated Pushkara in the game of dice. Thus Brihadhasva consoled Dharmaraja by narrating the story of Nala. He also described the secrets of gambling with dice and the knowledge of horses.

7. Tirthayatraparva



This parva contains 77 chapters and 2826 verses. As Arjuna left Kamyakavana to obtain sanctified weapons the Pandavas and Draupadi were distressed. Then one day sage Narada arrived there. After honouring their guest, Yudhishtira enquired of him the benefits of going on a pilgrimage. Narada explained to him whatever Bhishma had previously heard from sage Pulastya regarding pilgrimages. Pulastya told Bhishma that there is a sacred place of Brahma, Pushkara by name on earth that is famous in all the three worlds. Anyone who gains entrance into it is really a fortunate one. During the three auspicious times of the day all the ten thousand crores of tirthas will be present there. After spending twelve nights there one shall go to the sacred place called Jambumarga. Thus he described the meritorious fruits of all the tirthas.

Later sage Lomasa came there and having described the divine weapons such as Pasupata etc. of Arjuna, he delivered the message of Indra. The Pandavas, whose spirits were raised by that message, went on a pilgrimage. They visited Naimisaranya, Gomati and other places, and reached Prayaga, and from there went to Gaya and then to Agastya's hermitage. Asked by Yudhishtira, Lomasa narrated the episode of Agastya's killing of Vatapi. He then related the stories of Dadhichi's donation of bones for Vajra weapon, the killing of Vritra, Agastya's prevention of the growth of the Vindhya mountain, His gulping of the ocean, the birth of the sons of Sagara, the deeds of Rishyasringa etc. Later Dharmaraja and others undertook the journey to Kausika, Ganga and Vaitarani. From there they went to Mahendragiri where they spent a night. There Akritavrana, the disciple of Parasurama told them about the great adventures of Parasurama. Then the Pandavas reached the Prabhasatirtha. There the Yadavas met them. The Pandavas left that place and travelled to many pilgrim centers. Draupadi became unconscious with exhaustion. At the command of Dharmaraja, Bhima thought of his son Ghatotkacha. Following the command of Bhima, Ghatotkacha carried Draupadi on his shoulders, and the other giants carried the Pandavas. They reached Badarika forest. At the request of Draupadi, Bhima went to bring the flower called Saugandhika. On his way he met Hanuman. Bhima fought with the Rakshasas in the Saugandhika garden, and brought the flower. Guided by the invisible voice, he went to the famous abode of Nara and Narayana at Badari.

8. Jatasuravadhaparva

In this parva there is only one chapter and 73 verses. The Pandavas awaited the return of Arjuna on the mountain Gandhamadana. One day, in the absence of Bhima, a giant named Jatasura abducted Draupadi and other Pandavas. However, they escaped from the grip of the Rakshasa with the efforts of Sahadeva, and shouted for Bhimasena, running in the direction in which he went. Bhima then killed the Rakshasa after fighting with him.

9. Yakshayuddhaparva



There are 7 chapters and 385 verses in this parva. After the killing of Jatasura, the Pandavas went to the hermitage of Nara and Narayana, and stayed there. They spent four years in visiting sacred places. Arjuna was to return in the fifth year. They waited for him. The Pandavas went to the hermitage of Vrishaparva to meet the sage, and on the eighth day they took leave of him, and went towards north. Going on foot, they reached the Himalayas on the fourth day. There they went to the ashrama of Arshishena. He asked him to stay with him till the arrival of Arjuna. There they spent their fifth year. At the request of Draupadi, Bhima reached the peak of the mountain and fought with the Yakshas and Rakshasas there and sent them away from there. He killed the Rakshasa called Maniman.

The Pandavas, who were staying on the Gandhamadana mountain, were eager to meet Arjuna. The latter having spent five years in the abode of Indra, receive celestial weapons from him and with the permission of Indra, came down to the Gandhamadana to meet his brothers.

10. Nivatakavachayuddhaparva

This parva has 11 chapters and 407 verses. Mounting the divine chariot of Indra, Arjuna arrived on the Gandhamadana along with Matali. All the Pandavas were overwhelmed with joy on seeing him. Arjuna was also happy on meeting his brothers. Matali bowed to the Pandavas and having told him what should be done, returned to heaven. Indra also visited the Pandavas, and having spoken highly of Arjuna in front of Yudhishtira, went to his abode. Arjuna then related his experiences in detail. He described how he killed the Rakshasas Nivata and Kavacha in a fight. Yudhishtira asked Arjuna to demonstrate the skills and weapons he acquired. When the latter started to demonstrate them, Narada came there and stopped him saying that it was a great offence to improperly use the celestial weapons. All the Pandavas continued to live in that forest along with Draupadi happily.

11. Ajagaraparva

It has 6 chapters and 222 verses in it. The Pandavas spent four years on the Gandhamadana mountain in joy. A total of ten years of the Pandavas' forest-dwelling period, including the first six years and the four years on the Gandhamadana, passed happily. One day Bhima told Yudhishtira that the eleventh year of their exile period was running. They would spend their one year period staying unknown also happily cheating that mean one. After finishing it they would see the end of Duryodhana. So he requested him to resolve to kill the enemies and punish them. Having elicited the opinions of all, Yudhishtira bowed to the Gandhamadana, and started from there to Dwaitavana. Roaming fearlessly in those terrible forests Bhima came across a great python. It slithered near him and caught him crushing his shoulders. Bhima could not break himself free from its grip. Then the serpent revealed to him its previous birth. It was the sage-king Nahusha became a python cursed



by Agastya. It said that it would devour Bhima. Yudhishtira came there accompanied by Dhaumya in search of Bhima. He answered the questions of Nahusha. The latter was satisfied on getting the right answers and released Bhima. Nahusha, who was released from his curse, went to heaven. Yudhishtira returned to the hermitage along with Bhima and Dhaumya, and lived there happily.

12. Markandeyasmasyaparva

There are 51 chapters and 2083 verses in this section. The Pandavas again reached the Kamyaka forest from Dwaitavana. Sri Krishna came there accompanied by Satyabhama to meet them. He comforted Yudhishtira saying that the latter would realize all his desires within a short time. Once the period of stay in the forest was over, they could punish the Kauravas. Yudhishtira said that they had spent twelve years in lonely forests, abiding by their promise. After completing the period of staying incognito for one year they would be under his control. At that time sage Markandeya came there. Sri Krishna and the Pandavas worshipped him. The divine sage Narada also came there to meet Marakandeya. Krishna requested Markandeya to recount the meritorious tales of the ancient lore. As the sage was about to tell, Yudhishtira asked him to explain how the Jiva who left the body would experience in the other world the fruits of good or bad deeds; Where his karma would be preserved once he died. In answer to that enquiry, Markandeya said that Brahama, the progenitor Prajapati was born first of all. He created a pure and clean body for the beings. Simultaneously he revealed the scriptures. Allthose beings were resplendent, virtuous and long living. They could take birth or cast of their bodies at will. All of them realized Dharma by experience, had control over their senses and were devoid of jealousy. Their life span was thousand years. Thereafter people were seized by anger and lust, and started to live by deceit, fraud and arrogance. As a result of their sinful deeds, they took birth in the reptile and animal wombs, and fell into hell. Their bodies also bore the marks of their sins. The life span of the sinners got shortened. After death, the course of the beings would be in accordance to their deeds. They would collect a heap of good and bad karma with the body previously created by Iswara. At the end of his life, he would drop his gross body and would immediately enter into another womb. The karma of his previous birth would stay with that second body just like a shadow. Thus a man is born having the ability to experience pleasure and pain. It is not possible to prevent the fruit of karma. Noble people and the sages would arrive on to this land of action, and would go again to the heaven. A person who earns money and pleasure through righteous means alone will enjoy happiness in this world and in the other one. Having thus explained, the sage said that Dharmaraja should not despair as that hardship was an indicator of future happiness. In this regard he told them many tales. He also narrated the episodes of Vaivasvata Manu and the fish incarnation.

Referring to the incidents of past ages, Markandeya said that Sri Krishna, the ornament of the family of the Vrishnis was the Ancient Lord Sri



Hari. He was seen as a child previously. Asked by Yudhishtira, he described the incarnation of Kalki. All the Pandavas and Sri Krishna felt happy on listening to the discourse of Markandeya.

Markandeya also told them about the advice given by the butcher to the Brahmin Kausika.

13. Draupadi-Satyabhamasamvadaparva

This section contains 3 chapters and 91 verses. While the Pandavas were discussing matters of dharma with the Brahmins, in another corner Draupadi and Satyabhama were engaged in cheerful banter. Satyabhama enquired Draupadi how the Pandavas were always submissive to her. She asked her to tell of any vow which would enhance her prosperity and make Sri Krishna obedient to her. Draupadi however replied that such practices were pursued by wicked women but not by chaste women. It was not proper on her part to doubt her husband. She would tell her how she was behaving with the Pandavas. She was always serving her husbands casting aside desire, anger and egoism. She behaved in accordance with the opinions of her husbands. She was always indulged in doing which was agreeable and favourable to her lords. Satyabhama, on hearing those words of wisdom from Draupadi felt ashamed and asked for her forgiveness.

Draupadi told her that serving her lord with utmost devotion was alone the way to make him agreeable to her. After talking to them, Krishna took leave of the Pandavas and returned to Dwaraka along with Satyabhama.

14. Ghoshayatraparva

There are 22 chapters and 616 verses in this section. The Pandavas stayed in a hut in the Dwaitavana. One day an ingenious Brahmin came to them and from there he went to Dhritarashtra while roaming around the countries. Asked by the king, he related the news of the hardships of the Pandavas. Dhritarashtra felt sad at the news and asked him about the prowess of the Pandavas and the acquisition of celestial arms by Arjuna. Sakuni who heard the words of Dhritarashtra spoken in private, conveyed them to Duryodhana and Karna. Duryodhana grieved on hearing that. At an appropriate time, Sakuni and Karna praised Duryodhana and encouraged him to visit the Pandavas. They urged Duryodhana to go shining with royal glory to the Pandavas, who would be saddened on beholding his great wealth. They said that the queens of Duryodhana also should go there wearing beautiful sarees. The sad Draupadi who was wearing bark garments and deer-skin would also feel pain on seeing them. Duryodhana liked those words. He commanded Karna to consult with Sakuni and Dussasana and find a way to get the permission of the king to go to Dwaitavana. He would visit his father the next day itself. Having said so, he went to his retiring room. The next morning Karna went to Duryodhana and told him of the plan. As all their cattle stations were in the Dwaitavana, they could go there under the pretext of supervising them—ghoshayatra, which was



proper for the kings. Sakuni also supported that plan. Having resolved so, the three of them went to Dhritarashtra.

Dhritarashtra, though rejected in the beginning the idea of ghoshayatra, the visit to the cattle stations, later, convinced by Sakuni, conceded reluctantly to allow Duryodhana go on such an expedition. Duryodhana started for Dwaitavana with his retinue.

Having reached the cattle stations, Duryodhana and his followers camped there. Then Duryodhana ordered his servants to construct pleasure-house near the lake there. But a Gandharva occupied that lake. Duryodhana, on knowing that ordered his men to drive away the Gandharvas. Then a fight ensued between the Gandharvas and the Kauravas. The soldiers of the Kurus could not withstand the might of the Gandharvas. Even Karna was also defeated. Chitrasena, the Gandharva king seized Duryodhana, and his army took refuge with Yudhishtira. The latter ordered Bhima to rescue the Kauravas. The Pandavas fought with the Gandharvas and defeated them, and released Duryodhana. The latter reported to Karna his defeat and said that Yudhishtira had ordered the Pandavas to secure their release. During the fight, Arjuna and Chitrasena met and greeted each other. Arjuna asked for the release of the Kauravas. Having felt that as a shameful insult, Duryodhana expressed his resolution to fast unto death, and make Dussasana the crown prince. Dussasana, who was agitated on hearing those words, consoled Duryodhana. Duryodhana did not relent even when Karna and Sakuni convinced him and took up starvation unto death.

The Danavas, who were previously defeated by the gods, performed a sacrifice to invite Duryodhana to them. An amazing demonic form Kritya appeared from the sacrificial fire-pit. Ordered by them, she went to Duryodhana, and took him to the nether world. The Danavas urged him to break his fasting. Then Kritya conducted him back to his own place. Duryodhana thought all that was a dream, and believed that they could defeat the Pandavas. When it was day, Karna came again and convinced him. Duryodhana remembered the words of the Daityas, and having resolved to fight the Pandavas, went back to Hastinapura.

Duryodhana, his freedom secured by the Pandavas, reached the city. Bhishma criticized his conduct and advised him to make peace with the Pandavas. Duryodhana laughed at him, and went away to another place with Sakuni. Having been permitted by Duryodhan, Karna went on an expedition of conquering the quarters, and having conquered the whole earth, returned to Hastinapura. Duryodhana performed the Vishnu sacrifice on the advice of Karna and priests. He even sent an invitation to the Pandavas. But the Pandavas did not come as they had to keep their promise of staying in the woods. Karna promised that he would kill Arjuna. Having come to know of this through his emissaries, Yudhishtira was agitated.

15. Mrigasvapnobhavarva.



This section has only one chapter and 17 verses. One day, while he was asleep at night, Yudhishtira saw in his dream the wild animals that remained in the Dwaitavana, saying to him that their number dwindled on account of their hunting them. They requested him to shift his residence. Dharmaraja promised them so. The next day, the compassionate Dharmaraja along with his retinue shifted to Kamayakavana from Dwaitavana.

16. Vrihidraunikaparva

There are three chapters and 130 verses in this section. Eleven years elapsed since the Pandavas came to stay in the woods. Yudhishtira always felt sad thinking that owing to his fault, his family had to face misery. One day sage Vyasa arrived to meet them. In reply to Yudhishtira's enquiry, he told him that charity is the best of all dharmas. There is nothing else on this earth, which is more difficult to practice than donation. If some one gives even a little, but with pure mind at the right time and to the right person, he is considered for a long time in the other world as a great donor. Sage Mudgala, by donating a Drona (a measure) of money, attained great fruit. Then Vyasa recounted the story of Mudgala. After blessing them that they would get their ancestral kingdom after the thirteenth year, the sage left for his abode to continue his austerities.

17. Draupadiharanaparva

This section contains 10 chapters and 288 verses. Duryodhana came to know that the Pandavas were living doing charity even in the woods as in the city. So he conspired with Karna and Dussasana to put Pandavas in a troublesome situation. At that time sage Durvasas came there accompanied by his ten thousand disciples. Pleased with Duryodhana's services, the sage granted him a boon. Duryodhana requested him to be the guest of the Pandavas also along with his disciples. However he added that the sage should go at such a time when Draupadi, after feeding the Brahmins and her husbands, would finish her meals and take rest. The sage agreed and accordingly he went to Yudhishtira when all the Pandavas and Draupadi had finished their meals. After welcoming him, Yudhishtira requested him to complete his daily routines and come quickly. The sage went for a bath accompanied by his disciples. Draupadi was worried about the food to be provided to them. She prayed to Sri Krishna. Immediately Krishna appeared there. He hurried Draupadi to bring some food as he was very hungry. Draupadi told him that the akshayapatra presented by the sun god would provide food only till such time as Draupadi would not finish her meals. But that day she had her meals. Krishna then asked her to show him the vessel. Krishna found a bit of rice stuck to the neck of the vessel and having eaten it said that the Universal Soul Sri Hari was satisfied. Then he sent Sahadeva to invite all the sages for partaking of food. But there the sages already felt that their stomachs were



heavy with food. Then following the advice of their preceptor, all the disciples ran away from that place. Sahadeva reported all this to Yudhishtira. Krishna told him what had happened and with his permission left for Dwaraka. Thus the conspiracy of Duryodhana failed.

One day Jayadratha, the king of Sindhu, while going to Salva for getting married, saw the lonely Draupadi in the hermitage in the Kamyakavana, and having been attracted to her, sent Kotikasya to get her details. But Draupadi took him for a guest and was engaged in making preparations to welcome him. Kotikasya then gave Jayadratha her details. Jayadratha approached her and expressed her desire to her. She moved away from him on hearing those words and rejected his advances. Then he forcibly dragged her onto his chariot and drove away. The Pandavas who returned to the hermitage, having found out what had happened, pursued Jayadratha.

18. Jayadrathavimokshanaparva

There is one chapter in this section with 85 verses. Bhima seized him and brought him to the presence of Yudhishtira. At the request of Saindhava, Yudhishtira released him. Jayadratha, who was ashamed, went to Gangadwara and performed austerities taking recourse to the Supreme Lord. The Lord granted him a boon. Jayadratha asked for the boon of defeating the Pandavas. But Parameswara said that it was impossible and instead granted that he would defeat the Pandavas except Arjuna and that too for a single day only. Having granted that, the Lord disappeared. The listless Jayadratha also returned home.

19. Ramopakhyanaparva

This section has 20 chapters and 765 verses. After defeating Jayadratha and releasing Draupadi, Dharmaraja, grieving over the plight of the Pandavas, asked Markandeya, who was seated with other sages to tell him as the latter knew past, present and future if there were any other unfortunate man in this world like him. In reply to that Markandeya told the story of Sri Rama. Having narrated the birth of Rama, Ravana and others, preparations for Rama's coronation, Rama's exile to the forests, killing of Maricha, the abduction of Sita, the battle between Rama and Ravana, the killing of Ravana, the coronation of Sri Rama etc., Markandeya told Yudhishtira that when compared with the troubles of Rama, his troubles were minuscule. He comforted Yudhishtira with those words.

20. Pativratahatmyaparva

There are 7 chapters and 304 slokas in this section. Yudhishtira enquired of Markandeya whether the latter had ever seen or heard of a pious lady like Draupadi. Markandeya then told him the story of Savitri. King Aswapati performed severe austerities for getting progeny. By the boon of the goddess Savitri, who was pleased with his penance, a girl was born to him. She



was named Savitri. When she grew into a young lady, with the permission of her father, she went in search of a groom, and returned after visiting many places. She announced to her father she mentally chose Satyavan, the son of Dyumatsena, the king of Salva as her husband. On hearing that, sage Narada, who was present there at that time, remarked that by ignorance, Savitri made a mistake in choosing Satyavan as the latter would live for one more year only from that day. Her father asked her to choose another person as her husband. But Savitri refused saying that a girl should be given in marriage only once. She had selected him. On the advice of Narada, Aswapati performed her marriage with Satyavan, as she had wished. Savitri pleased with her service her in-laws and others.

As many days passed, finally that day on which Satyavan was to die, had neared. Savitri realized that on the fourth day from then, her husband would die. So she observed a vow for three nights and stood on her feet day and night. She was very depressed as her husband would die the next day. Satyavan went into the forest bearing an axe on his shoulder to collect wood. With the permission of her in-laws, Savitri accompanied him. He said that his head ached with the effort of cutting the wood. He wanted to take rest. Savitri sat there placing her husband's head on her lap. Meanwhile Lord Yama appeared there and said that her husband's life span was over. He would take him. An argument ensued between the two of them. Pleased with her, while granting her boons, Yama granted her the fourth boon and urged her to ask for anything except the life of her husband. She asked for hundred sons. Yama blessed her saying that it would happen. Then Savitri pointed out that his boon would not become true if there was to be no conjugal relationship between the couple. So her husband should live. Yama was pleased with her words. Satyavan came to life by his grace.

In accordance with the desire of the citizens of Salwa, Dyumatsena was installed on the throne, and Satyavan was made the crown-prince. By narrating this episode of Savitri, Markandeya had answered the query of Dharmaraja.

21. Kundalaaharanaparva

There are 11 chapters and 305 verses in this section. The twelfth year of the stay in the woods of the Pandavas was over. The thirteenth year began. Indra, who was partial to the Pandavas got ready to beg the ear-rings and armour of Karna. Having come to know this, Surya appeared in the dream of Karna and warned him, and advised him not to part with the ear-rings and armour. But Karna did not heed his word. He decided to donate the ear-rings and the armour to Indra, who was disguised as a Brahmin, and attain the higher planes. When Karna got up, he thought about the dream and decided to receive Sakti from Indra in return, and then only give the ear-rings and the armour. So he asked Indra, who took the form of a Brahmin, to give his infallible Sakti and receive the ear-rings and the armour. Indra thought for a while, and said that he could receive his Sakti by donating the armour and the ear-rings. But that Power would kill only one of his valourous enemies and then would return to



him. Having said so, he took the ear-rings and the armour from Karna and gave his infallible Power.

22. Araneyaparva

This section contains 5 chapters and 264 verses. When Jayadratha abducted Draupadi, the Pandavas brought her back, having defeated him in a fight. Then they left Kamyakavana, and again reached Dwaitavana. One day the arani of an austere Brahmin along with the churning stick got stuck in the antlers of a deer while it was butting about. At the request of the Brahmin, the Pandavas pursued the deer but in vain. They sat under a tree. They became thirsty. Ordered by Yudhishtira, Nakula went to fetch water, and as he drank water from a lake, laughing at, without answering the questions put by the Yaksha there, he fell down becoming unconscious. Having gone in search of him, Sahadeva, Arjuna and Bhima also became unconscious by drinking the water from the lake. Lastly, Yudhishtira answered the queries of the Yaksha properly. The satisfied Yaksha granted the boon of life to the four brothers of Daharmaraja.

In the thirteenth year, in order to live incognito, the Pandavas took permission of the resplendent Brahmins who were affectionate to them, and accompanied by Dhaumya and Draupadi, went away.

