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Maha·bhárata

Book Nine

Shalya

Volume Two



Translated by
JUSTIN MEILAND

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY PRESS & JJC FOUNDATION

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First Edition 2007

The Clay Sanskrit Library is co-published by
New York University Press
and the JJC Foundation.

Further information about this volume
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is available on the following websites:

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www.nyupress.org

ISBN: 978-0-8147-5737-6 (cloth : alk. paper)

Artwork by Robert Beer.

Typeset in Adobe Garamond at 10.25 : 12.3+pt.

XML-development by Stuart Brown.

Editorial input from

Tomoyuki Kono & Eszter Somogyi.

Printed in Great Britain by St Edmundsbury Press Ltd,

Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, on acid-free paper.

Bound by Hunter & Foulis, Edinburgh, Scotland.

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BOOK NINE

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55-57
THE DUEL

VAISAMPĀYANA uvāca:

55.1 **E**VAM TAD ABHAVAD yuddhaṃ tumulaṃ Janamejaya
yatra duḥkh'ānvito rājā Dhṛtarāṣṭro 'bravīd idam.

DHṚTARĀṢṬRA uvāca:

Rāmaṃ saṃnihitaṃ dr̥ṣṭvā gadā'yuddha upasthite
mama putraḥ kathaṃ Bhīmaṃ pratyayudhyata Sañjaya?

SAÑJAYA uvāca:

Rāma|sāṃnidhyam āsādy putro Duryodhanas tava
yuddha|kāmo mahā|bāhuḥ samahr̥ṣyata vīryavān.
dr̥ṣṭvā lāṅgalinaṃ rājā pratyutthāya ca Bhārata
prītyā paramayā yuktaḥ samabhyarcya yathā|vidhi
āsanam ca dadau tasmai paryapṛcchad an|āmayam.
55.5 tato Yudhiṣṭhiraṃ Rāmo vākyam etad uvāca ha
madhuraṃ dharma|saṃyuktaṃ śūrāṇāṃ hitam eva ca:
«mayā śrutaṃ kathayatām ṛṣiṇāṃ rāja|sattama
Kurukṣetraṃ paraṃ puṇyam pāvanaṃ svargyam eva ca
daivatair̥ ṛṣibhir̥ juṣṭaṃ brāhmaṇaiś ca mah'āt|mabhiḥ.
tatra vai yotsyamānā ye dehaṃ tyakṣyanti mānavāḥ
teṣāṃ svarge dhruvo vāsaḥ Śakreṇa saha māriṣa.
tasmāt Samantapañcakam ito yāma drutaṃ nṛpa.
prathit' ōttara|vedī sā deva|loke Prajāpateḥ.
tasmin mahā|puṇyatame trailokyasya sanātane
saṃgrāme nidhanaṃ prāpya dhruvaṃ svargo bhaviṣyati.»
55.10 «tath' ēty» uktvā mahā|rāja Kuntī|putro Yudhiṣṭhiraḥ
Samantapañcakaṃ vīraḥ prāyād abhimukhaḥ prabhuḥ.
tato Duryodhano rājā pragṛhya mahatīm gadām
padbhyām a|marṣi dyutimān agacchat Pañdavaiḥ saha.

VAISHAMPÁYANA said:

THIS WAS HOW that tumultuous battle came about, 55.1
Janam-éjaya. Regarding it King Dhrita-rashtra said this
in his sorrow.

DHRITA-RASHTRA said:

When my son saw Rama arrive just as the mace battle
was imminent, how did he fight against Bhima, Sánjaya?

SÁNJAYA said:

At Rama's arrival, Dur-yódhana—your powerful and
mighty-armed son—became eager for battle and was joy-
ful. When King Yudhi-shthira saw the plow-bearer, he got
up and duly worshipped him with great joy, descendant
of Bharata. He then gave Rama a seat and asked after his
health. Rama then said these words to Yudhi-shthira, which 55.5
were pleasant, righteous, and beneficial to heroes:

“Best of kings, I have heard seers say that Kuru-kshetra is
an extremely sacred and pure place that leads to heaven and
is frequented by gods, seers and great-spirited brahmins.
Those who give up their bodies in battle there will forever
live with Shakra in heaven, my lord. Let us therefore quickly
go to Samánta-pánchaka, Your Majesty. In the realm of the
gods, Samánta-pánchaka is famed as the northern altar of
Prajapati. Those who die in battle in that eternal and most
sacred place in the three worlds will certainly reach heaven.”

Agreeing, lord Yudhi-shthira, the heroic son of Kunti, 55.10
proceeded straight for Samánta-pánchaka. Full of wrath and
splendor, King Dur-yódhana also took up his huge mace
and walked on foot together with the Pándavas. The gods
that flew in the sky honored him with shouts of approval as

tathā yāntaṃ gaḍā|hastaṃ varmaṇā c' āpi daṃśitam
antarikṣa|carā devāḥ «sādhu sādhu ity» apūjayan.

vātikās cāraṇā ye tu dṛṣṭvā te haṛsam āgatāḥ.
sa Pāṇḍavaīḥ parivr̥taḥ Kuru|rājas tav' ātma|jah
mattasy' ēva gaj'|ēndrasya gatim āsthāya so 'vrajat.
tataḥ śaṅkha|ninādena bherīṇām ca mahā|svanaiḥ
siṃha|nādaś ca sūrāṇām dīśaḥ sarvāḥ prapūritāḥ.

55.15 tatas te tu Kurukṣetraṃ prāptā nara|var'|ōttamāḥ
praticy|abhimukhaṃ deśaṃ yath'"|ōddiṣṭaṃ sutena te
dakṣiṇena Sarasvatyāḥ sv|ayanaṃ tīrtham uttamam.
tasmin deśe tv an|iriṇe te tu yuddham arocayan.

tato Bhīmo mahā|koṭiṃ gaḍāṃ gṛhy' ātha varma|bhṛt
bibhrad rūpaṃ mahā|rāja sadṛśaṃ hi Garutmataḥ.
avabaddha|śiras|trāṇaḥ saṅkhye kāñcana|varma|bhṛt
rarāja rājan putras te kāñcanaḥ śaila|rāḍ iva.
varmabhyāṃ saṃyatau vīrau Bhīma|Duryodhanāv ubhau
saṃyuge ca prakāsete saṃrabdhāv iva kuñjarau.

55.20 raṇa|maṇḍala|madhya|sthau bhrātarau tau nara'|rṣabhau
aśobhetāṃ mahā|rāja candra|sūryāv iv' ōditau.
tāv anyonyaṃ nirīkṣetāṃ kruddhāv iva mahā|dvipau
dahantau locanai rājan paras|para|vadh'|āṣiṇau.

he proceeded mace in hand and clad in armor. The wind-traveling *cháranas* were filled with joy when they saw him. Although surrounded by the Pándavas, your son, the king of the Kurus, walked with the gait of a raging king of elephants. All the directions then filled with the blare of conches, the din of drums, and the lion-roars of heroes.

Those supreme champions then arrived at Kuru-kshetra 55.15 and proceeded to a place situated westwards that was designated by your son. Lying to the south of the Sarásvati, it was an excellent *tirtha* that was easy to move about on. It was in this unbarren place that they chose to fight.

Armor-clad Bhima then took hold of his large-tipped mace and assumed an appearance similar to Gáruda, great king. Wearing gold armor and strapping on his protective head-gear in battle, your son looked radiant, Your Majesty, like the golden king of the mountains. Clad in armor, the heroes Bhima and Dur-yódhana both looked glorious in battle, just like two enraged elephants. Standing in the center of the battle-circle, the two brothers and bull-like men 55.20 shone radiantly, great king, resembling a risen moon and sun. Burning each other with their eyes and eager to kill each other, they looked at one another askance like two great elephants filled with fury, Your Majesty.

- samprahr̥ṣṭa|manā rājan gadām ādāya Kauravaḥ
 sṛkkinī samlihan rājan krodha|rakt' |ēkṣaṇaḥ śvasan.
 tato Duryodhano rājan gadām ādāya vīryavān
 Bhīmasenam abhipreṣya gajo gajam iv' āhvayat.
 adri|sāra|mayīm Bhīmas tath" āiv' ādāya vīryavān
 āhvayām āsa nṛ|patiṃ siṃhaṃ siṃho yathā vane.
 55.25 tāv udyata|gadā|pāṇī Duryodhana|Vṛkodarau
 saṃyuge sma prakāsetām girī sa|śikharāv iva.
 tāv ubhau samatikruddhāv ubhau bhīma|parākramau
 ubhau śiṣyau gadā|yuddhe Rauhiṇeyasya dhīmataḥ.
 ubhau sadṛśa|karmāṇau Yama|Vāsavayor iva
 tathā sadṛśa|karmāṇau Varuṇasya mahā|balau.
 Vāsudevasya Rāmasya tathā Vaiśravaṇasya ca
 sadṛśau tau mahā|rāja Madhu|Kaiṭabhayor yudhi.
 ubhau sadṛśa|karmāṇau tathā Sund' |ôpasundayoḥ
 Rāma|Rāvaṇayoś c' āiva Vāli|Sugrīvayos tathā
 tath" āiva Kālasya samau Mṛtyoś c' āiva paran|tapau.
 55.30 anyonyam abhidhāvantau mattāv iva mahā|dvipau
 vāsitā|saṃgame dṛptaḥ śarad' īva mad' |ôtkāṭau.
 ubhau krodha|viṣaṃ dīptaṃ vamantāv uragāv iva
 anyonyam abhisamrabdḥau prekṣamāṇāv arin|damau
 ubhau Bharata|śārdūlau vikrameṇa samanvitau.
 siṃhāv iva dur|ādharṣau gadā|yuddha|viśāradau
 nakha|daṃṣṭr' |āyudhau vīrau vyāghrāv iva dur|utsahau.
 prajā|saṃharaṇe kṣubdhau samudrāv iva dus|tarau
 lohita|śāngāv iva kruddhau pratapantau mahā|rathau.
 pūrva|paścima|jau meghau prekṣamāṇāv arin|damau

Joyfully taking up his mace, the Káurava licked the corners of his mouth as he breathed heavily, his eyes red with rage. Mighty Dur-yódhana then took up his mace and glared at Bhima-sena, challenging him like one elephant challenging another, Your Majesty. In the same way, mighty Bhima took up his iron mace and challenged that lord of men, just like one lion challenging another in a forest. Wielding their raised maces, Dur-yódhana and Vrikódara looked glorious in battle, like two peaked mountains. Both were filled with extreme rage, both had terrifying prowess, and both had been disciples in mace-fighting under the wise son of Róhini. Both were similar to Yama or Vásava in their actions and both were men of great power, whose deeds resembled Váruna's. In battle they were like Vasudéva, Rama, Váishravana,* Madhu or Káitabha, Your Majesty. Both performed deeds that were similar to Sunda and Upasúnda, Rama and Rávana, or Valin and Sugriva, and both were enemy-scorchers who resembled Time and Death. 55.25

Charging against each other, they were like two enormous frenzied elephants mad with passion in the fall season and wild with desire to mate with a cow on heat. As they glared at each other in their rage, the enemy-tamers were like two snakes that spit out fiery poison born of wrath. Both were tigers among Bharatas and both were valorous. Skilled in mace combat, the heroes were as dangerous as lions and as difficult to quell as tigers that use claws and teeth as weapons. They were like two uncrossable oceans that swell up to destroy creatures. In their fury, the great warriors blazed as if they were the planet Mars. Those enemy-tamers looked like two clouds that rise in the east and west, thundering 55.30

garjamānau su|viṣamaṃ kṣarantau prāvṛṣ' iva hi.
 55.35 raśmi|yuktau mah" |ātmānau dīptimantau mahā|balau
 dadṛśāte Kuru|śreṣṭhau kāla|sūryāv iv' ôditau.
 vyāghrāv iva su|saṃrabdhau garjantāv iva toyadau
 jahṛṣāte mahā|bāhū siṃhau kesariṇāv iva
 gajāv iva su|saṃrabdhau jvalitāv iva pāvakau
 dadṛśāte mah" |ātmānau sa|śṛṅgāv iva parvatau.

roṣāt prasphuramāṇ' |ôṣṭhau nirīkṣantau paras|param
 tau sametau mah" |ātmānau gadā|hastau nar' |ôttamau.
 ubhau parama|saṃhrṣṭāv ubhau parama|saṃmatau
 sad|āśvāv iva heṣantau bṛṃhantāv iva kuñjarau.
 55.40 vṛṣabhāv iva garjantau Duryodhana|Vṛkodarau
 daityāv iva bal' |ônmattau rejatus tau nar' |ôttamau.

tato Duryodhano rājann idam āha Yudhiṣṭhiram
 bhrātṛbhiḥ sahitam c' āiva Kṛṣṇena ca mah" |ātmānā
 Rāmeṇ' ā|mita|vīryeṇa vākyam sautīrya|saṃmatam
 Kekayaiḥ Sṛñjayair dr̥ptaṃ Pañcālais ca mah" |ātmabhiḥ:

«idam vyavasitaṃ yuddham mama Bhīmasya c' ôbhayoḥ
 upopaviṣṭāḥ paśyadhvam sahitair nṛpa|puṅ|gavaiḥ!»

śrutvā Duryodhana|vacah pratyapadyanta tat tathā.
 tataḥ samupaviṣṭam tat su|mahad rāja|maṇḍalam
 virājamānaṃ dadṛśe div' iv' āditya|maṇḍalam.

55.45 teṣāṃ madhye mahā|bāhuḥ śrīmān Keśava|pūrva|jah
 upaviṣṭo mahā|rāja pūjyamānaḥ samantataḥ.
 śuśubhe rāja|madhya|stho nīla|vāsāḥ sita|prabhaḥ
 nakṣatrair iva saṃpūrṇo vṛto niśi niśā|karaḥ.

terribly and pouring down rain in the monsoon season. In 55.35
 their radiance and splendor, the mighty and great-spirited
 champions of the Kurus looked like two suns that rise when
 the world is destroyed. Resembling two enraged tigers or
 thundering clouds, the mighty-armed men bristled with
 joy like maned lions. The heroes were like two enraged
 elephants or two burning fires and they resembled peaked
 mountains.

Glaring at each other, their lips quivering with fury, the
 two great-spirited and excellent men encountered one an-
 other, wielding their maces. Greatly esteemed, they both
 experienced the highest joy as they neighed like fine horses
 and trumpeted like elephants. Bellowing like bulls, Dur- 55.40
 yódhana and Vrikódara—those best of men—looked as
 glorious as two power-intoxicated *daityas*.

Dur-yódhana then said these proud and haughty words
 to Yudhi-shthira, Your Majesty, who was accompanied by
 his brothers, heroic Krishna, infinitely powerful Rama, the
 Kékayas, Srínjayas, and great-spirited Panchálas:

“Sit with these assembled bull-like kings and watch the
 battle that has been arranged between me and Bhima!”

Hearing Dur-yódhana’s words, they all acted accordingly
 and the huge circle of kings sat down, radiant as a circle
 of *aditya* deities in heaven. The glorious and mighty-armed 55.45
 elder brother of Késhava sat down in their midst, honored
 on all sides, great king. As he sat in the middle of those kings
 with his blue robes and bright complexion, he resembled
 the full moon at night when surrounded by stars.

tau tathā tu mahā|rāja gadā|hastau su|duḥ|sahau
 anyonyam vāgbhir ugrābhis takṣamāṇau vyavasthitau.
 a|priyāṇi tato 'nyonyam uktvā tau Kuru|sattamau
 udīkṣantau sthitau vīrau Vṛtra|Śakrau yath” āhave.

VAISAMPĀYANA uvāca:

- 56.1 TATO VĀG|YUDDHAM abhavat tumulaṃ Janamejaya
 yatra duḥkh'|ānvito rājā Dhṛtarāṣṭro 'bravīd idam:
 «dhig astu khalu mānuṣyaṃ yasya niṣṭh” êyam īdṛṣī
 ekādaśa|camū|bhartā yatra putro mam' ân|agha
 ājñāpya sarvān nṛ|patīn bhuktvā c' êmāṃ vasun|dharām
 gadām ādāya vegena padātiḥ prasthito raṇe.
 bhūtvā hi jagato nātho hy a|nātha iva me sutaḥ.
 gadām udyamya yo yāti kim anyad bhāgadheyataḥ?
 56.5 aho duḥkhaṃ mahat prāptaṃ putreṇa mama Sañjaya!»
 evam uktvā sa duḥkh'|ārto virarāma jan'|ādhipaḥ.

SAÑJAYA uvāca:

sa megha|ninado harṣān ninadann iva go|vṛṣaḥ
 ājuhāva tadā Pārthaṃ yuddhāya yudhi vīryavān.
 Bhīmam āhvayamāne tu Kuru|rāje mah”|ātmani
 prādur āsan su|ghoraṇi rūpāṇi vividhāny uta.
 vavur vātāḥ sa|nirghātāḥ pāṃsu|varṣam papāta ca
 babhūvuś ca dīśaḥ sarvās timireṇa samāvṛtāḥ.

THE DUEL

Wielding their maces and extremely difficult to quell, the two warriors then took up position as they cut into each other with fierce words. Saying harsh words to one another, those heroes and best of Kurus stood there glaring at each other, just as Vritra and Shakra once did in their battle.

VAISHAMPÁYANA said:

THERE WAS THEN a tumultuous contest of words, Janam- 56.1
éjaya, regarding which King Dhrita-rashtra said this in his
SORROW:

“How terrible that humans should have the type of end
my son has had! Once the leader of eleven armies, Dur-
yódhana used to command every king and enjoy this earth,
faultless Sánjaya. But he now sets off on foot for the bat-
tlefield, swiftly taking up his mace. Once the lord of the
world, my son now resembles someone lordless. When he
has departed in this way, wielding his mace, what else can
this be but fate? Alas Sánjaya! My son has been afflicted by 56.5
great suffering!”

Saying these words, that lord of the people fell silent,
tormented by suffering.

SÁNJAYA said:

With the rumble of a thundercloud, mighty Dur-yódhana
roared joyfully like a bull as he challenged Pritha’s son to
fight in battle. Various terrifying visions appeared when
the heroic king of the Kurus challenged Bhima. Winds
and hurricanes blew. A shower of dust fell from the sky
and all the directions became covered with darkness. Huge
storms thundered loudly, bringing confusion and making

mahā|svanāḥ su|nirvātās tumulā loma|harṣaṇāḥ
petus tath” ōlkāḥ śataśaḥ sphoṭayantyo nabhas|talān.

56.10 Rāhuś c’ āgrasad ādityam a|parvaṇi viśāṃ pate
cakampe ca mahā|kampaṃ pṛthivī sa|vana|drumā.
dīptās ca vātāḥ pravavur nīcaiḥ śarkara|karṣiṇaḥ
girīṇāṃ śikharāṇy eva nyapatanta mahī|tale.
mṛgā bahu|vidh’|ākārāḥ saṃpatanti diśo daśa
dīptāḥ śivās c’ āpy anadan ghora|rūpāḥ su|dāruṇāḥ.
nirghātās ca mahā|ghorā babhūvur loma|harṣaṇāḥ.
dīptāyāṃ diśi rāj’|ēndra mṛgās c’ ā|śubha|vedinaḥ.
udapāna|gatās c’ āpo vyavardhanta samantataḥ
a|śarīrā mahā|nādāḥ śrūyante sma tadā nṛpa.

56.15 evam|ādīni dṛṣṭv” ātha nimittāni Vṛkodaraḥ
uvāca bhrātaraṃ jyeṣṭhaṃ Dharma|rājaṃ Yudhiṣṭhiram:
«n’ āiṣa śakto raṇe jetuṃ mand’|ātmā māṃ Suyodhanaḥ.
adya krodhaṃ vimokṣyāmi vigūḍhaṃ hṛdaye ciram
Suyodhane Kaurav’|ēndre Khāṇḍave Pāvako yathā.
śalyam ady’ ōddhariṣyāmi tava Pāṇḍava hṛc|chayam
nihatya gadayā pāpam imaṃ Kuru|kul’|ādhamam.
adya kīrti|mayīm mālāṃ pratimokṣyāmy ahaṃ tvayi
hatv” ēmaṃ pāpa|karmāṇaṃ gadayā raṇa|mūrdhani.
ady’ āsya śatadhā dehaṃ bhinadmi gaday” ānayā.
n’ āyaṃ praveṣṭā nagaraṃ punar vāraṇa|sāhvayam.

one's hair stand on end. Hundreds of meteors fell to the ground, bursting through the firmament. Rahu swallowed the sun at an irregular moment and the earth trembled violently, along with its forest and trees, lord of the people. Blazing winds began to blow, pouring down gravel, and mountain peaks fell to the ground. Wild animals with various forms charged about in all ten directions. Terrifying, blazing jackals roared with gruesome appearances. Hideous whirlwinds arose, making one's hair stand on end. The directions blazed brightly and wild beasts heralded ill fortune. The water in the wells swelled on all sides, Your Majesty, and one could hear huge roars that had no physical body as their source. 56.10

Seeing such signs, Vrikódara said these words to his elder brother Yudhi-shthira, the King of Righteousness: 56.15

“It is impossible for dim-witted Su-yódhana to conquer me in battle today. Against Su-yódhana, the king of the Káuravas, I will today release the anger that has long remained hidden in my heart, just as Fire once released his anger onto the Khándava forest. Today I will extract the dart that lies in your heart, Pándava, and with my mace I will kill this sinner, the lowest of the Kuru clan. Slaughtering this evil-doer with my mace at the front of the battlefield, I will today place a garland of glory around your neck. With this mace, I will today split Dur-yódhana's body into a hundred pieces. He will never again enter the elephant-named city of Hástina-pura.

56.20 sarpa'ḷotsargasya śayane viṣa|dānasya bhojane
 Pramāṇakoṭyaṃ pātasya dāhasya jatu|veśmani,
 sabhāyām avahāsasya sarva|sva|haraṇasya ca
 varṣam a|jñāta|vāsasya vana|vāsasya c' ān|agha,
 ady' āntam eṣāṃ duḥkhānāṃ gant' āham Bharata'rṣabha.
 ek'āhnā vinihaty' ēmaṃ bhaviṣyāmy ātmano 'n|rṇaḥ.

ady' āyur Dhṛtarāṣṭrasya dur|mater a|kṛt'ātmanaḥ
 samāptaṃ Bharata|śreṣṭha mātā|pitroś ca darśanam.
 adya saukhyaṃ tu rāj'ēndra Kuru|rājasya dur|mateḥ
 samāptaṃ ca mahā|rāja nārīṇāṃ darśanam punaḥ.
 56.25 ady' āyaṃ Kuru|rājasya Śāntanoḥ kula|pāṃsanaḥ
 prāṇāñ śriyaṃ ca rājyaṃ ca tyaktvā śeṣyati bhū|tale.
 rājā ca Dhṛtarāṣṭro 'dya śrutvā putraṃ nipātitam
 smariṣyaty a|subhaṃ karma yat tac Chakuni|buddhi|jam.»

ity uktvā rāja|śārdūla gadāṃ ādāya vīryavān
 abhyatiṣṭhata yuddhāya Śakro Vṛtram iv' āhvayan.
 tam udyata|gadaṃ drṣṭvā Kailāsam iva śṛṅgiṇam
 Bhīmasenaḥ punaḥ kruddho Duryodhanam uvāca ha:

«rājñāś ca Dhṛtarāṣṭrasya tathā tvam api c' ātmanaḥ
 smara tad duṣ|kṛtaṃ karma yad vṛttaṃ Vāraṇāvate.
 56.30 Draupadī ca parikliṣṭā sabhā|madhye rajasvalā.
 dyūte ca vañcito rājā yat tvayā Saubalena ca.
 vane duḥkhaṃ ca yat prāptaṃ asmābhis tvat|kṛtaṃ mahat
 Virāṭa|nagare c' āiva yony|antara|gatair iva

Dur-yódhana dispatched snakes against me in my sleep. 56.20
 He laced my food with poison. He threw me into the river
 at Pramána-koti. He set fire to the lac house. He laughed
 at us in the assembly hall. He stole all our possessions. We
 endured a life of disguise for a year and a life in the forest,
 faultless Yudhi-shthira.* Today I will end these sufferings,
 bull of the Bharatas. By slaughtering this man, I will erase
 my debts in a single day.

On this day the life of Dhrita-rashtra's foolish and corrupt
 son will come to an end. He will never again see his mother
 and father, best of Bharatas. On this day, king of kings, the
 villainous monarch of the Kurus will cease to be happy and 56.25
 will never again look upon women. On this day he will give
 up his life, glory and kingdom and will lie on the ground,
 having defiled the family of Shántanu's son, that king of
 the Kurus. On this day King Dhrita-rashtra will learn that
 his son has fallen and remember the evil deeds that sprang
 from Shákuni's mind."

Saying these words, tiger-like king, mighty Bhima took
 up his mace and stood ready to fight, like Shakra challenging
 Vritra. When he saw Dur-yódhana wielding his mace and
 looking like the peaked mountain Kailása, Bhima-sena once
 again became filled with rage and said to Dur-yódhana:

"Remember the evil deeds that you and king Dhrita-
 rashtra performed at Varanávata. Dráupadi was wronged in 56.30
 the assembly hall while she was menstruating. Both you and
 Súbala's son deceived King Yudhi-shthira in a game of dice.
 Today I will avenge the great suffering that you caused us,
 both when we were in the forest and when we were living

tat sarvaṃ pātayāmy adya. diṣṭyā dr̥ṣṭo 'si dur|mate!

tvat|kṛte 'sau hataḥ śete śara|talpe pratāpavān
Gāṅgeyo rathināṃ śreṣṭho nihato Yājñaseninā.
hato Droṇas ca Karṇas ca tathā Śalyaḥ pratāpavān
vair'āgner ādi|kart" āsau Śakuniḥ Saubalo hataḥ.
prātikāmī tataḥ pāpo Draupadyāḥ kleśa|kṛdd hataḥ
bhrātaras te hatāḥ sarve sūrā vikrānta|yodhinaḥ.

56.35 ete c' ānye ca bahavo nihatās tvat|kṛte nṛpāḥ.

tvām adya nihaniṣyāmi gadayā. n' ātra saṃśayaḥ.»

ity evam uccai rāj'|ēndra bhāṣamāṇaṃ Vṛkodaram
uvāca gata|bhī rājan putras te satya|vikramaḥ:

«kiṃ katthanena bahunā? yudhyasva tvaṃ Vṛkodara!
adya te 'haṃ vineṣyāmi yuddha|śraddhāṃ kul'ādharma!
na hi Duryodhanaḥ kṣudra kena cit tvad|vidhena vai
śakyas trāsayituṃ vācā yath" ānyaḥ prākṛto naraḥ.

cira|kāl'|ēpsitaṃ diṣṭyā hṛdaya|stham idaṃ mama.
tvayā saha gadā|yuddhaṃ tri|daśair upapāditam.

56.40 kiṃ vācā bahun" ōktena katthitena ca dur|mate?

vāṇī saṃpadyatām eṣā karmaṇā! mā ciraṃ kṛthāḥ!»

tasya tad vacanaṃ śrutvā sarva ev' ābhyapūjayan
rājānaḥ Somakās c' āiva ye tatr' āsan samāgatāḥ.
tataḥ saṃpūjitaḥ sarvaiḥ saṃprahr̥ṣṭa|tanū|ruhaḥ
bhūyo dhīrāṃ matiṃ cakre yuddhāya Kuru|nandanaḥ.
unmattam iva mātaṅgaṃ tala|śabdair nar'ādhipāḥ
bhūyaḥ saṃharṣayāṃ cakrur Duryodhanam a|marṣaṇam.

in Viráta's city, pretending to be men with altered births.
How splendid it is to see you, you villain!

It is because of you that Bhishma, that mighty son of Ganga and best of chariot-warriors, lies dead on a bed of arrows, slaughtered by Yajna-sena's son.* Drona has been killed, as have Karna and mighty Shalya. Shákuni, the son of Súbala—the initiator of this blazing feud—has also been slain. The evil usher who wronged Dráupadi is also dead, and all your heroic and courageous brothers have been slaughtered. These and many other kings have died for your sake. Today I will kill you with my mace. I have no doubt about that.” 56.35

While Vrikódara bellowed in this way, your fearless and truly valiant son replied with these words, king of kings:

“Why all this talk? You should fight, Vrikódara! Today I will dispel your faith in battle, lowest of the Pándava family! Measly wretch, Dur-yódhana is not some ordinary person that can be terrified by the words of a man such as you.

How fortunate I am! This has long been my heart's desire. The gods must have arranged this mace battle with you. What is the use of words and longwinded speeches, you fool? Fulfill your words with action! Cease your delaying!” 56.40

On hearing his words, the kings and the Sómakas who had gathered there all honored Dur-yódhana. Honored by all these men, that delight of the Kurus felt his hair bristle and once again firmly set his heart on battle. By clapping their hands, those lords of men cheered on wrathful Dur-yódhana still further, like men stirring a frenzied elephant.

taṃ mah”|ātmā mah”|ātmānaṃ
 gadām udyamya Pāṇḍavaḥ
 abhidudrāva vegena
 Dhārtarāṣṭraṃ Vṛkodaraḥ.

56.45 bṛṃhanti kuñjarās tatra hayā hreṣanti c’ āśakṛt
 śaṣtrāṇi c’ āpy adīpyanta Pāṇḍavānāṃ jay’|āiṣiṇām.

SAÑJAYA uvāca:

57.1 TATO DURYODHANO dṛṣṭvā Bhīmasenaṃ tathā|gatam
 pratyudyayāv a|dīn’|ātmā vegena mahatā nadan.
 samāpetatur anyonyaṃ śṛṅgiṇau vṛṣabhāv iva
 mahā|nirghāta|ghoṣās ca prahārāṇām ajāyata.
 abhavac ca tayor yuddhaṃ tumulaṃ loma|harṣaṇam
 jigīṣator yath” ānyonyaṃ Indra|Prahādayor iva.
 rudhir’|ōkṣita|sarv’|āṅgau gadā|hastau manasvinau
 dadṛśāte mah”|ātmānau puspitāv iva kiṃśukau.

57.5 tathā tasmin mahā|yuddhe vartamāne su|dāruṇe
 kha|dyota|saṅghair iva khaṃ darśanīyaṃ vyarocata.
 tathā tasmin vartamāne saṃkule tumule bhṛṣam
 ubhāv api pariśrāntau yudhyamānāv arin|damau.
 tau muhūrtaṃ samāśvasya punar eva paran|tapau
 abhyahārayat’ ānyonyaṃ saṃpragrhya gade śubhe.

tau tu dṛṣṭvā mahā|vīryau samāśvastau nara’|ṛṣabhau
 balināu vāraṇau yadvad vāsit”|ārthe mad’|ōtkāṭau,
 samāna|vīryau saṃprekṣya pragrḥīta|gadāv ubhau
 vismayaṃ paramaṃ jagmur deva|gandharva|mānavāḥ.

57.10 pragrḥīta|gadau dṛṣṭvā Duryodhana|Vṛkodarau
 saṃśayaḥ sarva|bhūtānāṃ vijaye samapadyata.
 samāgamyā tato bhūyo bhrātarau balināṃ varau
 anyonyasy’ āntara|prepsū pracakrāte ’ntaraṃ prati.

THE DUEL

Raising his mace, Vrikódara, the heroic son of Pandu, then swiftly charged against the heroic son of Dhrita-rashtra.

Elephants trumpeted, horses neighed repeatedly, and the weapons of the Pándavas blazed in their desire for victory. 56.45

SÁNJAYA said:

WHEN DUR-YÓDHANA saw Bhima-sena charging forward in this way, he counter-attacked him with great speed, roaring passionately. The two men clashed together like horned bulls and the noise of their blows boomed like a huge thunderstorm. The battle between them was tumultuous and hair-raising—like the battle between Indra and Prahláda—with both men eager to conquer the other. Wielding their maces, the spirited heroes looked like flowering *kínshuka* trees as all their limbs became drenched in blood.* During that great and horrific battle, the sky glistened beautifully as if with swarms of fireflies. During that extremely chaotic and tumultuous battle, both enemy-tamers became exhausted from their fighting. But after they had rested a while, the enemy-scorchers once again took up their splendid maces and attacked one another. 57.1

Equal in strength, the powerful bull-like men were like mighty elephants intoxicated with passion for a cow on heat. Gods, *gandhárvas*, and humans all felt extreme wonder as they gazed at the rested men and watched them brandishing their maces. When they saw Dur-yódhana and Vrikódara wielding their maces, every living creature felt unsure as to who would win. Clashing together once more, the two brothers and champions among powerful men attacked each other, eager to find their opponent's weaknesses. 57.10



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The main event of this second half of “Shalya” is the decisive mace battle between two sworn enemies, Bhima and Dur-yódhana, at the end of the war of the Bharatas.

In salutary contrast, the greater part of the volume describes Bala-rama’s purificatory acts of worship on his pilgrimage, away from the horrors of the bloodshed.

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NEW YORK UNIVERSITY PRESS
Washington Square
New York, NY 10003
www.nyupress.org

ISBN 978-0-8147-5737-6



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