

Notes for “The Battle at the Gate”

DAY 6 [KŪṬIYĀṬṬAM DAY 3]

performed by NEPATHYA
at the
University of Chicago Delhi Center

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

| | |
|-----------|---------------------------|
| RĀVAṆA | Margi Madhu Chakyar |
| HANUMAT | Nepathya Yadukrishnan |
| VIBHĪṢAṆA | Nepathya Vishnuprasad |
| RĀKṢASA 1 | Nepathya Rahul Chakyar |
| RĀKṢASA 2 | Nepathya Sreehari Chakyar |

MUSICIANS

| | |
|---------|---|
| MIZHAVU | Kalanilaya Manikandan Nepathya Jinesh Kalanilaya Sivaprasad Kalanilaya Vijay |
| EDAKKA | Kalanilaya Rajan |
| THALAM | Dr. Indu G. |
| CHUTTI | Kalanilaya Ravi Kumar |

Text from [Wurzburg Bhāsa Project](#) (Mathias Ahlborn)
Translation by Andrew Ollett

RĀVAṆAḤ — [*vicintya*] bhōḥ kaṣṭam.

acintyā manasā laṅkā sahitaiḥ suradānavaiḥ
abhibhūya daśagrīvaṁ praviṣṭaḥ kila vānaraḥ [11]

NOTE: As with most of the verses (numbered in this text), the actor will perform this verse *twice*: the first time *with recitation*, following the Sanskrit word order, with *mudrās* indexed to the Sanskrit words, and the second time *silently*, with only the *mudrās*, but this time the *mudrās* will follow a standard word order (called *anvayaḥ*, as explained in the workshop). Then he will perform the verse a *third* time, this time reciting the text.

api ca —

jitvā trailōkyam ājau
sasuradanusutaṁ yan mayā garvitena
krāntvā kailāsam īśaṁ
svagaṇaparivṛtaṁ sākam ākampya devyā
labdhvā tasmāt prasādaṁ
punar agasutayā nandinānāḍṛtatvād
dattaṁ śaptaṁ ca tābhyāṁ
yadi kapivikṛticchadmanā tan mama syāt [12]

NOTE: Again the actor performs the verse twice, once following the Sanskrit word order, and then with the words rearranged in the prose order (*anvayaḥ*). In this case, however, he begins telling the story of how Rāvaṇa attacked Kailāsa, and this story departs from the Sanskrit text. This story is enacted entirely in gestures, the meaning of which is glossed in the workshop (8:32–25:30). This includes a description of Rāvaṇa taking the *puṣpaka-vimāna* from Kubera, a description of Mount Kailāsa, a description of Śiva and Pārvatī. Pārvatī starts out by being jealous of Gaṅgā, who is in Śiva's hair, but her jealousy gradually turns into fear as Rāvaṇa shakes the mountain.

[*tataḥ praviśati* VIBHĪṢAṆAḤ]

RĀVAṆAḤ — [*thinking*] How terrible!

Even in their thoughts, the gods and
demons together could not visit Laṅkā.
And they say a monkey has come here,
in defiance of Rāvaṇa? [11]

What's more —

Once I proudly conquered in battle the three worlds,
together with the sons of the gods and demons,
and attacked Mount Kailāsa, making Śiva
and Pārvatī shudder, surrounded by their hosts,
I obtained a favor from him, but because I
paid no respect to Pārvatī and Nandin,
they cursed me — could it be that this is my curse
from them, in the form of this monkey's appearance? [12]

[*Thereupon enters* VIBHĪṢAṆA]

VIBHĪṢAṆAḤ — [*savimarśam*] ahō mahārājasya viparītā khalu
buddhiḥ samvṛttā. kutaḥ.

mayōktō maithilī tasmai bahuśō diyatām iti
na mē śṇōti vacanaṁ suhrdām śōkakāraṇāt [13]

[*upētya*] jayatu mahārājah.

RĀVAṆAḤ — vibhīṣaṇa ēhy ēhi. [*upaviśya*]

VIBHĪṢAṆAḤ — ēṣa ēṣa upaviśāmi [*upaviśati*]

RĀVAṆAḤ — vibhīṣaṇa nirviṇṇam iva tvām lakṣayē.

VIBHĪṢAṆAḤ — nirvēda ēva khalv anuktagrāhiṇaṁ svāminam
upāśritasya bhr̥tyajanasya.

RĀVAṆAḤ — chidyatām ēṣā kathā. tvam api tāvad vānaram ānaya.

VIBHĪṢAṆAḤ — yad ājñāpayati mahārājah. [*niṣkrāntaḥ*]

[*tataḥ pravīśati rākṣasair gr̥hīto* HANŪMĀN]

SARVE — āḥ ita itaḥ.

VIBHĪṢAṆA — [*Reflecting*] Oh god, the king's intentions have gone
from bad to worse. For

Many times I told him to give Sītā back to him.
It pains his friends that he does not listen to my words. [13]

[*Approaching*] Hail, king.

RĀVAṆA — Come, Vibhīṣaṇa. [*Sitting down*]

VIBHĪṢAṆA — Here I am. [*He sits down*]

RĀVAṆA — Vibhīṣaṇa, you look a bit upset to me.

VIBHĪṢAṆA — Of course a servant will be upset when the master he
depends on doesn't listen to what he's told.

RĀVAṆA — This conversation is over. Go and fetch that monkey at
once.

VIBHĪṢAṆA — As the king commands. [*Exits.*]

[*Thereupon enters* HANUMĀN, *held by Rākṣasas.*]

ALL — Hey, over here!

HANŪMĀN —

naivāhaṃ dharṣitas tēna nairṛtēna durātmanā
svayaṃ grahaṇam āpannō rākṣasēsādidṛkṣayā [14]

NOTE: After giving the prose word-order for this verse, Margi Madhu tells, in *mudrās*, the back-story of Hanumat's arrival at Rāvaṇa's palace, starting from his traversal of the ocean, to his visiting Sītā in the *aśōka* grove and giving her a message from Rāma, to his destruction of the *aśōka* grove, the tricks he played on the Rākṣasas and the ensuing battle. When he is brought before Rāvaṇa, he taunts him.

[*upagamyā*] bhō rājan api kuśalī bhavān.

NOTE: As Indu notes in the workshop (52:00), the *mudrās* that accompany Hanumat's speech actually mean "Did you perform the funeral ceremony for your son yet?"

RĀVAṆAḤ — [*sāvajñam*] vibhīṣaṇa kim asya tat karma.

VIBHĪṢAṆAḤ — mahārāja atō 'py adhikam.

RĀVAṆAḤ — katham tvam avagacchasi.

VIBHĪṢAṆA — praṣṭum arhati mahārājaḥ kas tvam iti.

RĀVAṆAḤ — bhō vānara kas tvam. kēna kāraṇena dharṣito 'smākam
antaḥpuram praviṣṭaḥ.

HANUMĀN — bhōḥ śrūyatām

añjanāyām samutpannō mārutasyaaurasaḥ sutaḥ
prēṣitō rāghavēṇāhaṃ hanūmān nāma vānaraḥ [15]

NOTE: This verse, and those that follow, is not given an explanation in prose word order.

HANŪMĀN —

No, that evil Rākṣasa didn't overpower me.
I let myself fall into their grasp
because I wanted to see the Lord of the Rākṣasas. [14]

[*Approaching*] Why hello, king. Are you well?

RĀVAṆA — [*Dismissively*] Vibhīṣaṇa, is he the one who did this?

VIBHĪṢAṆA — King, it's even worse than this.

RĀVAṆAḤ — What makes you think that?

VIBHĪṢAṆA — The king should ask him who he is.

RĀVAṆAḤ — Hey, monkey, who are you? What's the reason you got caught in my palace?

HANUMAT — I'll tell you.

I am legitimate son of the Wind God, born of Añjanā,
sent here by Rāma. I am the monkey Hanumat. [15]

VIBHĪṢAṆAḤ — mahārāja kim śrutam.

RĀVAṆAḤ — kim śrutēna.

VIBHĪṢAṆAḤ — hanūman kim āha tatrabhavān rāghavaḥ.

HANUMĀN — bhōḥ śrūyatām rāmaśāsanam.

RĀVAṆAḤ — katham katham rāmaśāsanam ity āha. āḥ hanyatām
ayaṁ vānaraḥ

VIBHĪṢAṆAḤ — prasīdatu prasīdatu mahārājaḥ. sarvāparādhēṣv
avadhyāḥ khalu dūtāḥ. athavā rāmasya vacanaṁ śrutvā paścād
yathēṣṭaṁ kartum arhati mahārājaḥ.

RĀVAṆAḤ — bhō vānara kim āha sa mānuṣaḥ

HANUMĀN — bhōḥ śrūyatām

varaśaraṇam upēhi śaṅkaraṁ vā
praviśa ca durgatamaṁ rasātalam vā
śaravaraparibhinnasarvagātraṁ
yamasadanaṁ pratiyāpayāmy ahaṁ tvām [16]

iti.

VIBHĪṢAṆA — Did you hear, king?

RĀVAṆA — What if I did?

VIBHĪṢAṆA — Hanumat, what does the honorable Rāma say?

HANUMAT — I'll tell you Rāma's orders.

RĀVAṆA — What? How is he going to call them "Rāma's orders"? Just
kill this monkey.

VIBHĪṢAṆA — Please wait, king. Messengers must not be killed, no
matter how offensive they are. Rather, listen to what Rāma says,
and afterwards you may do as you wish.

RĀVAṆA — Monkey, what does that human say?

HANUMAT — I'll tell you.

Either take refuge with Śiva, who granted you a favor,
or go to the underworld, where you'll be hardest to reach:
I will lacerate your body with my arrows
and send you to the world of Yama. [16]

RĀVAṆAḤ — ha ha ha.

divyāstrais tridaśagaṇā mayābhibhūtā
daityēndrā mama vaśavartinaḥ samastāḥ
paulastyō 'py apahr̥tapuṣpako 'vasannō
bhō rāmaḥ katham abhiyāti mānuṣō mām [17]

HANUMĀN — evaṁvidhēna bhavatā kimartham pracchannam tasya
dārāpaharaṇam kṛtam.

VIBHĪṢAṆAḤ — samyag āha hanumān.

apāsya māyayā rāmam tvayā rākṣasapuṅgava
bhikṣuvēṣam samāsthāya cchalēnāpahṛtā hi sā [18]

RĀVAṆAḤ — vibhīṣaṇa kim śatrupakṣam avalambasē

VIBHĪṢAṆAḤ —

prasīda rājan vacanam hitam mē
pradiyatām rāghavadharmapatnī
idam kulaṁ rākṣasapuṅgavēna
tvayā hi nēcchāmi vipadyamānam [19]

RĀVAṆAḤ — vibhīṣaṇa alam alam bhayēna.

katham lambaṣaṭaḥ simhō mṛgēṇa vinipātyatē
gajō vā sumahān mattaḥ sṛgālēna nihanyatē [20]

RĀVAṆA — Oh really?

I overpowered hosts of gods with my divine weapons.
I made all of the demon lords submit to me.
Kubēra, too, is sad that I stole his *vimāna*.
How then is Rāma, a human being, to attack me? [17]

HANUMAT — If you are so great, why did you have to steal his wife by
deceit?

VIBHĪṢAṆA — Hanumat is right.

You used magic to send Rāma away,
best of Rākṣasas, and you put on
the disguise of an ascetic to steal her by deceit. [18]

RĀVAṆA — Are you taking my enemy's side, Vibhīṣaṇa?

VIBHĪṢAṆA —

Please, king. I am telling you for your own good.
Give back Rāma's lawfully wedded wife.
I don't want this family to be undone
by you, best among Rākṣasas. [19]

RĀVAṆA — Enough of your cowardice, Vibhīṣaṇa.

How can a lion with a long mane be beaten by a deer,
or a great rutting elephant killed by a jackal? [20]

HANUMĀN — bhō rāvaṇa vipadyamānabhāgyēna bhavatā kim
yuktaṁ rāghavam ēvaṁ vaktum. mā tāvad bhōḥ

naktañcarāpaśada rāvaṇa rāghavam taṁ
vīragraganyaṁ atulaṁ tridaśēndrakalpam
prakṣiṇapunya bhavatā bhuvanaikanāthaṁ
vaktuṁ kim ēvaṁ ucitaṁ gatasāra nīcaiḥ [21]

RĀVAṆAḤ — kathaṁ nāmābhiddhattē. hanyatām ayaṁ vānaraḥ.
athavā dūtavadhaḥ khalu vacanīyah. śaṅkukaṛṇa lāṅgūlam ādīpya
visṛjyatām ayaṁ vānaraḥ.

ŚAṆKUKARṆAḤ — yad ājñāpayati mahārājaḥ. ita itaḥ.

RĀVAṆAḤ — athavā ēhi tāvat.

HANUMĀN — ayam asmi.

RĀVAṆAḤ — abhidhīyatām madvacanāt sa mānuṣaḥ
abhibhūtō mayā rāma dārāpaharaṇād asi
yadi tē 'sti dhanuḥślāghā diyatām mē raṇō mahān [22]

HANUMĀN — acirād draṅṣyasi.

abhihatavaravapragopurātṭām
raghuvarakārmukanādanirjitas tvam
harigaṇaparipīḍitaiḥ samantāt
pramadavanair abhisamvṛtām svalaṅkāṁ [23]

HANUMAT — Now Rāvaṇa, how is it proper for you, on the verge of
disaster, to speak of Rāma like that? Of course it isn't.

Rāvaṇa, you disgrace to the Rākṣasas, is it appropriate
for you to speak this way about Rāma, the foremost
among heroes, unequalled, resembling the Lord of the Gods
— you worthless villain, with no good *karma* left? [21]

RĀVAṆA — Now he's using my name? Just kill this monkey. No, people
will say I've killed a messenger. Śaṅkukaṛṇa, light his tail on fire
and let him go.

ŚAṆKUKARṆA — As the king commands. Over here!

RĀVAṆA — Wait. Just come here.

HANUMAT — Here I am.

RĀVAṆA — Tell that human something for me.

Rāma, you were already defeated when I stole
your wife. Go ahead and give me battle,
if you want to think you are a good archer. [22]

HANUMAT — Soon enough you'll see

This Lāṅkā of yours with its beautiful walls and ramparts
destroyed, the gardens surrounding it packed with
monkeys everywhere you turn, and you yourself
vanquished by the twang of Rāma's bow. [23]

RĀVAṆAḤ — āḥ nirvāsyatām ayaṁ vānaraḥ.

RĀVAṆA — Get this monkey out of here.

RĀKṢASĀḤ — āḥ ita itaḥ.

RĀKṢASAS — Alright, this way!

[*rakṣobhiḥ saha niṣkrānto* HANŪMĀN]

[HANŪMAT *exits with the Rākṣasas.*]

VIBHĪṢAṆAḤ — prasīdatu prasīdatu mahārājaḥ. asti kācid vivakṣā mahārājasya hitam antarēṇa.

VIBHĪṢAṆA — Please, king. There's something I want to say, for the king's own good.

RĀVAṆAḤ — ucyatām tac chrēyō vayam api śrōtāraḥ

RĀVAṆA — Go ahead and say it. I do take heed of what is good.

VIBHĪṢAṆAḤ — sarvathā rākṣasakulasya vināśō 'bhyāgata iti manyē.

VIBHĪṢAṆA — I think the total destruction of the Rākṣasa clan is at hand.

RĀVAṆAḤ — katham iva.

RĀVAṆA — And why is that?

VIBHĪṢAṆAḤ — mahārājasya vipratipattyā.

VIBHĪṢAṆA — Because of the king's mistake.

RĀVAṆAḤ — kā mē vipratipattiḥ.

RĀVAṆA — And what was my mistake?

VIBHĪṢAṆAḤ — nanu sītāpaharaṇam eva.

VIBHĪṢAṆA — Stealing Sītā, of course.

RĀVAṆAḤ — sītāpaharaṇēna kō dōṣaḥ syāt?

RĀVAṆA — What was wrong with stealing Sītā?

VIBHĪṢAṆAḤ — adharmāś ca ...

VIBHĪṢAṆA — It was wrong, and...

RĀVAṆAḤ — caśabdēna sāvaśēṣam iva tē vacanam. tad brūhi.

RĀVAṆA — You said “and.” What else did you mean to say?

VIBHĪṢAṆAḤ — tad ēva nanu.

RĀVAṆAḤ — vibhīṣaṇa kiṁ gūhasē mama khalu prāṇaiḥ śāpitaḥ
syāḥ yadi satyaṁ na brūyāḥ.

VIBHĪṢAṆAḤ — abhayaṁ dātum arhati mahārājaḥ.

RĀVAṆAḤ — dattam abhayam. ucyatām.

VIBHĪṢAṆAḤ — balavadvigrahaś ca.

RĀVAṆAḤ — [*sarōṣam*] katham katham balavadvigrahō nāma

śatrupakṣam upāśritya mām ayaṁ rākṣasādhamah
krōdham āhārayaṁs tīvram abhīrur abhibhāṣatē [24]

kō 'tra.

mamānavēkṣya saubhrātraṁ śatrupakṣam upāśritam
nōtsahē puratō draṣṭuṁ tasmād ēṣa nirasyatām [25]

VIBHĪṢAṆA — That's it, alright?

RĀVAṆA — Vibhīṣaṇa, what are you hiding? I swear to you on my life
that if you don't tell me the truth...

VIBHĪṢAṆA — The king should grant me freedom from fear.

RĀVAṆA — Granted. Now tell me.

VIBHĪṢAṆA — And hostility with a stronger enemy.

RĀVAṆA — [*Angrily*] What do you mean "hostility with a stronger
enemy"?

You take my enemy's side,
you pitiful excuse for a Rākṣasa.
You have to be brave to speak to me like this,
making my anger run hot. [24]

Who is this person?

He thought nothing of being my brother
and took my enemy's side. I can't stand
to look at him. Get him out of here. [25]

VIBHĪṢAṆAḤ — prasīdatu prasīdatu mahārājaḥ. aham ēva yāsyāmi.

śāsītō 'ham tvayā rājan prayāmi na ca dōṣavān
tyaktvā rōṣaṁ ca kāmāṁ ca yathā kāryaṁ tathā kuru [26]

[*parikramya*] ayam idānīm

adyaiva taṁ kamalalōcanaṁ ugracāpaṁ
rāmaṁ hi rāvaṇavadhāya kṛtapratijñam
saṁśritya saṁśritahitaprathitaṁ nṛdēvaṁ
naṣṭaṁ niśācarakulaṁ punar uddhariṣyē [27]

[*niṣkrāntaḥ*]

RĀVAṆAḤ — hanta nirgatō vibhīṣaṇaḥ. yāvad aham api
nagararakṣāṁ sampādayāmi. [*niṣkrāntaḥ*]

NOTE: Rāvaṇa's exit is followed by a performance-final ritual (*muṭiyakkita*).

VIBHĪṢAṆA — Please, king. I'll go myself.

It is at your command that I leave, king,
not because of any wrong I have done.
Please what you need to do,
without any anger or desire. [26]

[*Circling the stage*] I am now the one who

This very day will take refuge with Rāma
the lotus-eyed and fierce-bowed, well-known for
being good to those who take refuge with him,
the divine man who has resolved to kill Rāvaṇa,
and once it is destroyed, I will raise up again
the clan of Rākṣasas. [27]

[*He exits.*]

RĀVAṆA — Vibhīṣaṇa's gone, thank god. Now I need to attend to the
city's protection. [*He exits.*]