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**Dasharatha** king of Ayodhya had no children. So he arranged a *Putra-kameshti* sacrifice (*putra* = son *kameshti* = that which is desired). At the sacrifice [Agni](https://www.ancient.eu/Agni/) (god of fire) arose from the flames and handed the king a golden vase brimming with nectar. "Give this to your queens" said the god and disappeared. The king had three wives. To the eldest the king gave half of the nectar; the second queen got a portion that remained when the queen had drunk her half. To the youngest queen the king gave the remaining half of the nectar and again the second queen got the portion that remained. In time the queens gave birth to sons: to the eldest was born **Rama** to the youngest was born  **Bharatha** and to the second queen were born the twins **Lakshmana** and **Shatrughna**.

When the princes had grown up some the sage **Vishwamitra** arrived at **Dasharatha** court and asked that **Rama** and **Lakshmana** be "lent" to him to help him rid his hermitage of the demons that were plaguing the *ashram* dwellers by defiling their sacrifices with blood and bones and by killing them off. After the two princes successfully rid the *ashram* of the demons the sage took them to the neighbouring kingdom of Mithila to show them the *swayamvar* festivities of the Mithila princess **Sita** born of the earth. The king of that country had adopted **Sita** as his daughter and after **Sita** had grown up had declared that he would give her in marriage to anyone who could string the Great Bow of [**Shiva**](https://www.ancient.eu/shiva/). No one could. Several kings princes and commoners had tried and failed.

The *swayamvar* had been in progress for several months now and the bow still remained unstrung. It was to this place that the sage **Vishwamitra** brought the two princes of Ayodhya. **Rama** and Lakshamn entered the assembly hall where the bow was displayed in all its glory. **Rama** walked over picked up the bow strung it and plucked the bowstring with such a twang that two things happened simultaneously: the twang was heard for miles around and the force of it broke the bow into two with so great a sound that the king and his courtiers came running from their chambers to see what the commotion was about. When the confusion had settled **Rama** was married to **Sita**. His three brothers were married to a sister and cousins of **Sita** and there were many festivities and much rejoicing in the two kingdoms.

Some time later **Dasharatha** decided he had grown too old to rule and declared he would abdicate in favour of **Rama** the eldest born and the crown prince. This is when his youngest queen invoked an old promise that**Dasharatha** had made to her: she demanded that **Rama** be exiled for 14 years and that her own son  **Bharatha** be crowned king.**Dasharatha** refused but **Rama** decided to honour his father old promise and left for the forests. He was accompanied by **Sita** and by **Lakshmana** both of whom could not be dissuaded from following him. In grief at the injustice of it all and at **Rama** departure **Dasharatha** died within two days.

**Bharatha** was not in Ayodhya when these events happened; he and the fourth prince **Shatrughna** were away holidaying at  **Bharatha** maternal grandfather country. They were summoned to Ayodhya in haste and when  **Bharatha** learnt what had happened he was furious. He shouted at his mother refused to ascend the throne and gathered the townsfolk around him to proceed to the forest and bring **Rama** back.

**Rama** refused to return stating his intention to serve his father last wish by being an exile for the full 14 years.  **Bharatha** returned with **Rama** sandals placed them on the throne and proceeded to rule the country in **Rama** name. Meanwhile **Rama** moved further south even deeper into the forests so that the people of Ayodhya would not find it easy to keep coming to his hut and begging him to return.

One day a demoness named **Shurpanakha** saw **Rama** and being charmed out of her wits by his beauty walked up to him and begged him to marry her. "I already have a wife" said **Rama** and pointed to **Sita**. "Why don't you marry my brother **Lakshmana** instead?" When **Shurpanakha** turned towards **Lakshmana** he declared he'd taken a temporary vow of celibacy and sent her back to **Rama**. What followed was that the brothers took turns to thus play ping-pong with her and when **Shurpanakha** by now angry beyond measure rushed towards **Sita** to kill her **Lakshmana** cut off **Shurpanakha** nose and ears.

**Shurpanakha** flew towards Lanka (modern Sri Lanka) ruled by her brother **Ravana** and complained. Enraged **Ravana** vowed vengeance. He persuaded the demon **Maricha** to disguise himself as a golden deer and wander near **Rama** hut. When **Sita** saw the golden deer she begged **Rama** to get it for her. When the brothers were out pursuing the deer **Ravana** arrived abducted **Sita** placed her in his flying [**chariot**](https://www.ancient.eu/chariot/) and flew through the skies to Lanka. When the princes after having killed the golden deer and discovered it was a demon in disguise returned to their hut they found it empty and started to look for **Sita**.

During their wanderings the princes came upon a group of monkeys who showed them some ornaments of **Sita** : the monkeys had seen a beautiful lady crying and dropping her ornaments from a chariot in the sky that was being driven southwards by a demon.

Among the monkeys was **Hanuman** who ultimately located **Sita** whereabouts to be in **Ravana** kingdom in Lanka. **Rama** gained the help of the monkey chief **Sugriva** gathered a monkey army marched southwards built a bridge across the ocean and crossed over to Lanka. **Rama** after an epic [**battle**](https://www.ancient.eu/battle/) was then able to kill **Ravana** and finally free **Sita**. When **Sita** walked up to **Rama** however he refused to accept her since she had been a living in a demon palace all this while. Hurt **Sita** entered into a burning pyre intending to give up her life. However Agni rose from the flames carrying an unhurt **Sita** in his arms and said: Here **Rama** is your **Sita**. She has not an iota of sin in her. (*Valmiki Ramayana* 6.118)

Since the 14 years were over by now **Rama** then returned to Ayodhya was crowned king and ruled the kingdom with great wisdom: no child died before their parents did no door needed locks against robbers no farmland lay barren no tree went fruitless and there was peace and prosperity all around.

The *Ramayana* as composed by **Valmiki** is thought to have six chapters and to end at this happy point. A seventh chapter called the *Uttar-Ramayana* (*uttar* = post after that which comes later) continues the story and ends on a slightly less happy note. This is how the story continues: After many months of **Rama** rule rumours began to surface among the populace regarding **Sita** chastity since she had been abducted and imprisoned by a demon. Mindful of the feelings of his subjects **Rama** asked **Sita** to undergo an *Agni Pareeskha* again. **Sita** refused whereupon **Rama** banished her. **Lakshmana** was deputed to escort her out of the kingdom; he did so unwillingly and left **Sita** near the hermitage of **Valmiki**.

**Sita** was pregnant at that time. **Valmiki** took her in as an *ashram* inmate and **Sita** gave birth to her twins there: sons named **Lava** and **Kusha** whom **Valmiki** brought up with great love and affection teaching them princely skills such as archery as well as scholarly skills such as the [***Vedas***](https://www.ancient.eu/Vedas/) and other scriptures. **Valmiki** also taught them to sing the *Ramayana* which he had finished composing by this time. The twins who were unaware of their parentage and hence unaware that they were singing about their own family would recite the poem at gatherings. They became so well-loved for their sweet recitation that their fame reached **Rama** ears who summoned them for a performance. It was here at **Rama** court that the true story was revealed to the twins: that they spitting images of the king were his sons and that their mother was none other than the **Sita** whom they sang of.

**Rama** in remorse asked **Sita** to return to the palace if she could prove her chastity again before an assembly. **Sita** in anguish cried out "O mother earth just take me away from this place forever!" Whereupon the ground parted the goddess **Prithivi** arose on a golden throne took **Sita** in her lap descended and the rift closed. **Sita** was forever lost. Griefstricken **Rama** decided to live no longer. He abdicated the throne in favour of his sons and along with his brothers entered the waters of the river Sarayu that skirted Ayodhya; their spirits left their bodies and ascended to the heavens.

The son of King **Dasharatha** and Queen **Kaushalya** **Rama** is the prince of Ayodya. He is an avatara of **Vishnu** the Blue God and the sustainer of worlds. He is also a virtuous strong and just man in his own right. He is married to **Sita** whom he loves deeply. He has a strong bond with his brother **Lakshmana** as well.

**Sita** father King **Janaka** found her lying in a furrow on sanctified ground and decided to raise her as his daughter. She marries **Rama** and loves him so much that she follows him into exile. She is famed for her virtue and beauty and is regarded as an avatara of the goddess Lakshmi **Vishnu** consort.

**Ravana** is a rakshasa who performed penance for the God **Shiva** for many years and in return received a great blessing from the God: he cannot be killed by any God demon or other divine being. His arrogance combined with great intelligence and power has led him to rule over much of the earth spreading terrible evil everywhere he goes.

Son of King **Dasharatha** and brother of **Rama**. He is deeply devoted to his brother whom he follows through many dangerous adventures and quests. He is married to **Sita** younger sister **Urmila**.

King of Ayodhya father of **Rama** **Lakshmana**  **Bharatha** and **Shatrughna**. Of all his three sons he loves **Rama** most deeply and tries to shelter the boy from any danger. He is a good king: kind just and well-liked by his people.

**Vishwamitra** is a great sage and wise man who was once a king. Through long meditation he gained a number of magical powers. He takes **Rama** on a quest to defeat a demon and to lift the bow of **Shiva** the first step in the future king great journey.

Ganga is a goddess the daughter of Himavan. Because of her incomparable beauty she was given to the Devas and she became the Milky Way. Later **Shiva** brought her down to earth and she became the river Ganges.

**Shiva** is part of the great trinity in Hindusim along with **Vishnu** and Brahma. He is a great ascetic and often sits in meditation. He is able to tame the power of other gods devas and supernatural beings and he often grants blessings and wishes to those who sit in dedication meditation ('tapasya'). His wife is Parvati.

Along with **Kusha** one of the youths to whom **Valmiki** taught the **Rama**yana was **Lava**. He is one of the sons of **Rama** but he does not know this.

Along with **Lava** one of the youths to whom **Valmiki** taught the **Rama**yana was **Kushaa**. He is one of the sons of **Rama** but he does not know this.

## **Vasishta** **w**as Guru to King **Dasharatha** he offers religious advice to the king and the royal family.

**Kaikeyi** is the third and youngest wife of King **Dasharatha** and mother of  **Bharatha**. She is famed for her beauty. After she saved the life of **Dasharatha** in battle he offered to grant anything she would ask of him. **Kaikeyi** later calls in this favor to have  **Bharatha** crowned king and **Rama** sent into the forest inspired by the worlds of her maid **Manthara**.

**Sumitra** is the Second wife of **Dasharatha** and is the mother of **Lakshmana** and **Shatrughna**.

## **Kaushalya** is the first wife of **Dasharatha** and mother of **Rama**. She is the oldest wife and very kind and wise. She does not have a close relationship with her husband but she loves her son **Rama** very deeply.

## **Manthara** **is** An old maid of **Kaikeyi** . She is a wicked woman and gives **Kaikeyi** the idea to ask **Dasharatha** to exile **Rama** and crown **Bharatha** king instead.

## Kaushalya is the Wife of **Dasharatha** mother of **Rama**. She is wise and kind but she is not close with her husband; the greatest joy in her life is **Rama**.

## Bharata is the Son of King **Dasharatha** and Queen **Kaikeyi** he is half-brother to **Rama** **Lakshmana** and **Shatrughna**. He is devoted to his brother **Rama** and he tries desperately to undo the damage committed by his mother **Kaikeyi**.

## Shatrughna is the Son of King **Dasharatha** and Queen **Sumitra** (she drank two sips from the sacred cup and consequently had twins). His twin brother is **Lakshmana** and his half-brothers are **Rama** and **Bharatha**. He follows his brother **Bharatha** everywhere.

## **Shurpanakha** is The sister of **Ravana** she is a powerful rakshasi. She attempts to seduce **Rama** and kill **Sita** but the princely brothers attack her. She tries to muster the rakshasa army against **Rama**.

## **Maricha** is A rakshasa uncle of **Ravana**. **Rama** defeated him with a purifying magical weapon and he renounced his evil ways to become a rishi.

## **Jatayu** is A powerful golden eagle who speaks in the voice of a human being. He was loyal to King **Dasharatha** and pledges his service to **Rama**. **Jatayu** dies defending **Sita** from **Ravana**. **Sugriva** was usurped by his brother **Vali** and pledges his service to **Rama** and **Lakshmana** if they can restore him to his throne.

## **Hanuman** is the Advisor to **Sugriva**. He is the son of the wind god **Vayu** and a vanari woman.

## **Angada** is A vanara youth son of **Vali** and nephew of **Sugriva**. He is brave and intelligent.

## **Vibhishana** is the Young brother of **Ravana**. Though he is a rakshasa he is wise and good. When **Ravana** refuses to listen to his counsel he joins **Rama** army.

## **Sampati** is A great golden eagle brother of **Jatayu**. His wings were burned when he flew too close to the son.

## **Indrajit** is The favorite son of **Ravana** and his most powerful warrior. He earned his name after he captured Indra the king of the gods.

## **Kumbhakarna** is **Ravana** brother. He is a giant with infinite strength who sleeps for six months at a time before waking up and eating everything he can see.

**Rama** is the titular protagonist and the first son of King **Dasharatha**. Though in this story **Rama** is a human he actually an avatar of the god [**Vishnu**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/vishnu) who decided to take a human form in order to kill the evil rakshasa (demon) [**Ravana**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/ravana). Because of this **Rama** true identity is identifiable by his desire to rid the world of evil. He exceptionally strong and skilled in battle which is also an early clue to those around him that he an incarnation of **Vishnu**. **Rama** uses this strength to string **Shiva** bow and win [**Sita**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/sita) hand in marriage. Though every citizen of Kosala wants **Rama** to be king **Rama** demonstrates his intense loyalty and honor when he insists that **Dasharatha** uphold his promise to [**Kaikeyi**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/kaikeyi) one of his wives and crown **Rama** brother  [**Bharatha**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/bharatha) king instead. **Rama** retreats to the forests with **Sita** and his brother [**Lakshmana**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/lakshmana) for 14 years during which time **Rama** battles demons and rakshasas. When **Ravana** kidnaps **Sita** **Rama** works closely with the monkeys of Kiskinda to rescue her. During the fight with **Ravana** **Rama** behaves honorably by allowing **Ravana** time to recover from fainting spells and even doubts the legitimacy and righteousness of his victory when he notices an injury on **Ravana** back and fears that he inflicted it while **Ravana** fled. Though **Rama** has a streak of jealousy and possessiveness especially when it comes to **Sita** (and even moreso in a later episode that is left out of this version of the epic) in general he is presented as the ideal hero and man

**Sita** is [**Rama**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/rama) wife and the incarnation of the goddess [Lakshmi](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters) **Vishnu** wife—**Sita** was literally made for **Rama**. In the human world [King **Janaka**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/king-janaka) found the infant **Sita** in a plowed field and raised her as his own. To protect her from unsuitable callers **Janaka** set the test that any man who wished to marry **Sita** must be able to string **Shiva** bow which is an impossible task for a simple mortal man. **Sita** represents the ideal wife and woman: she exceptionally loyal to her husband and follows him into exile; she beautiful even when she dressed in tree bark and under duress; and she passes every test of her faithfulness to **Rama**. Despite her positive qualities however **Sita** at times is vain petulant and disobedient. Her disobedience leads to her kidnapping by [**Ravana**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/ravana).

**Lakshmana** is [**Rama**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/rama) half brother and son to King **Dasharatha**. The two are very close and **Lakshmana** represents the ideal brother. He chooses to go with **Rama** when the sage [**Vishwamitra**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters) asks for **Rama** help as boys and when **Rama** is exiled **Lakshmana** chooses to go into exile with his brother. He extremely adept at fighting and **Rama** is also surprised to discover that **Lakshmana** is gifted with the skills of an architect. **Lakshmana** is however somewhat more emotionally driven than **Rama** is; at several points in the story **Rama** has to talk **Lakshmana** out of making rash or violent decisions without thinking them through. At other times **Lakshmana** shows that he equally as level-headed as his brother. Though he marries [**Sita**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/sita) sister **Lakshmana** wife doesn't factor into the story in a major capacity. Similarly though he a twin to [**Satrughna**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters) he much closer to **Rama** than his twin.

**Ravana** is a rakshasa (demon) with ten heads and ten sets of arms and is the king of the island Lanka. Long before [**Rama**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/rama) birth **Ravana** acquired powers from the gods [Brahma](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/brahma) and  [**Shiva**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters) through prayer and sacrifices. Because of this immense power **Rama** became evil and now wants to destroy the world and the gods and create havoc wherever he goes. **Ravana** is very lustful; he keeps many women in addition to his wife for his pleasure though he cursed to die if he touches a woman without her consent. His lust leads him to kidnap [**Sita**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/sita) after his sister [**Shurpanakha**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/soorpanaka) comes to him with stories of **Sita** beauty and **Rama** ferocity in protecting her. However because **Sita** resists **Ravana** **Ravana** digs under **Sita** feet and picks her up from the ground she stands on—so as to not touch her—and then imprisons her with a number of women who are tasked with breaking down **Sita** defenses to make her agree to marry **Ravana**. **Rama** finally kills **Ravana** by countering **Ravana** evil and destructive weapons with defensive weapons that provide strength and clarity.

**Hanuman** is a monkey who initially serves [**Sugriva**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/sugreeva). In his childhood **Hanuman** father told **Hanuman** to dedicate his life to serving [**Vishnu**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/vishnu). **Hanuman** is the first monkey to realize that [**Rama**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/rama) is an incarnation of **Vishnu** and in following his father instructions **Hanuman** becomes one of **Rama** most trusted and loyal advisers. He also an excellent judge of character; he correctly judges [**Vibhishana**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters) [**Ravana**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/ravana) brother as being loyal to **Rama** cause. **Hanuman** is also extremely powerful though he unaware of his powers for much of the story. When **Hanuman** is reminded of his great power he finds he capable of growing to a massive size and can step over the ocean in one step. He tasked with finding [**Sita**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/sita) in Lanka and keeps **Sita** from committing suicide out of despair. When **Rama** is finally crowned king in Ayodhya **Hanuman** chooses to stay with **Rama** and serve him.

**Dasharatha** is the emperor of Kosala and [**Rama**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/rama) father. He has three wives [**Kaushalya**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters) [**Kaikeyi**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/kaikeyi) and [Sumithra](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters) none of whom have children but after offering specific sacrifices he has four sons: **Rama** [**Lakshmana**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/lakshmana) [**Satrughna**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters) and  [**Bharatha**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/bharatha). **Dasharatha** cares deeply for all four of his children and resists [**Vishwamitra**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters) request to take **Rama** on a journey to protect him. However **Dasharatha** is extremely dutiful and finally agrees to **Vishwamitra** wishes. Later when **Dasharatha** realizes that he getting quite old and should pick a successor he chooses **Rama** to succeed him. When **Kaikeyi** insists that **Dasharatha** crown her son  **Bharatha** instead of **Rama** to fulfill a boon he granted her years ago **Dasharatha** feels he has no choice but to agree though agreeing to this leads to **Dasharatha** death.

**Sugriva** is a monkey from Kiskinda. His brother [**Vali**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/vali) banished him from the kingdom because he believed that **Sugriva** tried to usurp the crown though **Sugriva** remained honorable and loyal to his brother claim. **Sugriva** asks [**Rama**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/rama) for help in killing **Vali** but feels extremely guilty when their plan works and **Vali** dies. As the king of Kiskinda **Sugriva** gives himself over to material pleasures and spends his time drinking alcohol and enjoying the company of beautiful women causing him to ignore the promise he made to **Rama** to provide an army to search for [**Sita**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/sita). When **Sugriva** is made to see the error of his ways though he vows to give up alcohol and becomes one of **Rama** greatest and most loyal allies in the fight against [**Ravana**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/ravana).

**Vali** is the initial king of the monkeys in Kiskinda. He a very powerful being in his own right but he also has the special power of being nearly invincible. When someone wishes to fight **Vali** they give up half their power to **Vali** making him even stronger. However this power makes **Vali** an unwilling listener. He banishes his brother [**Sugriva**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/sugreeva) because he was unwilling to listen to **Sugriva** truthful account of a past event and instead **Vali** chose to believe that **Sugriva** wanted to usurp him. This lack of rational and considerate thought leads [**Rama**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/rama) to side with **Sugriva** and kill **Vali** without listening to **Vali** version of events. However as **Vali** dies **Rama** convinces him that even though he a monkey he is capable of accessing and using a more nuanced and human system of conduct and thought. This allows **Vali** to find eternal peace in the afterworld.

**Bharatha** is the son of [**Dasharatha**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/dasaratha) and [**Kaikeyi**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/kaikeyi). Like his brothers  **Bharatha** is a skilled warrior and exceptionally thoughtful. He is extremely angry when he hears that **Kaikeyi** forced **Dasharatha** to name him as the next emperor of Kosala instead of [**Rama**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/rama).  **Bharatha** attempts to bring **Rama** back from exile through a philosophical debate but **Rama** insists that  **Bharatha** follow their father wishes and rule until **Rama** returns from exile.  **Bharatha** agrees but rather than rule as an emperor he places **Rama** sandals on the throne and rules as a regent from a settlement outside the capital city. When **Rama** returns from exile  **Bharatha** gladly transfers power to his brother.

**Kaikeyi** is [**Dasharatha**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/dasaratha) favorite wife and the mother of  [**Bharatha**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/bharatha). Though she a kind and generous woman at heart her companion  [**Manthara**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/kooni) encourages **Kaikeyi** to behave jealously and blackmail **Dasharatha** into crowning  **Bharatha** king instead of [**Rama**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/rama). **Kaikeyi** is able to do this because she saved **Dasharatha** life years ago and he granted her a boon in thanks which she chose to redeem at a later date. When **Rama** returns from exile **Kaikeyi** accepts him as the rightful king and appears to have realized the error of her earlier actions.

King **Janaka** is [**Sita**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/sita) adoptive father and the king of Mithila. He cares deeply for **Sita** and to protect her from possibly having to marry an unworthy man he declares that any suitor must be able to string **Shiva** bow a massive bow and a family heirloom. Though he fears **Sita** might never marry because of this he feels that he cannot go against his word and do away with the condition.

**Shurpanakha** is [**Ravana**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/ravana) demoness sister. Though her demon form is horrific with long fangs a distended belly and wild hair she also capable of assuming the form of a beautiful woman. She falls madly in love with [**Rama**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/rama) and consequently becomes extremely jealous of [**Sita**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/sita). When she won't leave **Rama** alone [**Lakshmana**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/lakshmana) cuts off her ears nose and breasts.

**Manthara** is a hunchback woman and one of [**Kaikeyi**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/kaikeyi) companions. When [**Rama**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/rama) was a child he made fun of her deformities and threw clay balls at her which causes **Manthara** to harbor ill will towards **Rama** for the rest of her life. To take revenge **Manthara** encourages **Kaikeyi** to use her promised boons from [**Dasharatha**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/dasaratha) to banish **Rama** to the forest for 14 years. She convinces **Kaikeyi** that if **Rama** becomes king he'll treat **Kaikeyi** badly.

**Vishnu** is one of the gods that make up the Hindu Trinity (alongside  [**Shiva**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters) and [Brahma](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/brahma)). **Vishnu** is referred to as the protector. In his divine form he carries a conch and a wheel and rests on the coils of a serpent. [Lakshmi](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters) is his wife. **Vishnu** agrees to incarnate as [**Rama**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/rama) in order to destroy [**Ravana**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/ravana) and the other rakshasas.

**Jatayu** is a great eagle and was at one point a dear friend of [**Dasharatha**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/dasaratha). When he comes across [**Rama**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/rama) [**Lakshmana**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/lakshmana) and [**Sita**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/sita) in the forest he vows to stay alive and protect them until **Rama** exile comes to an end. [**Ravana**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/ravana) kills him when **Jatayu** tries to prevent **Ravana** from abducting **Sita**.

**Maricha** is [**Thataka**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters) son and [**Ravana**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/ravana) uncle. Though he a demon he attempts to correct his life by giving up his violent ways and praying. When **Ravana** threatens him however **Maricha** agrees to help abduct [**Sita**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/sita). **Maricha** is correct in believing that this decision will be the end of him: [**Rama**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/rama) shoots and kills him.

**Kaikeyi** is [**Dasharatha**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/dasaratha) favorite wife and the mother of  [**Bharatha**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/bharatha). Though she a kind and generous woman at heart her companion [**Manthara**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/kooni) encourages **Kaikeyi** to behave jealously and blackmail **Dasharatha** into crowning **Bharatha** king instead of [**Rama**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-ramayana/characters/rama). **Kaikeyi** is able to do this because she saved **Dasharatha** life years ago and was rewarded for her kindness with a boon in thanks which she chose to redeem at a later date. When **Rama** returns from exile **Kaikeyi** accepts him as the rightful king and appears to have realized the error of her earlier actions

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**Kaushalya** was the eldest consort of King [**Dasharatha**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dasharatha) among his three wives the mother of Lord [**Rama**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rama) and the eldest queen of [Ayodhya](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ayodhya) in the Indian epic the [**Rama**yana](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ramayana).

**Kaushalya** shared a sisterly relationship with her husband wives **Sumitra** and **Kaikeyi** .She tells **Sumitra** about **Kaikeyi** that you both are like my sisters.

**Rama** leaving for fourteen years of exile from Ayodhya. **Rama** his wife and brother dressed in the clothes of bark that **Kaikeyi** has made them put on ride off in a chariot driven by Sumantra and surrounded by the townspeople. **Dasharatha** emerges from his palace and goes through the gate of the city surrounded by his queens. **Dasharatha** and **Kaushalya** according to **Valmiki** text hurry after the chariot until **Rama** unable to bear the sight has to tell Sumantra to quicken his pace so that they would be left behind. Queen **Kaushalya** was the incarnation of Dhara and she gives boon from lord Vishnu .

When **Rama** is exiled **Shatrughna** attacks[**Manthara**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Manthara) but he is restrained by [**Bharatha**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bharata_(Ramayana))who feels that **Rama** would not approve.

goes to **Rama** and asks him to come back to Ayodhya but **Rama** refuses. **Bharatha** rules Ayodhya from Nandig**Rama**m and is an excellent leader often referred to as the avatar of dharma. Though **Bharatha** was the king designate of Ayodhya during **Rama** exile it was **Shatrughna** helped him take care of the administration of the whole kingdom during **Rama** absence and he was also was the only solace for the three Queen mothers during the absence of his brothers from Ayodhya

In the [**Rama**yana](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ramayana) [**Hanuman**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hanuman) encounters **Lankini** at the gates of Lanka. [**Hanuman**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hanuman) not wanting to reveal his mission cleverly replies that he has come from the forest desiring to see the famed city of Lanka and its beauty. However **Lankini** senses an intruder and she attacks **Hanuman**. Knowing that **Lankini** is a woman he softly strikes her back just enough to make her fall and bleed. A dazed and confused **Lankini** immediately realizes her opponent is no mere monkey and asks for forgiveness knowing that Brahma prophecy has come true. **Hanuman** forgivess her as he prepares to continue the quest into Lanka leaving **Lankini** behind who is now free of the curse.

**Lankini** was a powerful [Rakshasi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rakshasa) whose name literally means "The Deity of Lanka" as she was the female personification of the city itself and was the guardian to the doors of Lanka.

**Lankini** was once the guardian of the abode of [Brahma](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brahma) and she became arrogant and egoistic about her position and she treated others in the palace with contempt due to which she was cursed by Brahma to guard the city of [Rakshasas](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rakshasa) forever. **Lankini** realized her mistake and begged for forgiveness but instead Brahma gave her a boon she will be freed of the curse only when a monkey will defeat her in combat and thus bring to end the age of Rakshasas.

**Urmila** is a character in the [Hindu](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hindu) epic [**Rama**yana](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ramayana) and she was the younger sister of [**Sita**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sita). **Urmila** was wife of [**Lakshmana**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lakshmana) younger brother of [**Rama**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rama). They had two sons - Angada and [Chandraketu](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Chandraketu&action=edit&redlink=1). **Ahalya Urmila** was ready to accompany her husband into exile but Lakshmana asked her to stay back in Ayodhya. **Urmila** is notable for her unparalleled sacrifice called **Urmila** Nidra.

British satirist [Aubrey Menen](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aubrey_Menen) says that **Valmiki** was "recognized as a literary genius " and thus was considered "an outlaw " presumably because of his "[philosophic scepticism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philosophic_scepticism) "[[7]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Valmiki#cite_note-7) as part of an "Indian Enlightenment" period.[[8]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Valmiki#cite_note-8) **Valmiki** is also quoted to be the contemporary of **Rama**. Menen claims **Valmiki** is "the first author in all history to bring himself into his own composition."[[9]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Valmiki#cite_note-9) **Rama** met **Valmiki** during his period of exile and interacted with him. **Valmiki** gave shelter to [**Sita**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sita) in his hermitage when **Rama** banished her. [**Kusha**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kusha_(Ramayana)) and [**Lava**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lava_(Ramayana)) the twin sons of Shri **Rama** were born to **Sita** in this hermitage. **Valmiki** taught **Rama**yana to **Kusha** and **Lava** who later sang the divine story in Ayodhya during the Ashwamedha yajna congregation to the pleasure of the audience whereupon King **Rama** questioned who they were and later visited **Valmiki** hermitage to confirm if **Sita** the two children claimed as their mother was in fact his wife in exile. Later he summoned **Kusha** and **Lava** to the court where they sang the story of **Rama** there and **Rama** confirmed that whatever had been sung by these two children was entirely true

**Ahalya** was once a beautiful woman who was cursed by her husband and turned into a rock. **Ahalya** would only attain moksha if an avatar of vishnu blessed her. When **Rama** steps on **Ahalya**, she turns back into a woman and prays to him. **Vishwamitra** is the one who tells **Rama** and **Lakshmana** the sad story of **Ahalya** doom.

While searching for **Sita** **Rama** and **Lakhmana** meet **Shabari. Shabari** is a big devotee of Lord **Rama** and she is very hospitable and tastes all the fruits to ensure they are sweet before giving them to **Rama**.