

Vishwamitra and the two princes travelling barefoot first crossed the river Sarayu and then, the river Ganga. Rama and Lakshmana did not mind the hardship at all, as this was their chance to learn about many things from Vishwamitra. After many days of walking, they entered a thick forest where a rakshasi called Taraka lived. She had terrorized all the sages in the forest and hence Vishwamitra instructed Rama to kill her. Rama drew out his arrow and aimed it at Taraka. The ugly looking demoness charged towards him but was killed by Rama's arrow. Vishwamitra was very pleased with Rama and gifted him many powerful weapons. Rama accepted them gracefully and learnt from Vishwamitra about their use. The trio continued their journey and reached the spot where Vishwamitra was to perform the yagna.

The Rishis of the Ashram were happy to have Rama in their midst. The princess rested for the night and from the next morning protected the yagna against the Rakshasas. Everything went on smoothly till the last day. On the last day of the yagna, suddenly, piece of flesh and blood fell into the sacred fire. When Rama looked up, he saw Mareecha and Subahu. The weapons were so strong and powerful that Mareecha was thrown into the sea hundreds of miles away while Subahu was engulfed in a ball of fire. All the Rishis were relieved that these evil demons were destroyed by Rama and joyously completed the Yagna. After conducting the yagna, Vishwamitra and the other Rishis left for the city of Maithili. Rama and Lakshmana accompanied them.

This city was ruled by Janaka, loved and respected for his goodness. He had a daughter by name Sita. Janaka had found her in a ploughed field and had reared her as his own daughter. Sita was the loveliest princess and was also renowned for her strength of character. When she was of the marriageable age, Janaka had announced that whoever could string the Siva bow would wed her. This bow was not an ordinary bow. It was so huge that five thousand people were needed to lug it. Sage Vishwamitra knew about this bow and had purposely taken the young princes to Mithila.