



Children's Ramayana

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Maya Ray

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Dasaratha was a great king. His palace was in the magnificent city of Ayodhya. He had three beautiful queens. Their names were Kousalya, Sumitra, and Kaikeyi.



The king had all the riches in the world. Yet he was sad, because he had no children.



A wise man advised the king to perform a yaaga, which is a ceremonial sacrifice. At the end of the yaaga, the king received a special sweet pudding.



The king gave the sweet pudding to the three queens. Before long, the queens gave birth to a total of four children.



Kausalya's son was named Rama. Kaikeyi's son was called Bharatha. Sumitra gave birth to two sons, Lakshmana and Satrugna.



The four brothers loved each other very much. They all grew up to be strong, brave, good and kind.



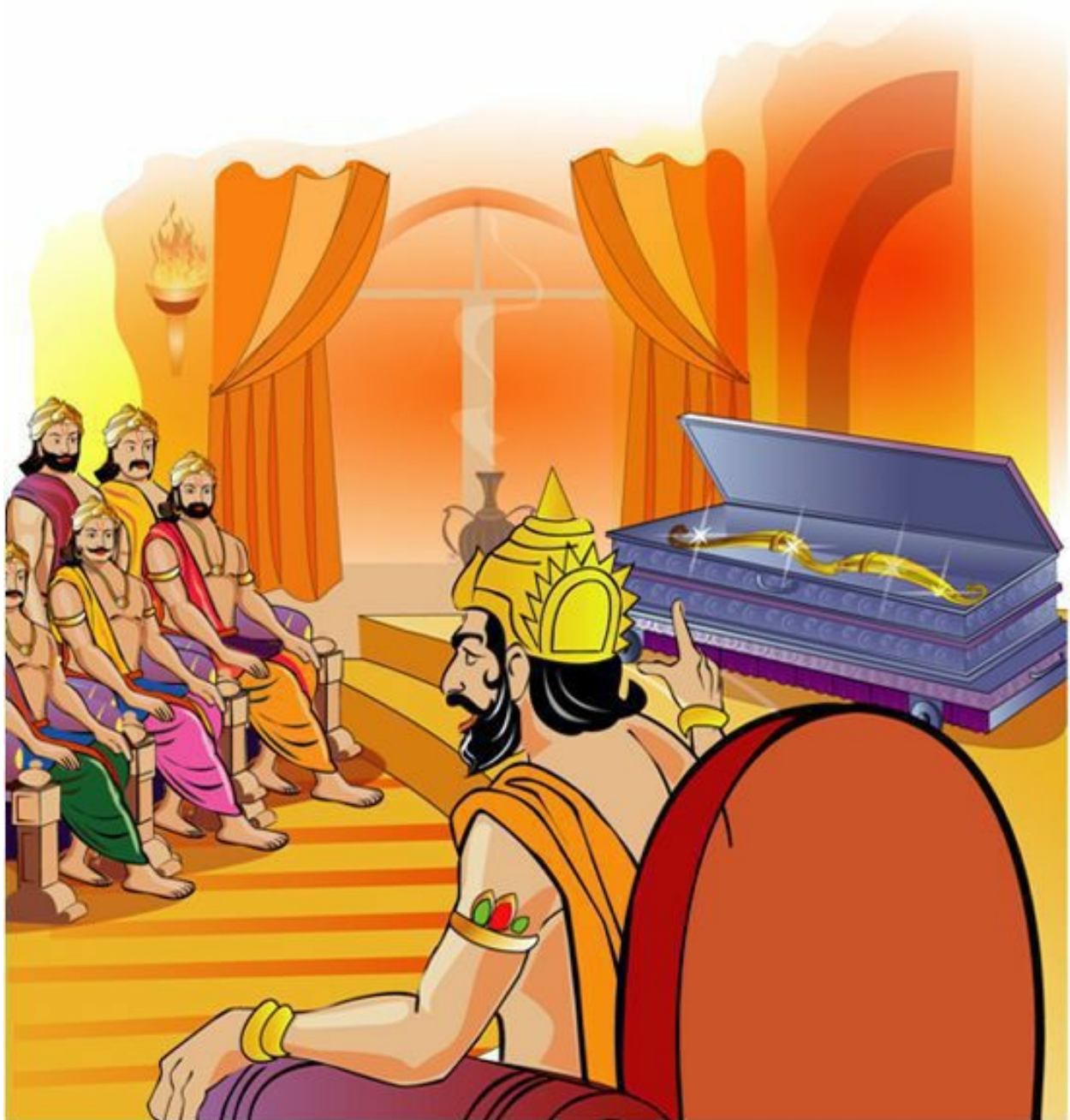
King Dasaratha was friends with another king named Janaka. Janaka had a beautiful daughter named Sita.



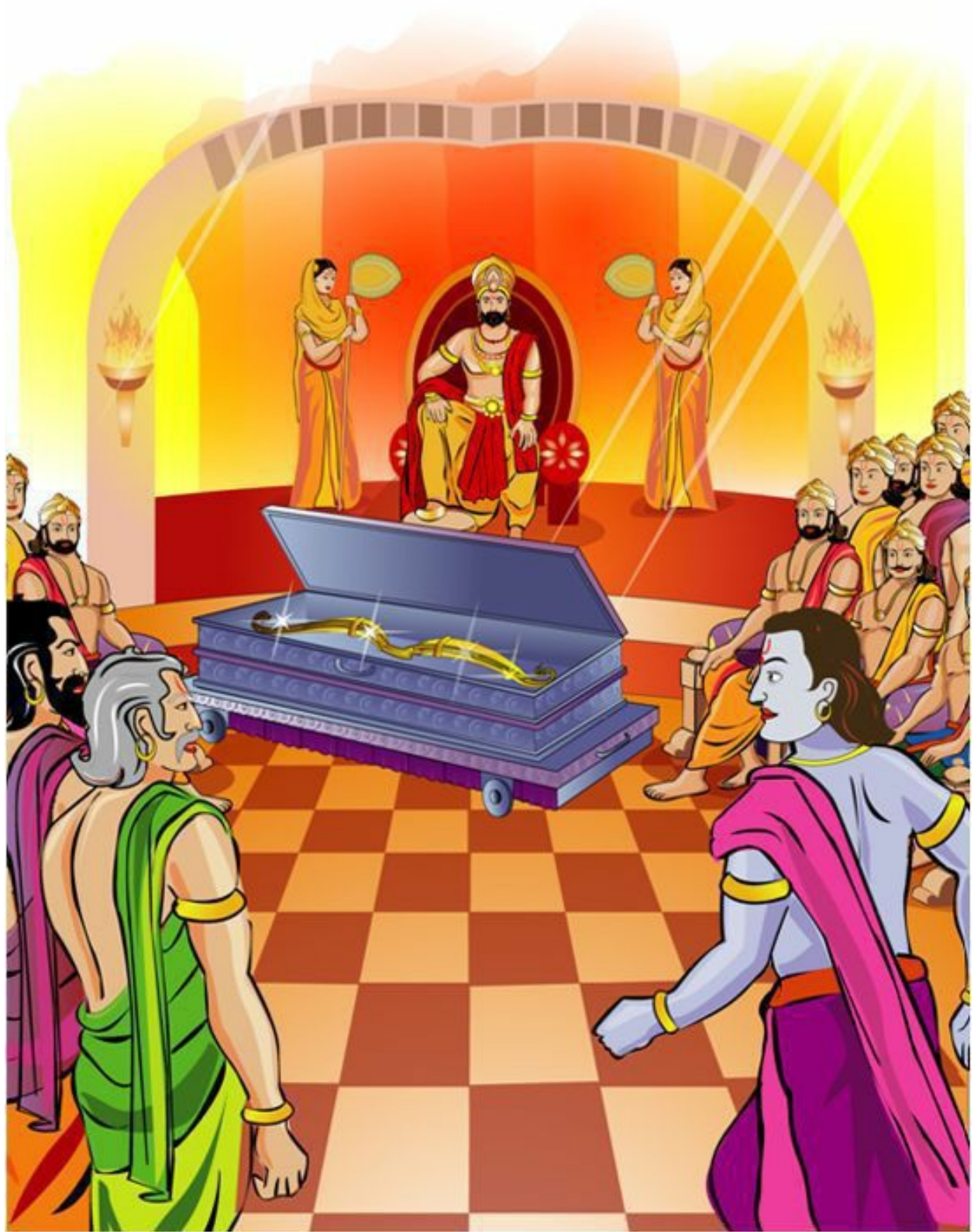
When Sita was old enough to marry, Janaka wanted to find a prince worthy of his daughter's love.



**Janaka had a special bow which was very big and heavy. He announced:
“Sita will be given in marriage to the prince who can lift, bend and string
the bow.”**



Many princes came to try, but none could even move the bow. Rama, the prince of Ayodhya came to Janaka's palace.



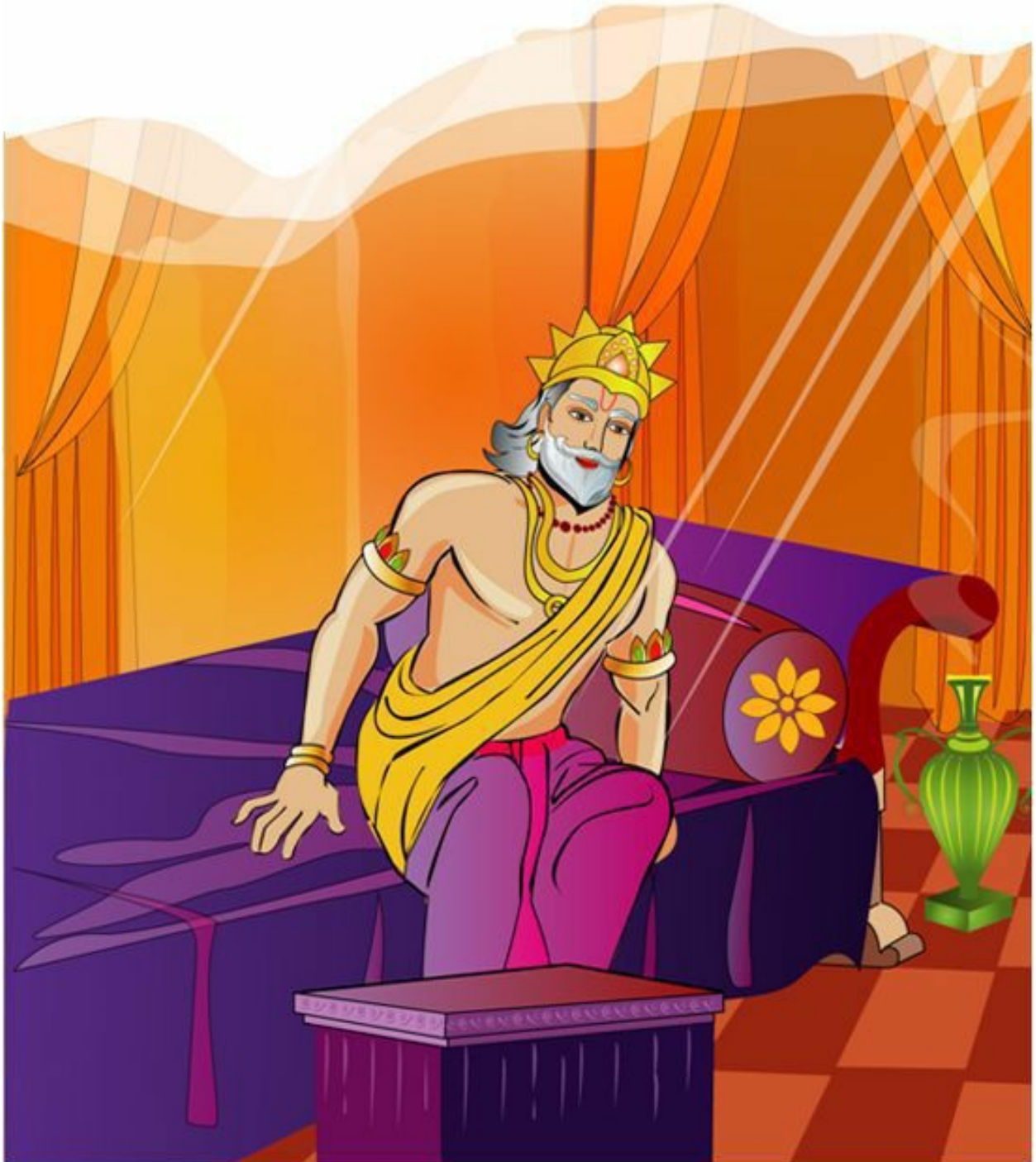
Rama was able to lift, bend and string the bow. The heavy bow snapped under the power of Rama's mighty arms.



Janaka gave Sita in marriage to Rama. Rama took Sita to Ayodhya to live as his bride.



Years passed. King Dasaratha was getting old. He decided to make Prince Rama the next king of Ayodhya.



But Queen Kaikeyi wanted her son, Prince Bharatha to become the king. Long ago, she was promised two wishes by Dasaratha. Wickedly, she asked for the wishes now.



As her first wish, Kaikeyi asked Dasaratha to make her son, Bharatha, the king. Her second wish was to have Rama sent to the forest for fourteen years.



Dasaratha was shocked and saddened by Kaikeyi's request. But he was a highly principled man who always kept his promises. With great pain, he granted Kaikeyi's wishes.



Rama obeyed his father happily, without any complaint. He went to the forest. His wife, Sita, and brother, Lakshmana, went with him.



While in the forest, Rama, Sita and Lakshmana were staying in a hut.



One day when Rama and Lakshmana were not in the hut, demon king Ravana kidnapped Sita and took her to his evil kingdom of Lanka. Rama and Lakshmana went in search of Sita.



Rama and Lakshmana met Hanuman, a god in the form a monkey. Hanuman was very strong and brave. The two men hoped Hanuman might help them find Sita and bring her home.



Hanuman agreed to help Rama find Sita. Rama, Lakshmana, Hanuman and his monkey friends went in search of Sita.



**They came to the shores of a vast ocean and looked across the water.
Ravana's evil kingdom of Lanka was on an island far into the ocean.**



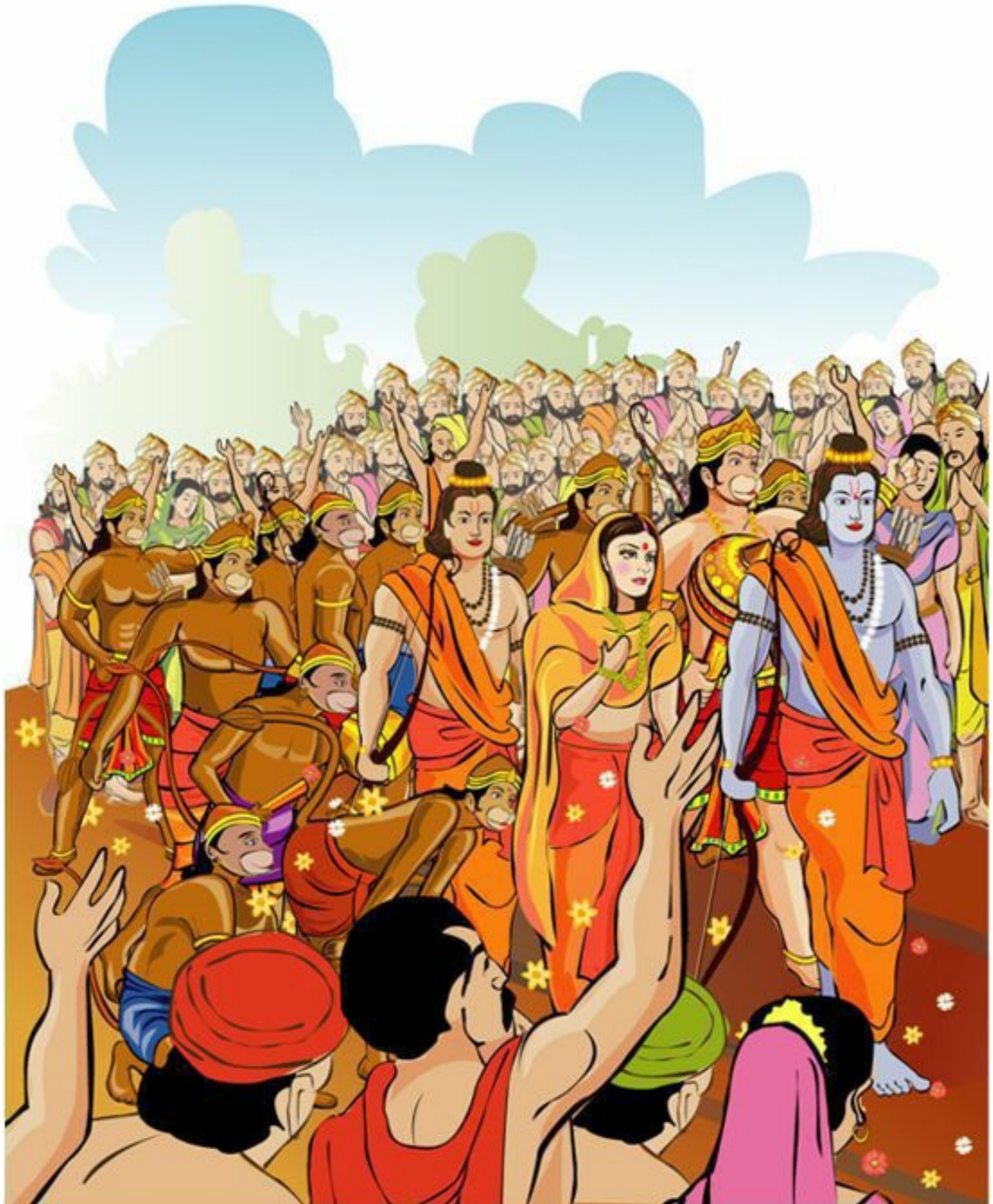
The monkeys built a raised path across the ocean to Lanka. Rama, Lakshmana, Hanuman and the monkeys marched on the stone path toward Lanka.



At Lanka, Rama's army fought with Ravana's army. Rama defeated Ravana and rescued Sita.



Rama, Sita, Lakshmana, Hanuman and the monkeys went back to Ayodhya. The people of Ayodhya were thrilled to see them.



Rama was made the king of Ayodhya and Sita the queen. The kingdom of Ayodhya was a happy place again.

