

shameful work of pulling at Pāñcālī's robes to strip her of all the clothes. All earthly aid having failed Draupadī in utter helplessness implored divine mercy and succour. Then a miracle occurred. In vain did Duśśāsana toil to pull the garments completely and make her naked. As he pulled off each, fresh garments were seen to come from somewhere and cover her nudity. Duśśāsana retired from his work exhausted and disappointed. Then Karṇa ordered that Draupadī should be sent to the palace of Duryodhana as a servant-maid. Hearing this Duśśāsana once again started dragging her. Draupadī wept. Bhīma roared in fury and said that if his brother, Dharmaputra, gave him permission he would at that instant smash to death the Kauravas just like a lion killing the animals. Bhīṣma and Droṇa interfered and pacified him. Duryodhana stood up and striking his right thigh with his right hand challenged Bhīma to a fight. Bhīmasena did not like Duryodhana exhibiting his naked thigh in front of Draupadī and an angered Bhīma declared that he would in a battle break Duryodhana's thigh with his mace. Dhṛtarāṣṭra came to the scene and pacified both of them and turning to Pāñcālī asked her to name any boon she wanted from him. Pāñcālī said : "In order that my son, Prativindhya, should not be called a 'dāsaputra' (son of a servant) his father Dharmaputra should be released from his servitude." The boon was granted. Then she requested that all the other Pāñḍavas should be set free. That was also allowed. Dhṛtarāṣṭra then asked her to name a third boon. Pāñcālī then said that all Kṣatriya women were entitled only to two boons and so there was no need for a third one. Then Draupadī took a vow that her hair which was let lose by the wicked Duśśāsana would be tied properly only by a hand tainted by the blood of Duśśāsana. After that in strict obedience to the conditions of the wager the Pāñḍavas started for the forests with Draupadī to spend twelve years in the forests and one year incognito. (Ten Chapters from Chapter 68, Sabhā Parva).

5) *Vanavāsa of Pāñcālī*. (Life in the forests). During the exile of the Pāñḍavas in the forests Pāñcālī was involved in many events of which a few important ones are given below :

(i) *Kirmīra's attack*. When the Pāñḍavas were in the Kāmyakavana, Kirmīra, the brother of Baka, came to the āśrama where Pāñcālī was taking rest. The demon was such a fierce-looking giant that Pāñcālī was forced to shut her eyes by fright and she became wearied like a river in the midst of five hillocks. Bhīmasena immediately ran to her rescue and killed Kirmīra. (Chapter 11, Vana Parva).

(ii) Pāñcālī consoled Dharmaputra by her soothing words. (Chapter 27, Vana Parva).

(iii) Once when her woes became unbearable she condemned the devas. (Chapter ?, Vana Parva).

(iv) While the Pāñḍavas were on the mountain Gandhamādana, Pāñcālī persuaded Bhīma to bring for her the Saugandhika flower. (See under Bhīma).

(v) While the Pāñḍavas were living in the Badarik-āśrama waiting for the return of Arjuna who had gone on a year's pilgrimage, Pāñcālī was carried away by Jaṭāsura. (See under Jaṭāsura).

(vi) After she was rescued from Jaṭāsura, Pāñcālī along with her husbands dwelt in the hermitage of Ārṣṭiṣeṇa. (See under Ārṣṭiṣeṇa).

(vii) Once Draupadī gave instructions on the duties of a wife to Satyabhāmā who came to the forests along with Śrī Kṛṣṇa. (Chapters 233 and 234, Vana Parva).

(viii) Once Durvāsas with his disciples came to the forest as the guests of the Pāñḍavas. They came late and Pāñcālī had taken her food already. The Akṣayapātra (the never-empty pot) could not be invoked to produce anything that day and Pāñcālī was greatly agitated and worried. She prayed to Śrī Kṛṣṇa for succour and Śrī Kṛṣṇa also coming hungry searched in the pot for something to eat and finding a bit of spinach sticking to the sides of the pot grabbed it with avidity and ate it. The guests felt as if they had enjoyed a sumptuous feast and left the place well pleased. (See para XII under Duryodhana).

(ix) Jayadratha carried away Pāñcālī from the forests once. The Pāñḍavas rescued her. (Para 4 under Jayadratha).

6) *Life incognito*. After their twelve years of exile in the forests the time for living in disguise for a year came and Dharmaputra and his brothers with Pāñcālī spent that period in the palace of the King Virāṭa. Each assumed a new name and accepted different types of service under the King. Pāñcālī took the name of Sairandhrī and served as a companion and attendant to the princess. One day Kīcaka, the mighty brother-in-law of the King, tried to molest Pāñcālī and Bhīmasena killed him. (See under Kīcaka). It was at the time when the incognito life was coming to an end that the Kaurava army headed by Duryodhana carried away the cattle of the King Virāṭa. The King was absent from the palace at that time and the prince, Uttara, had not the guts to go and attack the Kaurava army. It was Pāñcālī who then suggested sending of Bṛhannala of the palace (Arjuna) to serve as charioteer of Uttara. (See under Arjuna, Para 24).

7) *Subsequent events*. The thirteen years of life in exile and incognito came to an end. But the Kauravas were not prepared to give half of the kingdom to the Pāñḍavas. The differences between them increased and it led to a great war. Śrī Kṛṣṇa agreed to go as a messenger to the court of Dhṛtarāṣṭra and ask for the share of the Pāñḍavas. Before leaving he asked each of the Pāñḍavas what he should say at the court of Dhṛtarāṣṭra. Pāñcālī then approached Kṛṣṇa in private and said she desired for a war to defeat the Kauravas. She then reminded Kṛṣṇa of a vow taken by Bhīmasena that he would tie her hair with his hands smeared with the blood from the thigh of Duśśāsana.

The peace-mission of Kṛṣṇa failed and the famous Kurukṣetra battle started. Many valiant warriors on both the sides were killed. When Abhimanyu was killed Subhadra wept bitterly and Pāñcālī who went to console her fainted. Śrī Kṛṣṇa revived her. Pāñcālī asked Bhīmasena to bring to her the inborn jewel on the head of Aśvatthāmā, son of Droṇa. She wanted to take revenge on him for killing her brother Dhṛṣṭadyumna.