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Randy Hoyt

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# Song of Kaikeyi

by  
Randy Hoyt

The Demons with their fortresses on high  
Looked down from there with jealousy and rage.  
Conspiring how to inflict<sup>1</sup> their wrath on Men.  
They locked the heavens, pushed away the clouds,  
Consuming fields and flocks in stifling drought,  
Destroying joy and hope throughout the land.

Stirred up by hunger, thirst, and fear the Men  
Decided it was time to take a stand.  
A massive force came from the neighboring towns  
From Sindh, Kekaya, Mithila, and more,  
Fully arrayed across the parched plain  
To rally around the standard of the King.

Assembled thus they implored<sup>2</sup> the Gods for aide,  
To join their side and fight with them for rain.  
Their prayer was heard and answered and came forth  
The mighty Indra, warrior of the Gods  
For battle armed from his heavenly throne  
With all the heavenly host following<sup>3</sup> behind.

Dasaratha the first-born of the King  
Among all Men most fearless, brave, and strong  
(After this war a mighty king he'd make)  
Arrayed himself with armor made of bronze  
Received by his ancestors from the Gods  
And gathered up his arrows, bow, and spear.

A girl inside his chariot<sup>4</sup> he found  
With hands upon the reins, prepared for war  
She'd stowed away with men from Kekaya  
Though young already beautiful and strong  
In shimmering armor woven of green silk  
She was Kaikeyi the princess nine years old.

She drove the chariot to the sky with skill  
And mastery over<sup>5</sup> those horses fiery red  
From steady car Dasaratha let fly  
His arrows that struck down the enemy<sup>6</sup> hoardes  
With javelin, with arrow, sword, and spear  
The Demons tried but failed to harm these two.

A star fell from the heavens which they caught  
And hurled it at the car, knocked loose a wheel  
And brought great pain upon that mighty lord  
Kaikeyi caught him, rescued him from death  
With one hand kept the chariot upright  
Retreating from the fray safely to land.

She bandaged up his wounds, stayed by his side  
Night after night and nursed him back to health.  
On waking he proposed and she agreed.  
The future couple embraced.<sup>7</sup> He granted her  
Two of her heart's desires knowing not  
Years later those desires would cause his death.

<sup>1</sup> *to inflict*. Pronounced as two syllables, *tin-flict*.

<sup>2</sup> *they implored*. Pronounced as two syllables, *thaim-plóred*.

<sup>3</sup> *following*. Pronounced as two syllables, *fall-*

*wíng*.

<sup>4</sup> *chariot*. Pronounced as two syllables, *chair-yot*.

<sup>5</sup> *over*. Pronounced as one syllable, *ór*.

<sup>6</sup> *enemy*. Pronounced as two syllables, *én-mee*.

<sup>7</sup> *couple embraced*. Pronounced as three syllables, *cúp-lem-bráced*.