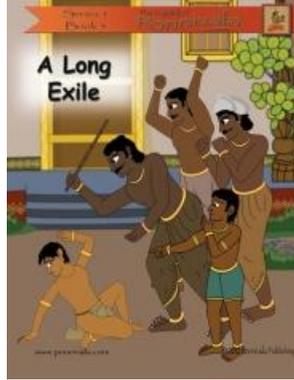


## Episode 3 – A Long Exile (Sub Stories a, and aa)

**Resource Materials: Graphic comic books, ipad books, + videos)**

**VISIT our SHOP: Choose the retelling that works best for you**



### **3-a) THE HERO SUFFERS AS AN ABUSED HOMELESS WAIF**

The young orphan is sent from family to family. Each household treats him more cruelly than the last. In one home the wife is the meaner one, in another it is the husband. Some families will not have him at all. Finally the clansmen meet and decide to give him a begging bowl, asking him to beg hereafter for food.

**SUGGESTED DISCUSSION TOPICS & EXERCISES: Have you ever met and talked to a homeless child? Can you find and tell the story of such a person?**

**COMMENTARY:** This episode features the sufferings of the homeless. It makes a good parallel for the stories of “street children” today. There are many examples of kids who live on the streets in any 3<sup>rd</sup> world country right now and also similar kids who live on the streets in affluent countries. The abuse experienced by such children is similar across cultures and across times and places. There are certain basic themes one finds among the homeless: the basic struggle to find food, reliable shelter and the search for safety. Good health and good hygiene are also common challenges for the homeless. But don’t forget to discuss the ending here. It is significant. The young hero is always hopeful. With each adventure he dreams of finding something he can call home, a place where he will be respected, safe and properly fed. Such good fortune is not easy to come by but his optimism helps him pull through. One can also point to the hero’s self reliance in adversity, his strength of character and his ingenuity in the face of hardship. Many “survivor” stories can be used as parallels here.

### **3-b) A CHILD WITH MAGICAL STRENGTH**

Five years pass like this while the poor child suffers in extreme poverty, sometimes working as a shepherd to earn his keep. Finally he becomes strong enough to run away. This basic theme repeats. Finally the boy sees the tower of a lovely temple in the distance. Hope for a good home rises once more in his heart. Eventually the little hero finds firewood in a forest. He ties up a huge bundle and lifts it onto his head. Lord Vishnu helps him lift this awesomely big load. A woman sees him and invites him in but when the husband begins to beat his wife the little hero is frightened and runs still further into the unknown.

**SUGGESTED DISCUSSION TOPICS & EXERCISES: Can you find a story of a sibling or a friend’s child who did something absolutely unbelievable?**

**COMMENTARY:** Many folktales and myths describe children who have magical or supernatural strengths. But so-called “ordinary” children can also seem “magical” to their parents. This sub-episode has many folktale and mythical equivalents. Hundreds of popular tales feature the supernatural characteristics of a bright and charming child. Sometimes the youngster may also have “trickster” characteristics, as in the popular stories about the much loved boy-Krishna which circulate widely in Hindu India. Many of these stories are accessible on the internet.