

Mahabharat: The Eternal Conflict

ACT ONE

Scene I

(Krishna and Draupadi)

KRISHNA

I'm glad to see you before leaving, Draupadi.

DRAUPADI

I wish I could say the same thing to you, my dear Krishna.

KRISHNA

Why? Don't I deserve your good wishes any more? Won't you wish me success in my mission?

DRAUPADI

How do you expect me to wish you success when you are humbly going to make peace with my enemy?

KRISHNA

You're grievously misjudging me, Draupadi.

DRAUPADI

Why are you so obstinately hankering after peace when everybody knows that war is the only solution?

KRISHNA

War has never been a solution, but sometimes it's the only recourse. And, knowing how wicked Duryodhan is, I have absolutely no doubt as to the outcome of my mission. Still, every possible attempt has to be made to come to a peaceful solution in order to avoid the destruction of our people.

DRAUPADI

Look at my dishevelled hair, O Krishna. Does it invite peace?

KRISHNA

I know how you feel Draupadi. But you are mistaking me. I'm not going there for peace or war. I'm only going to ask them to give back to the Pandavas what belongs to the Pandavas.

DRAUPADI

Do you think those barbarous men deserve to go on living after what they've done to me?

KRISHNA

Your anger is justified. But.....

DRAUPADI

Have I patiently counted the long minutes during these thirteen humiliating years just to be told that I must now forget everything and make peace with my enemy? Do you really expect me to forgive those monsters?

KRISHNA

Look here, Draupadi. More than your dishelved hair and the injury done to you, more than the flame of vengeance that is burning in your heart, I am concerned with the welfare of the Pandavas.

DRAUPADI

Welfare, you say? What sort of welfare are you talking about? Do you think that I'm going to kiss the very hands that disrobed me in front of the whole gathering?

KRISHNA

Listen, Draupadi. I assure you that your tribulations will soon be over.

DRAUPADI

When?

KRISHNA

If only I could obtain peace on terms that don't conflict with the welfare of the Pandavas, nothing would make me happier.

DRAUPADI

That peace will be without honour. And Krishna, believe me, even if my husbands listen to you and avoid war, my old father will fight the Kauravas, and my children will go forward to crush Duryodhan's army.

KRISHNA

Weep not, dear sister. Console yourself, because Duryodhan is so arrogant that he will not listen to me. The Kauravas will reject my peace proposal. War will become inevitable. In the end, they will fall and their bodies will serve as food to wild dogs and jackals.

DRAUPADI

That's what I wanted to hear!

KRISHNA

And you, Draupadi, will be here to see the victory of the Pandavas. And the insult done to you will be fully avenged.

DRAUPADI

Really?

KRISHNA

That's my promise to you.