

THE PHRALAK PHRALAM or THE LAO RAMAYANA
EPISODE 4

"In Search of Princess Sida"

Characters: Phralak and Phralam, as well as four generals; Hanuman, Ongkhot, and Somphuphanh (the three Monkey Kings); Samphathy (the Red Bird); Sadayou (the Blue Bird); Thotsakhan; and Nang Sida.

Princess Sida has been abducted by Thotsakan. Phralam has for several months been sad and sick. His army whose mission is to find Nang Sida has already failed several times and Nang Sida remains unfound. After these failures, Phralam orders Hanuman to lead his army of monkeys to Thotsakan's Palace on the island of Lanka. But the great army, exhausted and hungry, finds itself stopped by the sea that separates Lanka from the kingdom of Phralam. In fact, Hanuman and his army are a short distance away from the cave of Samphathy (*a 60,000-year-old eagle, older brother of Phragna Khout, and keeper of the Laws of the Forest.*)

Hearing noise from outside, the eagle comes out and, flying over the camp of Hanuman's army, tries to eat some of these monkeys. He cannot catch any, because he has to face two of the army's generals, Ongkhot and Somphuphanh. Hanuman, knowing Samphathy's history, decides to negotiate with him. He goes to the eagle and tells him what happened to his younger brother (Phragna Khout, or Sadayou), who was mortally wounded by Thotsakhan. Samphathy composes himself and asks why Sadayou had been killed. Hanuman tells him that Phragna Khout, having noticed the abduction of his friend Phralam's wife, went with all his talons out for Thotsakhan. But the strength of Thotsakhan being greater, the giant cut off both wings, and Phragna Khout lost the fight.

Samphathy, filled with rage at hearing all this, decides to avenge his younger brother. But though he is very old, he is most eager for the fight. Despite the fact that the sun god burns a few of his feathers, he goes with Hanuman to take him to the kingdom of Lanka by air.