

## Shoorpanaka

By: Nivrithi Kuttuva

Everyone thinks my brother, Ravana is evil. There is always another side to one story. This is his story, from my point of view. The first thing I heard was my shrill, high-pitch screeching that sent a shock to my brother. "Ahh! Ahh!" I yelled. My dear brother came dashing to me. "Oh, Ravana, the pain is just killing me!" I felt my face twist into a knot of fear and anger, as I knew how something was missing from me. My vicious blood trickled down my destroyed, tangled face. "Oh, Shoorpanaka, what has happened to you?!" Ravana yelled out of the desire to imagine this was all just a dream. My red blood pricked me each time I cried. "Oh, that cruel Lakshmana, Rama's brother, chopped off my nose!" He immediately sprang up, hearing this news. Watching my distorted face probably made his thoughts as thin as ever as they raged across his mind, burning him with fury. He gaped at this sudden news, and quietly asked me, "Why would he ever do this?" I paused for a moment before returning to my avenging face and replied, "Because...all I wanted to do was ask Rama to marry me...but I saw Sita, who was already his wife, and got angry. Then, Lakshmana chopped off my nose!" This news struck him like lightning- I could tell from his expression. He assured me, he would definitely do something about this. Ravana knew that Sita was very precious to Rama and he would do anything for her. One beautiful morning, he found the cottage that Rama, Sita, and Lakshmana were living in. Ravana had also brought our uncle, Mareecha. They dashed behind a tree, and Uncle Mareecha transformed into the form of an elegant, golden, graceful deer who would grasp Sita's wonder. The deer frolicked into Sita's gaze, as her eyes instantly lit up like lanterns. "Rama! Look at that beautiful creature! Its bright, golden silk shines like the sun and its graceful, calm frolic shines like the moon! What an elegant creature God has created. Please can you bring it here for me to admire?" Sita asked Rama. "Yes, I will bring it for you. Lakshmana, don't ever, ever let Sita out of your sight. I trust you." A few minutes after Rama left, Ravana heard a scream of helplessness that was for Lakshmana and Sita. He observed how quickly Lakshmana dashed to save Rama, and how easy it would be to capture Sita. Ravana transformed into a wise-looking, sage and walked beside their cottage. "Hello! I was walking by when I noticed your beauty," he said. Sita looked a little bit nervous and took a step back. Ravana quickly swooped her up, and carried her into his chariot. "Rama! Lakshmana! Help!" She cried. Just imagine how heart-broken Rama would be! That's Ravana's beginning of Ramayana. Now you decide. He's not evil. Or is he?...