

## Bharata boating into forest to find Rama (Thai Ramayana mural)

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On this mural at the Emerald Buddha Temple, Rama's brother Bharata and his comrades boat into the forest to try to find the exiled Rama after their father dies. The detail shows several long paddled canoes and a large poled platform barge. On each watercraft, royal persons or their lance-carrying guards sit in the center, while workmen paddling the boats sit at the ends.

Bharata was away from Ayudhya when his mother conspires to place him on the throne. When he returns he is angry and does not want to rule in his beloved brother Rama's place. He boats into the forest to persuade Rama to return to his rightful throne.

Rama, however, feels it is his duty to follow his dying father's instructions to spend fourteen years in the forest, so he refuses Bharata's attempt to renounce the throne. Bharata returns to Ayudhya with Rama's slippers and places them on the throne as a sign that Rama is the true king, and that he, Bharata, will only act as regent until Rama's return.



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