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KATHAASARITSAAGARA

'OCEAN' WHERE ALL THE 'RIVERS OF STORIES' ENTER

of

MAHAKAVI SOMADEVA BHATTA

in

ENGLISH

FIRST SURGE

named

'THE PEDESTAL OF THE STORY'

by

Narayanalakshmi

ANCIENT WISDOM

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Narayanalakshmi (Maa Tejaswini)

Narayanalakshmi, also known as Tejaswini in her ascetic life spent most of her life in the Himalayan terrain, engaged in the penance of knowledge.

She is well-versed in all philosophies and is a scholar in Sanskrit language.

Her mission life is to retrieve the lost knowledge of the ancient Rishis and offer it unblemished to all the seekers of the Truth. She is from Bangalore, Karnataka, India.

BrhatKathaa by Gunaadya

‘BrhatKathaa’ means ‘Huge Story’ which contains stories within stories without a gap. It was written in the language of Paishaaci. ‘Paishaaci’ is largely unattested literary language of the middle kingdoms of India. It is a ‘BhootaBhaasha’, a dead language.

‘BrhatKathaa’ in its original form, no more exists, but several later adaptations namely, KathaaSaritSaagara, BrhatKathaaManjari, and BrhatKathaaShlokaSamgraha in Sanskrit, as well as ‘PerumKadai’ in Tamil.

The stories in BrhatKathaa are so inexhaustible that most of the stories prevailing in India as belonging to the ancient era are just a few drops extracted from it.

The story of BrhatKathaa mainly contains the adventures of a king named NaraVahanaDatta, the son of King Udayana.

The stories of BrhatKathaa are the stories of seven emperors of the Vidyaadharas, the highly learned clan of Devas, and carry a flavour of sacredness, because they are said to be the stories related by Lord Shiva to his beloved Paarvati, to amuse her.

Unfortunately, out of the seven stories, six stories were burnt off by Gunaadya himself in despair, that they were not valued by the king at that time. Only one story was left back, at the pleading of his disciples, and that too survives only in adapted versions.

Here is an attempt to retrieve the ancient sacred thoughts of Shiva through the work of SomaDeva.

The entire book of KathaaSaritSaagara is given here in English only, for easy reading.

SomaDeva is the author of KathaaSaritSaagara, or rather its compiler.

He was the son of Rama, a Saivaite Brahmin of Kashmir.

The work abounds with the many names of Shiva, wherever possible.

The author seems to have compiled it with extreme devotion to Shiva, since the stories flow out of the mouth of Shiva, his favoured deity.

KathaaSaritSaagara is a large work consisting of eighteen Lambakas (Surges/books) of 124 Tarangas (waves/chapters) and approximately 22,000 Shlokas in addition to prose sections, and approximately 66,000 lines, whereas Brhat-Kathaa contained 700,000 Shlokas and is lost to us.

INTRODUCTION

The first Lambaka was named 'KathaaPeetha', the main pedestal or foundation of the story. The event of story-telling happens in the Kailaasa Mountain where Shiva, the perfect lover narrates countless amusing tales to his beloved wife Paarvati.

Whether he added more characters and life-narratives to the already-crowded Brahmaa's world through his stories, we mortals do not know. What we have before us is a collection of stories describing the exploits of King NaraVaahanaDatta, son of Udayana, a king born in the dynasty of Paandavas. KathaaSaritSaagara is a concise form of the BrhatKathaa of Gunaadya, composed by Poet SomaDeva. This collection is the source of all the stories that are prevalent in India. You read this collection and you have read a

Story is not a Vedic dictum to be followed verbatim.

Story is not a Puraana to gain merits when read.

But story is a necessary part of our life.

A human mind has evolved from the animal-level to like stories; to make stories; and live stories.

The main purpose of narrating the story is to imagine anything and everything to create interest in the mind of a hearer. If it amuses you enough to forget the day-to-day turmoil of life, then the story is worthwhile listening to. A story becomes interesting only if there is a twist and a challenge at every sentence; and that is well expressed in these stories composed by Gunaadya.

Of course, if the stories of the original work amounted to some seven lakh verses, then it was indeed a task beyond the human mind. Only Shiva could do such a feat; not even a Brahmaa is capable of making so many stories!

We have to go through only a briefing of the stories originally told in one lakh verses; but even that concise form is like a huge ocean.

Here is a humble attempt to offer a comfortable ship to the reader to cross over the ocean of never-ending stories. Go ahead and enjoy these unique stories locked inside the treasure-chest of Sanskrit poetry.

May the blessings of Lord Shiva be there with all those who are ready to cross over the Ocean of Stories, enjoying every water drop of a story that falls from the huge surges rising one after the other.

KATHAA-SARIT-SAAGARA

INTRODUCTION

Beautiful hill summit!

Fruit trees abounded there and flowers smiled from all the creepers.

However on that fatal day the forest which populated only tame animals like deer, boars and buffaloes was empty. All the animals were sitting quietly near a Sage who was reciting something aloud in an unintelligible language!

All the quarters echoed the weird sounds coming out of that sacred hill.

There was a huge fire blazing in front of that old man.

The Sage was dropping some old worn out Taala-leaves marked with red letters into the fire one by one.

The dark smelly smoke rising from the fire filled the sky making it a dark day for the entire earth.

The Sage looked very old and emaciated.

His pale skin was hanging loose over the collection of bones which still held the Praana within somehow.

The brown and grey-hued entangled mass of hair on his body overflowed and covered his thin body.

His face was covered with lines all over as if exhibiting the countless pains he underwent in his long long life.

He looked very sad!

But he had no tears! His heart had dried up long back fighting the senseless follies of the ignorant and learned alike.

He mechanically read out the words written on the Taala-leaves and dropped the leaves, his life-work, into the ever-hungry mouth of the Fire-God.

It was his Yajna! A Sacrifice which will prove the end of all his sufferings on the earth!

The deepest pain that pierced his heart was his being away from the lotus feet of his Lord, his Shiva whom he loved so much!

He just wanted to finish his gruesome work of destruction and walk out of this horrifying mortal world to rest under the shade of the lotus feet of Mother Paarvati.

The animals understood his suffering as it were!

They were the only sympathizers he had and they did not fail him.

They had no arrogance! They had no envy!

They were part of the Nature (Prakrti), the Supreme Goddess (Umaa) who watched everything silently. These animals did not even move! They did not eat any grass! They did not drink water also! They sat there just listening to the Sage!

Wonder of wonders!

Did they understand anything? Or did they all, absorb the thoughts of the Sage just like that?

We do not know!

We know this much only that knowledge was ignored and discarded even in his times!

The Sage was none other than Shri Gunaadya (one rich in virtues), the devoted servant of Shiva stuck in a mortal form by the curse of Paarvati!

The text he was burning was an exact rendering of the countless stories related by Lord Shiva to his beloved wife Umaa!

He had written those stories in the Paishaacha dialect, inside a formidable forest, living with the Paishaacha clan, using his own blood as ink, for seven whole years, day and night without a break.

Actually he had poured his life and blood into his work!
 The text contained seven stories, each containing one lakh verses, totally making it seven lakh verses.
 But he was burning them all now to be lost forever, for no human knew the value of that work and nobody wanted them.

His two Paishaacha disciples and the animals watched the tragic end of the work, shedding tears at the loss of a great work.

All would have been lost completely but...
 ... the earth still had some virtuous people maybe!

By their merit as it were, the two disciples begged the Sage to spare the last of the work containing the history of King NaraVaahanaDatta, as they favoured the king and his exploits.
 That was the only left over work of Gunaadya we have on this earth now.
 The sacred stories told by Lord Shiva are not fully given to us because of the folly of human arrogance that always blocks any knowledge given by anybody.

Even this text was so huge that a Kashmir poet named SomaDeva managed to compile into a short form and called it KathaaSaritSaagara – the ocean into which all rivers of stories enter.
 Yes! This is an ocean of stories where rivers of stories continuously enter making it ever-turbulent! It is difficult to cross indeed.

Poet SomaDeva divides his work into eighteen ‘Lambakas’ (swells or surges). Each ‘Lambaka’ again is divided into ‘Tarangas’ (waves).
 ‘Lambaka’ is not a flooding wave which drowns you but a huge wave which is made of many numbers of waves; which rises high and ‘hangs’ for a fraction of a second before falling down.
 In this great work of SomaDeva, eighteen huge waves (Lambaka) of stories carrying within them, many mini waves of mini-stories, appear one after the other.

As SomaDeva is a devotee of Lord Shiva, the book abounds in the various names of Shiva and Paarvati.
 This is not just a story book; but the sacred ocean of Shiva’s words.

A humble attempt has been made to translate the Sanskrit text of SomaDeva verbatim, in simple English as an offering to the lotus feet of Lord Shiva and his spouse Shiva.

FIRST 'LAMBAKA' NAMED 'PEDESTAL OF THE STORY '

BENEDICTION

*This nectar of stories rose out of Shiva's 'mouth-ocean',
when churned by the
'heavy Mandara Mountain of love' of the 'daughter of the Mountain-king'!
Those who cross over it perforce, will have all the obstacles removed from their heart,
and obtain all the divine riches by the grace of 'Bhava', the source of all.*

{Everyone knows very well about the nectar that came out of the milk ocean, when the 'Devas' and the 'Asuras' churned the ocean with the huge Mandara Mountain.
But there was another ocean that got churned!
It was the mouth of Shiva, the auspicious milk-ocean wherein resides the Supreme knowledge.
Who placed the Mountain in Shiva's mouth?
Paarvati, the daughter of the Mountain!
After all, her father was the King of Mountains; and she could easily place some weighty mountain in Shiva's mouth!
What was the Mandara Mountain?
'Love'! So much love! It created turbulent waves in the heart of Shiva!
And what nectar came out?
'Stories'! What could be sweeter than a story?
How many stories?
Countless! Shiva's mouth overflowed with the nectar of stories!
Who gets benefited by that nectar? We! The mortals!
Whoever can cross over this ocean of stories will surely be blessed by Lord Shiva and will be rewarded by the riches of the heaven!}

FIRST WAVE

*Let Shiva bless us with all good things!
His dark-hued neck was enveloped by the ropes, namely the looks of Paarvati seated on his lap,
who was induced by passion towards her Lord.*

{Shiva! The Supreme Lord, spouse of Paarvati!
Paarvati was seated on his lap in the tight embrace of her Lord.
Her heart was disturbed by the rising waves of passion as if stuck by the arrows of Manmatha. She tied her Lord with strong ropes from which he could never escape. What were they? Her passion filled looks!}

*Lord Ganesha, who destroys all the obstacles,
swept away all the stars with his trunk, when he was dancing with glee at the evening time;
and he was spraying cool spray of water as if creating different ones (as stars)!
Let him protect us!*

{Happy by the love sports of his parents, Ganesha started dancing at the evening time. As he danced wildly in the Cosmos, all the stars were swept away by his violently moving trunk. But as he sucked the waters of the Celestial River flowing from his father's head and sprayed it all over, lo, the sky was again filled with the white pearly drops of Ganges, and shone as if with stars!}

*I salute the Goddess of speech,
who lights up the meaning of all words without any residue.
(Blessed by her) I now compose the collection which contains the essence of 'Brhat-Kathaa'*

TITLES OF THE LAMBAKAAS

First I will begin with 'KathaaPeeta' - the pedestal on which the entire work is placed; it will be followed by KathaaMukha; then the third story will be of 'Laavanakaa'; then NaraVaahanaDatta's birth, then ChaturDaarika, then MadanaMunchakaa, then the seventh one is named as RatnaPrabhaa, the eight one is named SuryaPrabhaa, then Alankaaravatee and Shaktiyashaa, and then Velaa will be the eleventh one; then Shashaankavati, then Madiraavati, then Mahaabhisheka, followed by PanchaLambaka; then SurataManjari, then Padmaavati, and VishamaSheelaa will be the eighteenth.

The stories are exactly as depicted in the source. There is not the least deviation. Only the original text has been rendered short; the language alone is different. At suitable places changes are made as little as possible, and the poem has been rendered intact, without spoiling the essence of the stories. I am not composing this for getting name or wealth; but to make the entangled network of stories easy to remember.

GLORY OF SHIVA AND PAARVATI

*There is a renowned emperor of all the great hills named Himavaan.
He is served by all the Kinnaras, Gandharvas, and Vidyaadharas.*

*The Mountain was so celebrated for greatness in the world that
Bhavaani, the mother of all the three worlds took on the identity of being his daughter.*

*On his northern side is the great Mountain called Kailaasa, covering many thousands of Yojanas.
He shines pure white as if laughing aloud saying,
'The (milk) ocean also did not turn white like nectar by the churning of the Mandara Mountain;
but I have turned white without any effort!'*

{The milk ocean gave out the dark poison along with the nectar; so it did not turn white fully! Shiva who resides on Kailaasa swallowed the poison and darkened his throat, and later the Milk Ocean became white without any blemish. But the Mountain became white just by the presence of Shiva who had saved the entire Creation by consuming the poison.}

*The great Lord, who is the Master of all the moving and non-moving,
lives there along with his spouse Ambikaa,
served by the Shiva-Ganas, Vidyaadharas and Siddhas.*

*The moon which stays in the high yellow-hued matted locks (of Shiva),
newly enjoys (in its new position),
the (same) joy of the company of the eastern mountain yellowed by the evening twilight.*

{The moon adorns now the highest place on the matted yellow locks of Shiva, and feels great as if he is sitting on top of the eastern mountain which has become yellow by the twilight of the evening. He can boast now of sitting on the eastern mountain and act equal to the so-called great Sun!}

*Shiva had indeed 'pierced inside' the single heart of 'Andhaka demon' with his Trident,
but had 'extracted out' the spear (of suffering)
that had pierced through the heart of the three worlds! Indeed it is a wonder!*

{Andhaka demon was harassing all the three worlds with his wicked deeds. When Shiva killed him with his trident, he had instantly extracted the 'pain of harassment' in the form of the 'piecing spear from the hearts all the people of the three worlds'. One heart alone was pierced by a spear; but all the worlds were free of the spear hurting them! A great wonder indeed!}

*The Suras and Asuras shine, as if they have received half of the moon as blessing;
because of the edge of the (crescent-shaped) nails (which look like half-moons) of Shiva
reflected in their crest-jewels (when their heads rested on his feet).*

STORY BEGINS IN KAILAASA

Once, Bhavaanee the spouse of Shiva, in an amorous mood, pleased her husband the Ishvara, the Lord of Lords through many eulogies, when alone with him.
Shiva was delighted by her praises and made her sit on his lap.

ShashiShekhara, the Lord whose crest was adorned by the crescent moon asked her,
“Beloved! What shall I do for you?”
Then Girijaa, the daughter of the Mountain-king replied,
“Prabhu (Lord)! If you are pleased with me, then tell me some new amusing story, hey Deva (divine being!)”
Sharva, the destroyer said, ‘What is there my beloved, that you do not know whether it is past, present or future?’”

As the mind of that envious wife (Maanavatee) had a whim to hear something from him, his dear wife then insisted that Her Lord should tell her, some new story. Forced by her pleadings of love, Shiva told her then a short story about her own greatness in order to flatter her.

[With so many Ganas, devotees, Devas competing for his grace, Paarvati felt that she should get something from her Lord, which no one had access to. That would make her a closest devotee of Shiva and she would be placed above all others, and be proved also as his one and only dearest lover. What story can you tell the Mother of the world who knows everything already of the past, present and future?]

STORY OF THE ‘LUSTROUS LINGA’

"Long back in the past, Naaraayana and Brahmaa wanted to have my vision and wandered all over the world; and at last reached the base of the Snow Mountain.

There they saw a blazing fire in the form of Linga (JvaalaaLinga- a lustrous pillar of blazing fire) in front of them.

(It reached down below for endless distances; and raised high above to endless distances.)

One of them (Brahmaa) flew up to see the top-end of that Linga; the other (Naaraayana) went down below searching for the bottom-end of that Linga.

Both of them could not find the edges of the Linga, above or below.

They then performed penance to propitiate me (Shiva).

I appeared in front of them both and said to both of them, “Ask for any boon you both want!”

Hearing these words, Brahmaa immediately said, “You please bless me by becoming my son.”

Because of his insolence he was cursed that he should not be worshipped by anyone at any time.

Then Lord Naaraayana requested me for a boon like this, “Bhagavan! Let me be blessed by serving you always!”

Then he was manifested out of me in your form. He who is Naaraayana is you my dear Shakti, my own power manifested in your form. And you were previously also my wife!”

Paarvati then asks, “How was I your wife previously?”

STORY OF DAKSHA'S SACRIFICE

Bhargha (the shining one) then replied,

“Long ago, hey Devi, Daksha Prajaapati had many daughters including also, you my dear.

He offered you to me in marriage; and others were offered to Dharma and other Devas.

Once he performed a grand Sacrifice.

He invited all the son-in-laws to attend that Sacrifice, except me.

Then you questioned him, “Dear father! Why did you not invite my husband? Tell me!”

He spoke then words that pierced your ears like poisonous needle,

“Your husband is a KapaalaMaalee (Wearer of skulls) (who owns no riches)! How can I invite him for this Sacrifice?”

You became very angry and said, “Why should I bear this sinful body born of you?”

Then you discarded your body by entering the ‘sacrificial fire’, my dear.

That ‘Sacrifice of Daksha’ was destroyed by me in anger.

Later, you were born from the ‘King of Mountains’ like a ‘Chandrakalaa’ (crescent of the moon) appearing in the ocean.

And then remember! I came to the Snow-Mountain for performing penance.

Your father appointed you to serve me, his guest.

Manmatha was sent by the Devas to make me get a son to kill Demon Taaraka.

Waiting for the right moment, he stuck me and was burnt off instantly.

Then 'you the courageous one' brought me off (stole my mind) through the performance of fierce penance. I accepted you as an addition to my own collection of auspicious things.

Thus you were previously my wife. What more do you want me to say?”

After saying this, Shambhu (Principle of auspiciousness) remained silent.

Devi was annoyed, and said, “You are a trickster! You are not telling an amusing story even after I plead with you so much. You wear Gangaa on your head, and worship Sandhya, but can't you understand what is in my mind?” Shiva pacified her and agreed to tell a divine story. Then, Paarvati discarded her anger.

She ordered Nandi (bull-vehicle of Shiva) that no one should be allowed inside, and made him stand guard at the gate. Shiva started his story-telling.

{Since Paarvati knew already everything, there was nothing new that could interest her!

Shiva tried his best to show her that he loved her a lot. Even Naaraayana, his ardent adorer was the form of Paarvati only! And moreover she had always occupied the position of his wife always at all times. She was so great that she had thrown her body into the fire in her love for him!

Whom else would he love other than her?

She was dearer to him than his Self! He had offered her half the body, as a mark of his love.

She was the closest of all! No one could occupy her place at any time! She was unique!

But she was insisting that, she wanted stories that were unknown to her, or any one else!

Brahmaa the Creator should not know and Naaraayana as the protector should not know!

That means that the stories would not have occurred in the past, present or future!

That means that the stories should not have been experienced by anyone in the creation!

So Shiva had to invent stories!

And of course as he narrated the stories, the stories appeared as real experiences of the characters in the story, in the space-time world of Brahma! The stories occupy a sacred position because they are the imaginations of Shiva the Supremacy!

Since she was the only one having access to this knowledge, she first of all safe-guarded the place of story-telling from one and all. She strictly ordered Nandi to stand at the gates of their abode and not allow any god, or a Gana or a devotee inside, for whatever reason!

Shiva began to narrate countless stories to Paarvati which still had not occurred in the mind of any Devas or humans including Brahmaa and Naaraayana. }

STORY OF PUSHPADANTA AND MAALYAVAAN

{Shiva narrated her, endless stories so far not occurred anywhere in any creation. His imagination had no bounds. Paarvati was lost in the wonder of it all. She knew something now, be it just a story, but something which only she and her husband knew. It was their private possession.

She now could be proud that she was indeed the dearest of all to Shiva! But imagine her anger and frustration when her own door-keeper approached and told her all the stories as narrated by her husband! She burst out like volcano and two Ganas who acted against her were cursed to enter the human world.}

“Devas are always happy enjoying the solitude (because of knowledge); the mortals are always miserable (because of ignorance); whereas the chronicle of the divine-humans is not less in excellence. Therefore I will relate to you the story of Vidyaadharas”.

{Vidyaadharas are extremely sophisticated Devas, are highly learned, and are endowed with magical powers. They live at the base of Kailaasa mountain where Shiva resides, and are extremely devoted to him.}

Even as Hara was speaking these words, PushpaDanta, the excellent of the Ganas and a favourite of Shambhu arrived there. Nandi who was guarding the gate refused permission for him.

PushpaDanta was surprised that he (a prominent attendant of Shiva) was also barred from entering Shiva’s presence for no valid reason. He was curious. In a second he entered inside invisible to all, by the power of Yoga.

After entering, he heard seven most wonderful stories of Vidyaadharas as told by ‘Pinaaki Shiva’ who holds the Pinaaka weapon or Trident.

He returned home and narrated those stories to Jayaa, his wife.

Who can hide wealth or secret from women?

Jayaa was amazed by the stories and went to meet the daughter of the Mountain because she was a Prateehaaree (door-keeper) there, and repeated the stories to Paarvati (as narrated by her husband newly). *Where do women have control over their speech!*

{PushpaDanta should have returned back when he saw Shiva and Paarvati in private conversation. But his curiosity won over him. Paarvati was too much absorbed in listening to the wonderful narratives created by Shiva. Shiva, the all-knower did not disturb the course of events that started rolling one after another.

The next mistake of PushpaDanta was to repeat those stories to his dear wife Jayaa!

Jayaa again retold them to Paarvati.}

Girijaa got angry and accused Ishvara saying,

“You did not tell me stories unheard by anybody. Even Jayaa knows all these stories.”UmaaPati (Lord of Umaa) understood everything that had happened through his vision of knowledge.

He pacified her saying, “PushpaDanta entered inside through his power of Yoga and had heard everything that I narrated. He has related the stories to Jayaa. Who else can know this, my dear!”

Very much angered, Devi called for PushpaDanta. He stood in front of her frightened and apprehensive. She cursed him, “You disobedient wretch! Get born as a mortal!”

Another Gana named Maalyavaan entreated on behalf of PushpaDanta, and he also got cursed in the same way.

{In a second, Umaa also understood the future course of events. Her curse was also a part of the play of her Lord! PushpaDanta had recently been acting vain-headed, and the forced entry into Shiva’s private chambers was the peak of all arrogance. He had deserved a punishment and got it now!}

They both fell at her feet along with Jayaa and begged for forgiveness.

They all begged her to tell how and when the curse would end.

Sharvaani (spouse of Sharva the annihilator) spoke slowly (with her anger under control).

“There is a Yaksha (demigod attendant of Kubera, the wealth god) named ‘Suprateeka’ who attained the state of the Pishaachi (flesh eating clan) with the name of KaanaBhooti, by the curse of Kubera; and he lives in the forest region of the Vindhya Mountains.

PushpaDanta! When you come across him, remember your original identity and narrate this story to him. Then you will be freed of the curse.

When Maalyavaan hears the story from KaanaBhooti, then KaanaBhooti will be freed of his curse. When Maalyavaan makes the story well-popular, then he will be freed of his curse.”

{The story now had to reach the mortals and purify their hearts. So it had to now go from PushpaDanta to Suprateeka to Maalyavaan and spread all over the earth!

Knowledge cannot become the private property of any one even if he is the Supremacy!}

After this, ‘ShailaTanayaa’ (the daughter of the Mountain) remained silent. The very next moment both the Ganas (including Jaya) vanished from sight, like the ‘clump of lightning flashes’ vanishing instantly.

{Though Paarvati had felt offended by PushpaDanta’s behaviour and the curse had shot out of her mouth, she still worried about him! After all, she was the Mother of all! She missed his wonderful hymns! She missed Maalyavaan’s beautiful garlands! She missed also Jayaa, who also had vanished along with her husband!}

As time went by, once Gauree (the daughter of the Mountain) asked Shankara (one who always causes good) with her heart filled with compassion, “Deva! In which place have the two excellent Ganas (Pramathas) taken birth on the Bhuloka?” ChandraMauli (one who wears the crescent moon on the head) said, “There is a great city named Kaushaambi. PushpaDanta is born there with the name of VaraRuchi my dear! Maalyavaan is also born with the name of Gunaadhya in a renowned city named ‘Supratishitaa’. This is what happened to them.”

{Shiva consoled his compassionate wife, and kept her cheerful through various acts of love and affection.}

After informing in this manner, that ‘Vibhu’ the all-pervading one, remained entertaining ‘his wife’ ‘who was feeling apologetic for embarrassing the servants who always were well-obedient’;

inside the bowers made of Kalpa creepers which were situated at the base of the Kailaasa Mountain, and were conducive to their amorous sports.

END OF FIRST WAVE

SECOND WAVE

{PushpaDanta is born as VaraRuchi, Maalyavaan as Gunaadhya, and Suprateeka as KaanaBhooti.]

VARARUCHI MEETS KANABHOOTI

PushpaDanta was born on the earth and wandered with a mortal body.

He was named as VaraRuchi (man of good taste), but also was famed as Kaatyaayana (Devotee of Kaatyaayini). (Kaatyaayini, so named because of getting worshipped by Rishi Kaatyaayana in the past) He mastered all learning; served King Nanda as a minister; yet feeling somewhat depressed he reached the Vindhya Mountain in order to have a vision of VindhyaVaasinee (in the shrine). (VindhyaVaasinee- the dweller-deity of Vindhya Mountain).

He propitiated her with penance. Devi appeared in his dream and asked him to meet (a Pishaachi named) KaanaBhooti, who lived in the forests of Vindhya Mountain.

VaraRuchi wandered in the forest which was spread out with tigers and monkeys, which was filled with thorny trees and which had no water anywhere. At last he saw a tall banyan tree.

He saw nearby the Pishaacha named KaanaBhooti surrounded by hundreds of Pishaachas. His body was very tall like a Saala (Sal) tree.

(‘Pishaachas’ are the wild forest dwellers who consume raw flesh.)

KaanaBhooti saw Kaatyaayana and immediately held on to his feet (with extreme respect).

Kaatyaayana sat down and spoke the very next moment, “You are of such a good conduct. Why have you attained such a lowly state?”

Hearing his affectionate words, KaanaBhooti replied “I do not know this by myself; but had heard it from Sharva when in the cremation ground at Ujjayini. Listen! I will tell you that!”

KANABHOOTI TELLS WHAT HE LEARNT FROM SHIVA

(Shiva is a frequent dweller of cremation grounds filled with burning bodies, smoke, spirits, and Pishaachas. He also holds in his hand a skull as his bowl. Once when KaanaBhooti was wandering in a cremation ground searching for raw flesh, he heard the conversation of Shiva and Paarvati.)

Once, Devi asked the Lord in such a cremation ground filled with skulls “Deva! Why are you fond of skulls and cremation grounds? Bhagavaan (one who has all the powers) said,

“Long ago, at the time of ‘Kalpa-Kshaya’ (dissolution of the created world), the world was filled with waters. Then I pierced my thigh and made the blood-drops fall down.

The drops fell into the waters and became an egg. The egg was broken into two pieces by me.

A person (Conscious principle) (Purusha) came out of it.

Then Prakrti the primordial principle was created by me to complete the world phenomenon. (Purusha is formless, Prakrti rises as his form.)

Both of them together created other Prajaapatis (the powerful lords of Creations who helped in increasing the numbers of beings in the Creation); and they created more beings. That ‘Purusha’ (the first one created by me, Brahmaa) was known as ‘PitaaMaha’ (Grandfather) in the world, my dear! After creating the universe made of moving and non-moving, this Creator was filled with arrogance. (Brahmaa did not salute Shiva, his own Creator.) Therefore, I sliced off his head.

Then feeling regretful I took on a great vow.

That is why I hold the ‘Kapaala’ in my hand and am fond of ‘Smashaanas’.

Moreover, this Jagat itself stays in my hand as this ‘Kapaala’, Devi! I mentioned previously that the egg broke into two halves; those shell-pieces are the heaven and the earth.”

After Shambhu finished his talk, I still stood there out of curiosity, waiting to hear more.

Then again Paarvati spoke to her husband, “How much time it will take for PushpaDanta to come back to us?”

Hearing Devi’s words, Maheshvara the Great Lord spoke to Devi pointing out to me,

“This Pishaacha seen here is a Yaksha, an attendant of Vaishravana (Kubera).

He had a Raakshasa friend named SthoolaShiras (one with a huge head).

Kubera, the Lord of wealth) saw his attendant in the company of the wicked ‘Raakshasa’, and cursed him to experience the state of a ‘Pishaacha’ in the wild forests of Vindhya.

At that time his brother named DeerghaJangha (one with long thighs) fell at his feet and begged for forgiveness. He asked him about the redemption of the curse. The Lord of wealth told him that 'PushpaDanta will be cursed and be born as a mortal in this earth. He should hear the great story from him and then relate it to Maalyavaan who had also become a mortal by the curse. Along with those two Ganas, he will also be redeemed of the curse'. In this manner, Kubera explained to him how the curse would be redeemed.

You also told the same thing about PushpaDanta! Remember my beloved!”

I felt very happy by the words of Shambhu and came here.

In this manner, the fault of my curse will last only till the arrival of PushpaDanta.”

When KaanaBhooti said these words and became silent, the very next second VaraRuchi remembered his original identity. He spoke as if woken up from a deep slumber,

“That PushpaDanta alone am I. Listen to the story from me.”

After saying so, Kaatyayana related to him seven great stories of seven hundred thousand verses.

KaanaBhooti then said, “Deva! You are manifestation of Rudra. Who else do know these stories? By your grace the curse has been removed from my body.

Prabhu! Tell me about your life on this earth from the time of your birth, if it is not to be hidden from ordinary people like me. Sanctify me again.”

VaraRuchi obliging the Yaksha, who was saluting with reverence, related the full story of his life in detail to him.

VARARUCHI (PUSHPADANTA) TELLS HIS STORY

There lived a Brahmin named SomaDatta, also known as AgniShikha (fire-crest), in the city of Kaushaambi. He had a wife named VasuDattaa. She was the daughter of a Sage and was born as a Brahmin-girl by a curse. I was born to her by that excellent Brahmin, because of my curse.

My father died when I was still a child. My mother took care of me by doing hard labour.

Once, two Brahmins arrived at our house desiring to be sheltered for just one night.

They had come from far and were covered by dust.

As they rested in our house, a drum sound was heard outside. My mother spoke to me in a choking voice, remembering her husband, “Son! This is the actor Nanda, your father’s friend who is dancing.” I then told her, “Mother, I will go out and see him. I will show you exactly the same dance movements as done by him and recite the song also.”

Those two Brahmins heard my words and were surprised.

My mother told them, “Sons! There is no doubt about it. This boy can remember any thing that he hears once.”

To test me, they recited the 'PraatiShaakya'. Immediately I recited them exactly as I had heard it, in their presence. ('PratiShaakhya'- collection of four grammatical treatises connected to the phonetic aspect of the Sanskrit in the Vedas).

Then, I went with them to see the dance performance and after returning home, showed my mother all that I had seen and heard in the show, exactly as it had been performed.

One of the Brahmins named Vyaadi decided that I was capable of ‘learning anything by a single hearing’ (EkaShrutaDhara). He saluted my mother and related this story.

STORY OF VYAADI AND INDRADATTA

“Mother! There lived two Brahmin brothers named DevaSwaamy and Karambhaka (one who knows many dialects) in the city named Vetasaa (Vetas- some kind of cane). They were extremely affectionate towards each other. This one here is IndraDatta son of one brother and I am Vyaadi, the son of the other.

Then my father departed from this life.

IndraDatta's father was very much grieved and he went off on a great pilgrimage (MahaaPatha). Our hearts also broke by the grief. We were orphans without anyone to care for us. Though we had enough wealth, we wanted to master all learning. We decided to propitiate Lord SwamiKumaara (Lord Subrahmanya) through penance and entreat him.

As we remained engaged in performing penance, Lord Kumaara appeared in our dreams.

He advised us like this. "There is a city named 'Paatalikam' ruled by King Nanda. There lives a Brahmin named 'Varsha'. You will obtain all that you want to learn from him alone. Therefore, both of you go there."

Then both of us went to that city and inquired about that Brahmin. The people of that city informed that there was a foolish Brahmin named Varsha there.

Stuck by dilemma, we went to his house and saw the terrible condition in which Varsha lived.

The house was like the birth-place of miseries. There were mud-hills all over, and rats lived in them. The walls were filled with cracks and were in ruins. There was no shade. There was no proper roof also. We saw Varsha sitting and meditating inside the house.

His wife welcomed the guests in the due manner. Her body looked pale and emaciated. She wore a tattered tainted garment. She was like the 'personified form of poverty' which had sought the company of the Brahmin attracted by his virtues.

We saluted her with respect and told her all the events of our life, and also that the people of the city had derided her husband as a fool.

She said, "Sons! Why should I feel shy in front of you? Listen, I will tell you everything."

That devoted wife of the Brahmin then told us this story.

There lived an excellent Brahmin in this city named ShankaraSwaamy.

My husband and another one named UpaVarsha were his sons.

This husband of mine was a fool and had no money. His brother was opposite of all that he was. He gave the responsibility of the house in his wife's hands.

Monsoon season came. At this time, women will ground a paste of floor with jaggery, make it into some disgusting unbecoming shapes and will offer them to a foolish Brahmin. By this (they believe that) they will be freed of the exhaustion of bathing, in the winter and summer times.

Usually Brahmins refuse to accept it, since it is a much despised custom.

My sister-in-law offered these disgusting balls to my husband along with the 'Dakshinaa', the fee due for a Brahmin). He came home with that and was reprimanded by me a lot. He was frustrated with himself because of his foolish act.

He took shelter at the feet of Lord SwamiKumaara. He performed penance and pleased the Lord.

Entire learning was revealed to him by the grace of the Lord.

He was ordered by the Lord that he should offer all his knowledge to a Brahmin who was a 'SakrtShrutaDhara'. one who can absorb everything by just one hearing.

He returned home happy. He told me all that had happened.

From then onwards, he is engaged in the recitation of hymns and meditation, waiting for a SakrtShrutaDhara. Therefore you both go and search for 'ShrutaDhara' and bring him here. By that, all the wishes of everybody will be fulfilled."

We heard her words and gave her hundred gold coins to remove her poverty, and left that city.

We wandered all over the earth and never could meet a 'ShrutaDhara'.

Tired and exhausted we came to your house.

"EkaShrutaDhara' has been met and that is your son, who is still in his childhood. Give him to us. We will go and attain the wealth of knowledge."

Hearing Vyaadi's words, my mother consented to his request and said, "All the events appear connected only. So I believe! When I gave birth to this son in the past, a clear voice from an invisible person rose from the sky-'This child is a 'ShrutaDhara'. He will obtain all the knowledge from Varsha. He will establish the science of Grammar in the world. This boy is named VaraRuchi for he will like whatever is excellent.' After saying all this, the voice ceased.

That is why I was worried about this boy as he grew up, wondering day and night as to where will that teacher Varsha could be found. After hearing your account I am very much happy.

So take him along with you. He is your brother. What harm is there?"

Hearing my mother's words, Vyaadi and IndraDatta were overwhelmed by joy. They passed the night as if it was a moment.

They gave their money to my mother for the (sacred thread) ceremony to be conducted immediately, and I was given the sacred thread in the proper manner, as I desired to qualify for the learning of Vedas. My mother somehow held her tears back as I took leave of her. I suppressed all my grief in my enthusiasm for learning. Vyaadi and IndraDatta took me along with them thinking that the flower of Kumaara's grace had blossomed, and left that city without any delay.

Soon we reached the house of our Guru Varsha. He also accepted me as the personified grace of Lord Skanda. ('Skanda' - that which is spilled or oozed- a seed - seed of the entire world).

Next day, our Master Varsha sat on a clean place in front of us and uttered 'Omkaara' in a divine voice.

Immediately all the Vedas with their branches flashed forth in his mind. He started teaching all that to us (through recitation). I heard it once from the Guru; Vyaadi heard it twice; and IndraDatta heard it thrice and grasped the Guru's words.

Hearing the divine wonderful sound, all the Brahmins of that city immediately entered the house quickly, curious to know what was happening, and started to praise Varsha, approaching him and honouring him with due salutations.

Observing all the strange happenings UpaVarsha could not control his joy, and even the entire population of PaataliPutra city celebrated a festival all over the city. King Nanda of excellent wealth was also overjoyed by seeing the power of the boon given by Shiva's son, and immediately filled Varsha's house with riches, with all the due respect.

END OF SECOND WAVE

THIRD WAVE

KaanaBhooti was listening with full concentration to all that VaraRuchi said, in that forest. VaraRuchi again said, “As Time passed in studies, one day after the studies were completed for the day, we questioned our Master Varsha who had finished his daily worship, like this.

“Master! Tell us as to how this city has become an abode of both Lakshmi (wealth) and Sarasvati (knowledge)?”

Hearing our request, he addressed us and said, “Listen to this story which I will narrate to you.

STORY OF PAATALIPUTRA

There is a sacred pilgrimage centre named ‘Kanakhala’ at ‘GangaaDvaara’, where the divine elephant ‘KaanchanaPaata’ broke the ‘Usheenara hill’ and allowed River Ganges to flow down.

A Brahmin belonging to the southern region lived there performing penance, along with his wife.

He got three sons there itself. In course of time he and his wife both departed from this world.

The three sons went to a city called ‘RaajaGriha’ (the king’s abode) to acquire learning.

They mastered all the learning there. These sons had no one to care for them and were very much grieved. They took the path leading towards south to visit the shrine of SwaamiKumaara.

They reached a city named ‘Chinchinee’(rich in tamarind trees) situated on the ocean bank.

They went to the house of a Brahmin called ‘Bhojika’ (a wealthy person), and lived there.

Bhojika offered his three daughters in marriage to those three Brahmins and also all his wealth, since he had no other progeny, and went off to the bank of River Gangaa to perform penance.

As they continued to live in the house of their father-in-law, a fierce famine struck due to drought.

The three abandoned their devoted wives and went off.

The thoughts about the welfare of relatives do not touch the hearts of the cruel men.

The middle one of the wives was pregnant at that time. All three of them took shelter at the house of YajnaDatta, a friend of their father’s. They stayed in his house going through much difficulty, yet thinking about their husbands always.

Do the women born of noble families ever give up their chastity even at times of difficulties!

Vying with each other in showing affection to that child, their love for that child also increased.

Once, Shiva was roaming in the sky-path. ‘Skanda’s mother’ was seated on his lap.

Observing the child she was moved by compassion and said, “Deva! Look! All these three women are very much attached to this child. They all believe that he will care for them later. Do something by which the child can take care of them now itself, even though he may be just an infant.”

Thus requested by his beloved, the Lord the giver of boons (Varada) said to her, “I will bless him; for he had worshipped me in his previous life along with his wife. He is now on the earth only to enjoy his merits. His wife has taken birth as the daughter of a king named MahendraVarman and is called as Paatalee (pale red in hue). She will become the wife of this person only.”

Later, that ‘all pervading Lord’ (Vibhu) appeared in the dream of those three virtuous wives and said, “Your infant child is named as ‘Putraka’. Everyday, as soon as he wakes up from sleep in the morning, you will find one lakh of gold coins under his pillow. He will become a king after he grows up.” Those good ladies found the gold coins when the child woke up.

Those daughters of YajnaDatta, the devoted wives were very happy that their virtues had rewarded them. The store of gold grew enormously very soon, and Putraka became the king.

Wealth always follows penance.

YajnaDatta once said to Putraka in private, “King! Your father and uncles went off somewhere when the famine struck the place. Therefore offer a lot of charity to Brahmins. They will come to know of it and will come here (greedy for the money). I will tell you the story of BrahmaDatta! Listen!

BRAHMADATTA’S STORY

There was a king named BrahmaDatta in Vaaraanasee.

He once saw a pair of golden swans flying in the sky at night. A golden lustre emanated from them spreading all over. They were surrounded by hundreds of white-hued excellent swans (RaajaHamsas). It looked as if a heap of golden lightning had been suddenly surrounded by white clouds. The king longed to see the swans again so much so that he lost interest in all the other royal pleasures. He consulted his ministers and built a beautiful lake as per a design thought out by him, and he gave sanctuary to all the animals and birds. In course of time, the two swans arrived there and the king saw them. As they trusted the king, he was able to approach them and ask them the cause of their golden bodies.

The swans answered the king in clear words. “In our previous life of the past, we were born as crows, O king. Once we fought for some food-offering (Bali) and by our own fighting tendency fell into a deep vessel kept inside an empty sacred temple of Shiva, and died there itself. Therefore (because of the merit of dying in a sacred place) we are born as swans made of gold now, and we well remember our past.” Hearing their words, the king kept watching them as much as he wanted and felt happy.”

YajnaDatta continued his talk-

“Therefore only through charity that is unparalleled, can you get back your father and uncles.”

Thus advised by YajnaDatta, Putraka did what was told by him.

The Brahmins (who were extremely selfish and wicked) came there hearing about the charity. They were recognized and they obtained great wealth and also their wives.

It is a wonder that the wicked men whose intellects are blinded by non-discrimination, do not discard their evil disposition even after experiencing many difficult times.

In course of time, they desired to own the kingdom and wanted to kill Putraka. Those Brahmins took him on the pretext of visiting the shrine of Devi VindhyaNivaasinee. They had arranged for the killers to hide inside the sanctum sanctorum. They told him, “You go inside the temple first and see the Goddess alone”.

Trusting them completely, he entered inside and saw the killers. He asked them, “Why do you men want to kill me?” They told him, “Your fathers have offered gold to us to get you killed.”

The wise Putraka said to those men deluded by the power of Devi (greed).

“I will give you this necklace made of precious stones which I am wearing on my person. It is priceless. Release me. I will not expose your secret. I will go away far.”

They agreed; took that necklace and went out. They lied to the fathers that Putraka was dead.

Those Brahmins greedy for the kingdom returned; but were put to death by the ministers who found out their deceit. How can ungrateful people ever get good things!

Meanwhile Putraka, bound by his promise, entered the forest-land of Vindhya Mountain, feeling dispassionate towards his relatives. As he wandered, he saw two men who were engaged in wrestling. He asked them as to who they both were.

They replied, “We are the two sons of ‘Mayaasura’. This wealth which was his belongs to us now. This is a vessel, this is the stick; and this is a pair of sandals. We are fighting to possess these things. He who is stronger will own them.”

Putraka laughed aloud hearing their words and said, “What value are these worthless objects for a man!?”

Then they both said, “When a man wears these sandals, he can float in the sky. Whatever is written by the stick turns out to be true. This vessel will get filled with whatever food one desires.”

Hearing their words, Putraka said, “Why fight unnecessarily? Let us have this bet. He who can run fast should own them.”

Those fools agreed and ran off. Putraka wore the sandals; took the vessel and stick in his hand and ascended the sky.

In a moment, he had crossed great distances and saw a beautiful city named ‘Akarshikaa’ (attractive). He got down there from the sky.

‘Prostitutes are experts in deceit. Brahmins will be like my fathers. Merchants will be greedy for money. In whose house can I stay?’

So thinking, the king went to a deserted dilapidated house. He saw an old woman inside.

He felt kind towards her; gave some gifts and gratified her.

He lived in that dilapidated house unseen by anybody.

Once the old woman who felt affectionate towards Putraka said, “Son! I am only worried that you do not have a wife suitable to you. The king of this city has a daughter named Paaṭalee. She is safe-guarded like a precious jewel inside the topmost storey of the harem.”

As he gave his ears (listened) to the words spoken by the old woman, Manmatha who had been waiting for a chance to attack the king, entered his heart through the ear-hole.

He decided to see that pretty damsel that day itself. At night he wore the magical sandals and floated in the sky. He entered the window of that room in the mansion, which was almost like the peak-point of a tall mountain; and saw the sleeping ‘Paaṭalee’ who was getting bathed by the ‘moon-light’ continuously by clinging on to her limbs: (her beauty shone) as if the ‘personified power of Manmatha’ was resting there, after the ‘conquest of the entire world’.

He wondered how to wake her up. At that time he heard the night-watcher (Yaamika) outside saying-

*“Those young men indeed get the fruit of their birth,
by embracing the sleeping beloved in the privacy of the night and awaken her,
even as she sweetly moans and opens her drowsy eyes slightly with reluctance”.*

Encouraged by the words heard at that appropriate time, the king embraced his beloved with all his limbs, quivering in passion. Then she woke up.

She looked at that king with an inter-mixture of curiosity and shyness, repeatedly averting her eyes away and again lifting her eyes to see him; and they both felt attracted towards each other.

After due conversations and marrying in the ‘Gaandharva way’, the love for each other increased every moment for the couple; but not the night.

Taking leave of the distressed wife, mind lost in her thoughts, Putraka came back in the last hour of the night to the old lady’s house. Every night he visited her and left in the early hours of the morning. Once the guards kept for safe-guarding Paaṭalee, noticed signs of amorous union in her body. They reported this to the king. He appointed a woman to watch secretly the proceedings of night inside the harem. She saw the king entering the harem secretly and meeting the princess. When he was asleep, she marked his garment with red lac for identifying him later.

The king sent spies to find the culprit hiding in his city. They found Putraka in the dilapidated hut, by the mark left on his cloth.

He was brought to the presence of the king.

Looking at the angry king, Putraka rose up in the sky with the help of his magical sandals and entered Paaṭalee’s room in the top storey of the harem.

“We have been found out. Come! Let us escape with the help of these sandals.”

So saying he lifted her on his shoulders and flew up in the sky.

He descended down from the sky on the bank of River Gangaa.

He produced various delicacies in the magic vessel and entertained his tired beloved.

Paatala understood the powers he possessed and as per her request, he drew the picture of a city furnished all the four types of army.

The city appeared in reality by the magical power of the stick. He became the ruler of that city. He pacified his father-in-law and ruled the kingdom stretching till the ends of the ocean.

*This is the divine city created magically along with all the citizens (and is not really there).
It is the joint abode of Lakshmi and Sarasvati
and is renowned by the name of 'PaataliPutra'”*

VaraRuchi continued to speak,

“Hey KaanaBhooti! After listening from the mouth of Varsha, the strange story so far never heard before by anybody, we ruminated for long, the events of the story in our minds, enjoying the wonder of it all.

END OF THIRD WAVE

‘BRAHMAN KNOWLEDGE’ HIDDEN IN THIS ORDINARY STORY

There is the supremely sacred state (Kanakhala) which is far beyond the reach of the minds.

It is filled with golden trees (of Creations), rather the potential seeds of all experiences that flow through the state of Brahmaa, the Creation principle.

The pure consciousness, or Chit, or existence-awareness (termed as Brahman, Sat, Chit etc), the celestial Ganges flows through the creation channel as it were, and rises as countless fertile lands of Jeeva-states.

Jeeva state is just a flowing state of experiences, known as ‘Aapa (waters) in the Upanishads.

To open the quiescent of Brahman-Reality, the Brahmaa, the Creator, the divine elephant with the two tusks of duality, named as KaanchanaPaata (Hiranyagarbha, the golden shine), broke the Usheenara hill (the solidified fulfilment states of Vaasanaas or subtle wants) (Ushi means wants) and allowed Brahman to exist as the lower states of Jeevas.

So there existed a Brahmin (the Creator who always stays identified with the Brahman state) in the ‘southern region’ where the ‘Death’ resides as the ‘deity of destruction’ in the form of ‘time and space limitations’.

‘Maayaa’, the delusion power as his wife who always served him.

She had the power to hide the Brahman-Reality (the true self in all) and revealed the world alone as truly existing as solid and hard reality.

This Brahmin had three sons in the form of Raaga, Dvesha and Bhaya (wants, aversions and anxieties) (likes, dislikes and the fear of not getting what one wants).

The Brahmin was too aged (like the long past time of Creation), and was conceived as having an end also, since he must have had a beginning. (So the humans thought and calculated his age.)

So Creations began and ended again and again non-stop, because of Maayaa’s power of conception.

The three sons were now fully developed and made their home in the royal city called the Intellect.

They took to belief in a super power also as their ruler.

They lived in a city named Chinchini (filled with sour tamarind trees) (the desire-fulfilment states which only brought harm instead of true joy).

They lived in the house of a Brahmin named Bhojika (the enjoyer of fruits of actions) and were Karma-bound (and were lost in the conceptions of death, after-life, hells, heavens, re-births etc).

Bhojika had three daughters, namely the three Gunas.

He gave off his three daughters to the three sons, and gave all his wealth to them.

So there arose a huge world (Samsaara) filled with various actions based on the three sons (Raaga, Dvesha, Bhaya) and the three wives the Gunas.

The three Gunas are Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas.

These Gunas are the roughly divided into three levels of intellects in all the living beings.

Sattva is the deep longing for learning (lustre), Rajas is the extreme attachment to actions bound with results (dusty), Tamas is the dull state of avoiding both action and learning (darkness).

All the intellects are under the influence of the three Gunas, and the three attitudes, and are trapped in the city of tamarind trees, enjoying the wealth of world-experiences of various types offered by Bhojika (the want of enjoyment).

There is an evolved state of the intellect which can be rid of the Raaga, Dvesha and Bhaya, where Sattva Guna predominates. Yet the evil tendencies were not fully gone, but lingered deep within ready to sprout any time, because of lack of dispassion.

Putraka is the Jeeva (the son of Brahman, so to say), the minuscule manifestation of his father, the changeless Reality denoted by the term Sat, Chit, Brahman, etc.

He is the son of the middle one, Rajas, and is action-bound only, and goes through lives after lives because of the results of his actions, good and bad.

The Jeeva which is fully Sattvic, but is not filled with dispassion (that rises through the analysis of the worthlessness of the worldly existence), is happy in its Sattvic life of religion, discipline, meritorious acts etc..

Because of the virtues cultivated by him, the three Gunas stay under his control, and the evil tendencies associated with those Gunas. like arrogance, conceit and greed leave him and go off.

YajnaDatta is the friend of his true father Brahman, and exists in the form of religious discipline, austerities, penance, charities, meritorious acts, kindness, self-less acts etc.

Then because of his devotion to his regular duties in life (rites pertaining to daily life) (YajnaDatta's house in the story), and handling the three Gunas in a proper balanced manner, he is able to prosper in life.

Separated from the true father (Brahman), pampered by the three Gunas – Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas, and by the Niyati that offers the fruits of actions as Shiva and Shivaa, he enjoys the experiences of the world and is happy in his life.

Since he is virtuous and Sattvic, he will unite with 'Aatman knowledge' (Paatalee), the beautiful princess hidden by MahandraVarman, the ruler of all, the ignorance (the non-analytic character of the intellect).

As time goes by, he becomes more dispassionate and engages himself in offering charity to the poor and other meritorious acts (as fruit of his YajnaPhala (YajnaDatta, the minister of the story).

However, these acts bring about arrogance, conceit and the greed for heavenly pleasures (dacoits) that are the results gained by meritorious acts.

He is thrown in the path of destruction, where he will be forever trapped in the clutches of ignorance.

But becoming aware of his own downfall, he takes shelter in Mother Maayaa, and cleverly gets rid of the evil tendencies..

He analyses the worthlessness of worldly pleasures and develops true dispassion, and goes off in search of liberation.

(False dispassion is where you feel disgusted with the world because of some disappointment, frustration, and helplessness).

He studies many scriptures of Knowledge, and is able to understand the truth about the world-phenomenon (Samsaara) which though unreal, fools all as real, and binds.

Mayaasura and his two sons who own the wealth are the Samsaara state of duality.

Maya is the state of Samsaara, where the mere sense information (disturbance in the silent emptiness) appears as the solid world of sense experiences.

This magic of Maya presents itself as the magic sandals that produce the space and time phenomena as the fixed ideas in the mind, and can make one imagine limitless time and space in emptiness; and as the stick (the ever-vibrating mind, the information processor of sense-input) that can think anything and make it look like real; and the vessel of Vaasanaas (latent subtle desires hidden within each Jeeva) which can go on producing fields of experience without limits, and fulfil the desires of the Jeeva.

With this knowledge, he takes shelter in the Upanishads and Upanishad-based books like BrhadVaasishtam, namely the aged lady who is associated with the destruction of the world through knowledge.

Soon, he is able to have the glimpse of realization which is far beyond the reach of the ignorant, in the form of Paatali (the dawn of true knowledge).

Paatali is hidden from all by the king namely Ignorance, and stays at the top of the harem which is attained only by making a sincere effort to understand the Truth of Brahman, by taking shelter in the Knowers (and their works) and doing continuous rational analysis (Vichaara) of their words.

Wanting to attain that state of realization with utmost effort, he is continuously engaged in Vichaara of the Scriptural truths and somehow is able to have a glimpse of that state in his intellect.

He understands that no bliss equals the bliss of realization and is enamoured by it.

He still does not know how to make it his natural state of existence.

Then he hears the Scriptures declaring-

‘Make the world non-existent through Vichaara, completely get rid of the ‘I’ ness that binds to you a name and form, remain the formless existence-awareness alone, and just ‘be’ as the quietness itself’.

He practices hard, slowly gets rid of all his faults that bind him to the Samsaara.

By becoming more and more dispassionate, making the world non-existent (through Vichaara endowed with courage) he embraces the ‘princess of Self-realization’ (the quietness of the true state of the Self).

By repeatedly analyzing the truths of the Upanishads, he is able to have joy of the state of Aatman, by developing the non-identity with his body with name and form.

The love-union of each other increased every moment for the couple; but not the night of ignorance.

What you seek also seeks you; so the realization state also drags the Jeeva towards itself, enamoured by his dispassion and steadfastness.

Putraka now becomes a SthitaPrajnaa (one with stabilized intellect).

He marries her (Vision of absolute truth) (or the answer the mystery of existence), and is able to stay established always in the true Self with a stabilized intellect.

There is no forced dispassion or Vichaara now; but he is naturally in the knowledge state (where the world has lost all its realness), and is always with the third eye of knowledge, like the Brahman acting with a pure intellect.

Since he has no Vaasanaas to bind him any more to the reality of the worldly existence, he exists as a JeevanMukta (marked with red colour of stable intellect, representing the dawn of true realization) attending to his regular duties of life, as per his false identity of name and form.

The ignorance tries to trap him with the deity visions, heavenly pleasures, name and fame, the glory of staying as Guru, the prominent position of a famed Knower in the world etc. But he rejects all these temptations and escapes the clutches of ignorance (the king) and is far from the reach of ignorance (Avidyaa, the un-evolved intellect state), and keeps the ignorance subdued always.

He descends down from the 'sky of the formless Brahman level' to the 'lands of perceived experiences', where the Brahman-river flows as Jeeva-Gangaa.

The Knowledge keeps on evolving, and now he rises to that state of absolute freedom, where he can by just willing, create any sort of perception-field he fancies.

Since he is pure Brahman state with the intellect (that produces the movie of world-pictures), he is himself the producer, the director, the actor, the audience, the screen also of his life-movie (a story-less story).

And his world, is the world where he lives with complete freedom, untouched by virtues and vices alike, far beyond the reach of the Gunas, is known a PaataliPutra, the world where no one exists but yet is a world that appears real as if.

A world of a realized Knower is the Creation rising from his pure Knowledge-level intellect (Sarasvati), and is filled with anything that he fancies (Lakshmi).

This is the divine city created magically along with all the citizens (and is not really there).

*It is the joint abode of Lakshmi and Sarasvati
and is renowned by the name of 'PaataliPutra'.*

॥नेह नानास्ति किञ्चन॥

NOTHING AT ALL IS HERE AS 'MANY'

ॐ

FOURTH WAVE

After relating the above-mentioned story to KaanaBhooti in that interior of Vindhya forest, VaraRuchi again continued his story from where he left back.

VARARUCHI'S MARRIAGE

"In this manner, I lived there along with Vyaadi and IndraDatta, and through methodical learning, had mastered fully all the sciences that had to be learnt, as I gradually crossed over my childhood.

Once we all went to see the Indrotsava, festival of Indra. We saw there a beautiful girl, who was a weapon (bow and arrow) used by Manmatha without even the need of an arrow.

I asked IndraDatta, who she could be.

He said that she was UpaKoshaa, the daughter of UpaVarsha.

That girl got to know of me through her friends, and flashing forth tender love-filled glances at me, she took away my heart; and went back to her mansion, herself undergoing the pangs of separation.

She had a face like the full moon. Her eyes were beautiful like blue lotuses. Her shoulders were soft and tender like the lotus stalks. Her breasts were attractive and huge. Her neck was like a conch. Her lips (radanacchada) shone forth as if made of excellent coral (pravaala). Or rather, she was another Indiraa (Goddess Lakshmi) in the 'mansion of beauty' built by King Manmatha.

My heart was shattered by the arrows of Kaama, the deity of passion. I could not sleep at night thirsting for the taste of her lips which were like the Bimba fruits.

Somehow, after a lot of struggle, I fell asleep. At the end of night (in the dream) I saw a divine lady wearing white garment. She spoke to me like this,

"UpaKoshaa was your wife in the previous life. (PushpaDanta's wife Jayaa had incarnated as UpaKoshaa). She appreciates virtues. She will never desire another man. Son! You need not feel apprehensive about your love. I am Sarasvati (Goddess of learning) who resides in your person at all times. I could not bear to see you suffer like this." So saying, she vanished from sight.

I woke up immediately. Feeling encouraged, I hesitatingly walked towards my beloved's house and stood under a young mango tree near her house. Then her friend came there and informed me about UpaKoshaa's deep infatuation for me, which was brought about by the newly risen passionate feelings in her mind.

My pangs of passion increased double-fold now. I addressed her and said,

"How can I enjoy the company of UpaKoshaa by my own wish, without her being offered to me by her parents? It is better to die than get blame in one's character.

If her parents somehow understand the mind of your friend, it would lead to some good.

Good lady! Do this much! Help me and your friend to hold on to our lives."

That girl went and reported everything to her friend's mother. She immediately reported all this to her husband UpaVarsha and he reported this to his brother Varsha, and he approved of our match. The wedding date got fixed. Vyaadi brought my mother from Kaushaambi as ordered by Guru Varsha. Then UpaKoshaa was given to me in marriage by her father through appropriate ceremonies. Then I lived happily along with my mother and wife.

STORY OF PAANINI

As time went by, the number of students was on the increase.

There was one student named Paanini (descendant of Paani) who was very dull-headed.

Frustrated by his mindless services, Varsha's wife sent him away.

Paanini felt sad about all this and decided to acquire learning through penance. He went to Himalayas and pleased Lord InduShekhara (one who has the moon on the crest) by performing fierce penance.

He obtained by the grace of Shiva, a new grammar treatise (NavaVyaakaranam) which would be the source of all learning. He returned and invited me (the most learned of all itself) for a debate. We both debated for seven days.

I won over him on the eight day (not that the grammar was at fault, but because Paanini was unable to debate with his lesser intellectual power). Immediately a highly terrifying sound of Shiva's 'Humkaara' -sound of angry grunt) rose in the sky (which brightened up Paanini's intellect).

The Aindra Grammar (treatise founded by Lord Indra) perished at that moment by the will of Shiva. All of us were defeated by Paanini in the debate, and we were proved as fools.

I felt disgusted with everything. I deposited some money in the hands of a friend of mine, a merchant by the name of HiranyaGupta for the maintenance of my house and family; took leave of UpaKoshaa and went off to Himalayas to propitiate Shankara through penance, abstaining from food even.

UPAKOSHA'S STORY

UpaKoshaa stayed at home and desiring my welfare took to observing vows, daily bathing in the Ganges River with devotion.

Once, it was spring season. She looked very beautiful with fair-hued body and slender build. She stole the eyes of the observers like 'PratipacchandraLekhaa' (the single digit of moon seen on the first day of the fortnight after the new moon). She went to the River Ganges as usual to have her holy bath. She was then seen by the chief priest of the king, by the chief judge, and the young minister of the prince.

Next moment all three of them became the targets of Manmatha's arrows.

Somehow on that particular day she took a long time to finish her bath.

As she was returning in the evening, the young minister grabbed at her forcefully.

That wise lady of virtues accosted him bravely and said, "Hey Good man! I also desire what you desire. But I belong to a noble family. My husband is also away on a journey. How can I act shameless? Some one or other may be watching us! Then both of us will get into trouble for sure, and get censured. So come to my house definitely in the first hour (Prahara) of the night of the spring festival, when all the people will be busy in enjoying the festivities."

Thus she pacified him by making an agreement for the time being, and got away from him.

Unfortunately, before she walked a few steps even, she was stopped by the chief priest.

She made an agreement with him in the same way, and told him to meet her on the very same day of the spring festival. She fixed the time as the second hour of the night.

Escaping from him, she walked very few steps and was accosted again by the third person, namely the chief judge. She made the same agreement with him to meet on the very same day (as with the others); but fixed the time as the third hour of the night, in the third part of the night.

(UpaKoshaa could not directly oppose them or avoid them. They were working under the king. So she just managed to escape for the moment by postponing the issue so that she will have time to think out a way of escape.)

Escaping him also by her good fortune, she returned home trembling all the way. She confided in her friends about the promises she had made.

'It is better that, women belonging good families give up their lives, when the husband is away on a journey, than become the objects of the lustful eyes of other men!'

Given to such distressful thoughts and remembering me, she passed the night lamenting about her beautiful body which caused so much trouble. That virtuous lady did not partake of any food too.

Next morning, she sent her maid to get some money from the merchant HiranyaGupta, as she needed some for worshipping the Brahmins. That merchant came and met her in privacy.

He said, "Become mine! Then only, I will give you the money deposited by your husband."

UpaKoshaa had no witness to give proof for her husband depositing the money with the merchant. She understood the merchant also to be a wicked villain. Feeling despondent and angry, that virtuous lady told him also to meet her on that very day of spring festival. She fixed the time for his meeting as the fourth and last hour of the night. He went away.

Later, with the help of her friends, she abundantly filled a huge pot (Kundaka) with 'collirium mixed with oil' and added various perfumes like 'Kasturi' to that mixture. She made four rag garments and dipped them in the collirium paste, and kept them aside. She also got ready a very huge box (Manjushaa) which could be locked from outside.

The young minister of the prince who was grandly attired for the occasion arrived at the first hour of the night on the day of the spring festival. He entered her house stealthily unseen by any one.

UpaKoshaa said to him "I will not touch a man who has not bathed. Therefore bathe first and then enter inside."

That fool agreed. Her friends guided him towards the room at the back side of the house which was dark and well-hidden from the outside. They made him remove all his clothes and ornaments and took them away. They made him wear the rag cloth dipped in collirium, as the inner garment. They applied thickly the scented collirium on his body from top to toe as if it was some special unguent; and the fool could not know what was done to him because of the dark interiors. Even as they kept massaging each part of his body with that paste, the priest arrived there in the second hour of the night.

"Ah! A friend of VaraRuchi is here! And he looks like a priest. Come quickly and hide inside this box."

Whispering in alarm, they pushed the naked young minister (with the dirty rag cloth barely covering his body), inside the huge trunk. They locked it off from the outside.

The priest was also taken to the dark interiors of the house on the pretext of getting a bath.

That man was also removed of all the ornaments and clothes; was made to wear the tainted tattered rag, and cheated likewise by UpaVarshaa's friends; by that time, the chief judge arrived there in the third hour. And the girls acted immediately frightened and apprehensive; pushed the priest into the box as before and locked it from outside. The chief judge was also taken to the inner dark room for getting a bath. He was also deceived into removing his clothes and ornaments; was applied collirium paste all over his body. By then, in the fourth and last hour of the night, the merchant arrived. Feigning fear by his sight, the women-folk quickly pushed that judge also inside the box, and locked it from outside. All three of them could feel each other but did not open their mouths, frightened of getting identified, and remained silent as if practising to live in the 'hell of darkness' (AndhaTaamisra) forever.

UpaKoshaa led that merchant to that room holding a lamp in her hand.

She said, "Give me the money deposited by my husband with you."

The wicked merchant saw that there was no one else in that room and said, "I told you already that I will give that money which was deposited by your husband to you."

UpaKoshaa turned towards the box and spoke aloud, "Hey Devas! Listen to the words spoken by this HiranyaGupta." She then blew away the light. The merchant was also made to wear a ragged tainted cloth by her friends like the others, and was applied collirium paste all over his body on the pretext of bathing, for a long time.

Then when the night ended, he was told, "Go off, the night has ended", and though he was unwilling to leave, was held by the neck and thrown out by them.

Covered by just a tattered garment, with the whole body dark with collirium paste, getting bit by the stray dogs at every step, he reached his house feeling extremely shameful.

He could not even face the servants when they washed the collirium off his body at his house.

The path of the vice (wicked conduct) is indeed a miserable one.

Early in the morning, UpaKoshaa went to the court of King Nanda accompanied by her maid, without informing the elders of the house. She herself complained to the king that merchant HiranyaGupta wanted to rob her of the money which her husband had deposited with him.

The king got the merchant brought to the court for enquiry.

He said, "Lord! I do not have any of her money with me."

Then UpaKoshaa said, "Lord! I have witnesses to prove my case. My husband had placed those House-deities in a box before leaving for his journey. This man confessed that he has my money with him in front of those deities, yesterday night. Get that box with deities brought here, and you can question them yourself."

The king was surprised and ordered the box of deities to be brought to the court. Within minutes the box was carried by many men and was brought to the court.

UpaKoshaa addressed the box and said, “Hey Devatas! Tell exactly what was said by this merchant; then you will reach your homes safely. Or else, I will burn you all along with the box, or open the box in front of everybody in the court-room.”

Hearing her words, the three wicked men inside the box trembled in fear. They shouted from inside the box-“What she says is true! This fellow confessed in front of us that he has her money with him.” The merchant had nothing to object. He confessed to all his guilt.

The king felt curious about all that had happened. He took the permission of UpaKoshaa and got the box opened in front of all the people in the court, by breaking its lock.

Three men shaped like three dark lumps of flesh came out of the box. They were recognized by the king and the ministers with great difficulty. All of them laughed aloud wondering about it all. Questioned by the king, the devoted wife reported to him all that had happened.

All those assembled in the court praised UpaKoshaa saying, "The methods used by the virtuous high-born women to save their chastity is unthinkable indeed"!

All three of them who had evil intentions for the wife of another man were deprived of all their wealth, and were banned from the country. *Who indeed gets benefited by bad conduct!*

“You are my sister” so saying, the king gave UpaKoshaa a lot of money with due affection and sent her home.

Varsha and UpaVarsha commended the virtuous behaviour of that noble woman. All the citizens were amazed and amused when they heard what had happened.

VARARUCHI’S STORY CONTINUES

Meanwhile, after performing fierce penance in the Snow Mountain, I propitiated the Lord of Paarvati, the compassionate boon-giver. By his grace, the treatise of Paanini was revealed to me. Obliging his will, I completed it. I returned home, not even feeling the fatigue of the journey, for I was filled with the ‘nectar of the grace of the Lord who wears the crescent of the moon on his head’.

Then I saluted the feet of my mother and other elders; and I heard then about the wonderful account of what UpaKoshaa did. By that, 'joy and wonder in the heart', and 'respect and honour for her'- both attained the extreme height.

Varsha then wanted to hear the new treatise of grammar from my mouth. But it was revealed to him by SwaamiKumaara himself.

Later Vyaadi and IndraDatta asked Varsha what ‘Dakshinaa’ (offering to Guru) should be offered to him. Guru Varsha asked them for one crore of gold coins.

They agreed and said to me, “Come friend! Let us go and request King Nanda to give us that money so that we can offer Guru-Dakshinaa. So much gold cannot be obtained from any one else. The king possesses nine hundred and nine crores of wealth. He has also given the status of a sister to UpaKoshaa. He is your brother-in-law now. He will indeed respect your virtues and oblige us.”

Having decided thus, all three of us accompanied by a few celibate-students went to Ayodhya, where the king had camped. The moment we got there, the king died. Confusion due to sudden grief arose in the country, along with our despair.

At that time IndraDatta, the great Yogi said, “I will enter the body of this king through the power of Yoga. Let VaraRuchi request me for the money. Then I will give him the gold. Let Vyaadi protect my body till I return.” So saying, IndraDatta (as a spirit) entered the body of Nanda.

When the king became alive, the country celebrated the event with festivities.

Vyaadi stood guard for IndraDatta’s body in a deserted temple; and I went off to the palace.

I greeted YogaNanda (the king who was alive by Yoga) in the due manner by reciting ‘Svasti’ (auspicious blessing), and requested him to give one crore of gold coins for offering ‘GuruDakshinaa’.

He called the minister of the real Nanda named Shakaṭaala, and commanded him, “See that this man gets one crore of gold coins.”

Observing the fact of the dead king becoming alive and someone asking for so much money immediately, made the minister understand the trickery involved.

What can be hidden from the wise!

The minister said, “Deva! So it will be done!”, and then thought like this.

'Nanda's son is still a child. The kingdom is ready to be attacked by many enemies. Therefore I will protect this body (with another spirit) like this only.' Having decided thus, he ordered all the bodies of those who were dead at that time, to be burnt completely.

He sent spies everywhere to search for dead bodies. They found IndraDatta's body (seated in YogaSamaadhi) in the temple, pushed away Vyaadi and burnt it off.

Meanwhile the king pressurized the minister to get the gold coins immediately and give it to me.

(Shakaṭaala wanted to be sure that the Yogi's body was burnt off before he parted with the money.) Shakaṭaala who was in deep thoughts said, “The servants are all highly excited at present. Let this Brahmin wait till I get the money.”

At that time, Vyaadi came there and lamented in front of King YogaNanda. “A crime against a Brahmin has been committed! A Brahmin was performing a feat of Yoga and went out the body. His body was burnt away forcefully saying that it was an unclaimed body; that too when you have become alive at this moment!” Hearing this, YogaNanda (who was a Brahmin by birth) felt highly distressed (as he was trapped in the king's body fully).

That wise minister gave me the required gold after he was sure that the Yogi was trapped in the body of the king, because of his own body being destroyed in fire.

(Unseen by Shakaṭaala, the friends had a meeting.)

YogaNanda met Vyaadi secretly and said, “I have attained the state of a low-caste though I am a Brahmin! What am I going to do with all this wealth, even if it belongs to me for long?!”

Vyaadi consoled him and spoke words of wisdom as per the situation.

“You have been found out by Shakaṭaala. Now think. This minister is the chief of all. Soon he will kill you by his own will. He will consecrate ChandraGupta on the throne who is the son of the previous Nanda. Therefore, appoint VaraRuchi as your prominent minister.

Then this kingdom will be yours for long because of VaraRuchi's intelligence and also because of the divine experiences he had had.”

Having said this, Vyaadi went off with the money to offer Dakshinaa to his Guru; and, YogaNanda got me brought there and appointed me as the minister immediately.

I then spoke, giving him the counsel, “King! Though you have been robbed off your Brahmin hood, I am of the opinion that the kingdom will never be yours as long as long as Shakaṭaala is in his post. Therefore he must be killed by some trick or other.”

YogaNanda got the minister thrown into a dark deep well. He got his hundred sons also thrown into the same well. He announced that the minister was punished for burning a Brahmin alive.

Every day just one cup of fried flour and one cup of water was given as food, for Shakaṭaala and all his hundred sons.

Shakaṭaala spoke to his sons, “My sons! This meagre food will not satiate even one person! What to say of many! So let that person alone, who is capable of avenging YogaNanda, partake of this flour and water daily”. His sons told him, “You alone are capable of such a deed. Therefore you consume this food and water.”

Revenge against the enemies is dearer than the lives, for the courageous!

From then onwards, only Shakaṭaala survived, consuming that flour and water daily.

Alas! Those who desire victory are indeed cruel at heart!

Shakaṭaala who was imprisoned inside that dark deep well, kept watching the painful deaths of his sons, even as they suffered hunger and thirst, and thought with regret- 'A man who desires success should not act as he likes, without understanding the mind and without getting the trust of the powerful Lords.'
All his hundred sons died in front of his eyes. He alone stayed alive surrounded by the skeletons.

By that time YogaNanda was firmly rooted in the kingdom.

Vyaadi later came back to him, after offering Dakshinaa to his Guru.

As soon as he saw the king, he blessed him by saying, "Friend! Be the ruler of this kingdom for long! I take leave of you. I will go somewhere and perform penance."

YogaNanda spoke to him in a choking voice, "Enjoy all the pleasures in my kingdom. Do not leave me and go."

Vyaadi then said, "King! When the body has only momentary existence, which man of wisdom will drown in these worthless pleasures? The mirage of the desert namely the wealth, never deludes a wise man."

So saying he immediately left for performing penance.

"Hey KaanaBhooti, later YogaNanda arrived at his own capital city PaataliPutra for enjoying the royal pleasures, along with me, followed by his entire army.

I bore the weight of the post of the minister giving him due counsel.

UpaKoshaa served me with love and devotion.

I lived happily for long, rich and prosperous along with my mother and other elders.

The celestial river (Gangaa) bestowed on me abundant gold, being pleased by my penance.

Sarasvati (Learning) who was present in my body guided me in all my actions in person.

END OF FOURTH WAVE

FIFTH WAVE

VaraRuchi continued his story. “In course of time, passion overcame YogaNanda. Like an intoxicated elephant, he disregarded every rule.

Who will not get deluded by the sudden acquisition of fortune!

Then I thought, ‘The king has lost all his restraints. Always occupied in the mind about his duties, I am neglecting my own personal duties. It would help a lot if I release Shakaṭaala and reappoint him. Even if he tries to harm, what can he do, when I am already here as the prominent minister!’

After making such a decision, and requesting the king for permission, I got Shakaṭaala taken out of that dark deep well.

Brahmins are indeed soft-hearted!

‘YogaNanda is unconquerable, if this VaraRuchi stays as his minister. Therefore, I will be adopt the 'conduct of the cane' (flexible) (vaitasi vritti) and wait for the correct time to act.’ So thinking, that wise Shakaṭaala performed the duties of the kingdom at my request, being re-appointed as the minister once again.

Once, YogaNanda went outside of the city. He saw a hand with clenched fingers in the middle of River Gangaa. He immediately called for me and asked me, “What is this?”

I pointed out two of my fingers in the direction where the hand was.

The hand disappeared immediately.

The king was very much surprised and again asked about that, and I said to him,

“If five fingers are joined together, what cannot be achieved in this world!’ (Strength alone leads to victory).

The hand suggested this idea, showing the clenched fingers.

Then I showed two of my fingers. ‘If two have the same mind, what cannot be achieved!’ (Bond of two minds in friendship can conquer anything.)

When I solved the riddle, the king became highly pleased.

Shakaṭaala was worried by my unbeatable intelligence.

Once, YogaNanda saw his queen watching a Brahmin guest looking up at her, through the hole in the window. The king flew into a rage by that itself, and ordered that the Brahmin should be immediately put to death.

Jealousy indeed blocks the path of Discrimination!

When the Brahmin was led towards the execution place, a fish in the market-place laughed aloud, though it was dead. The king was informed of this and he immediately cancelled his execution, and asked me the reason for the fish’s laughter.

I told him that I will find out and let him know.

As I sat in solitude thinking about this, Sarasvati said to me, “Stay on the top of the Taala tree this night, hiding from the eyes of all. You will find out the reason for the fish’s laughter for sure.”

After hearing her words, I went to the place of execution and stayed at the top of the Taala tree that night. I saw a terrifying Raakshasi (demoness) coming there accompanied by her young sons.

The sons pestered her to give them food. Then she said, “Wait for some time! I will give you all the flesh-pieces of a Brahmin in the morning. Today he was not killed.”

They asked her, “Why was he not killed?”

She said again, “Seeing him, a fish laughed though it was dead.”

They asked, “Why did the fish laugh?” The Raakshasi replied, “All the queens of the king have gone astray. Men disguised as women stay all over the harem. The poor Brahmin gets killed instead, for no fault of his. That is why the whale (Timi) laughed. Sometimes, the spirits which have the power to enter all the objects at will, laugh at the excessive foolishness of the kings and exhibit such weird acts.”

After hearing her words, I returned home.

In the morning, I reported the reason for the laughing act of the fish.

After detecting the deceitful men in the harem, who were wandering there in the guise of women, the king felt highly appreciative of me and freed the Brahmin from execution.

Observing the king's conduct which had gone beyond restraint, I felt disturbed.

At such a time, a young artist who could paint portraits came there.

He drew the portraits of YogaNanda and MahaaDevi, the chief queen on a canvas. It was as if the figures drawn on the canvas were alive but without the movements of limbs and speech.

Pleased by the work, the king rewarded the artist with enormous gifts of gold. He got the painting mounted on a wall in his private chambers.

One day when I passed through that room, I observed that the queen's portrait in the canvas presented all her physical characteristics perfectly well. I calculated all the connected physical characteristics one by one through my skill and checked them all.

And I added one more mark (Tilaka) in her waist region where the girdle gets tied.

I was satisfied that the picture was now perfect and walked away.

YogaNanda saw that additional mark on the queen's portrait when he entered the room.

He asked the chamberlains there as to who had done such a thing. They reported to him that I was the one who had painted an additional mark on the queen's portrait.

'This mark is in Devi's covered part of the body. Only I am aware of it; no one else. How is it that, VaraRuchi came to know of it? He has secretly entered the harem area which is banned for all men other than me. That is how he has come to know of the men disguised as women living there.' Such suspicious thoughts rose in the mind of YogaNanda. He was afire as it were in anger. Fools always find connections in things like this only!

Then by his own counsel, he ordered Shakaṭaala to meet him immediately.

He commanded him, "You must immediately execute VaraRuchi. He has offended the queen."

Shakaṭaala said "As the Lord commands!" and went out.

He thought like this, 'I do not have the power to kill VaraRuchi. He is endowed with divine power and he had rescued me out of my own destruction. Moreover he is a Brahmin.

It is better that I hide him. I will now get him into my trust.'

Having decided thus, Shakaṭaala came to me and told me, the reason for king's anger and about the punishment of death waiting for me. Then he said to me, "I will get someone else killed

instead of you and satisfy the king. You hide in my house and save me from the king's wrath."

Accepting his suggestion, I remained hidden in his house. He got some one else executed in my stead, at night to prove the execution act.

Observing his fairness of act, I said to him with gratitude, "You are indeed a perfect minister. You decided not to kill me who am innocent. Anyhow I cannot be killed by anyone. I have a friend who is a Raakshasa (demon). He will appear in front of me just by my very wish, and for my sake he will consume the entire world. This king is actually a Brahmin named IndraDatta. He also cannot be killed (because it is a highly sinful act to kill a Brahmin)."

Then Shakaṭaala asked me to show him that Raakshasa.

I meditated for a second and immediately the Raakshasa was standing in front of us. I introduced him to Shakaṭaala. Shakaṭaala was alarmed by looking at him and was also highly surprised.

STORY OF RAAKSHASA

After the Raakshasa was gone, Shakaṭaala asked me again, "How did this Raakshasa become your friend?" Then I said to him, "Long back it so happened that when head police officers patrolled the city, each and every night, one of them died.

YogaNanda came to know about it and appointed me as the chief police officer.

When I was patrolling the city, I came across a Raakshasa at night.

He addressed me and said, "Tell me! Who is the most beautiful woman in the city?"

I laughed aloud and said, "Hey fool! A woman (whether good-looking or not) appears beautiful for the eyes of the man who loves her alone". He heard my words and said to me, "You are the only one who won over me by giving the right answer!"

I had escaped death in his hands by solving the riddle correctly.

He again said to me, "I am pleased with you. You are my friend from now onwards. I will be with you the moment you remember me."

Having said this much, he vanished from sight. I returned home.

In this manner, this Raakshasa is now my friend and will help me in any danger."

Again Shakaṭaala made a request to me to show him the vision of Goddess Gangaa. I meditated on the Goddess and she immediately appeared before us in person. I pleased her with hymns and she vanished. From then onwards Shakaṭaala became my friend and respected me a lot.

I lived in his house hiding from the king. Observing that I was distressed by the whole thing, he spoke consolingly, "You are an all-knower; yet why are you worrying like this? Don't you know that the kings always act without thinking? Soon you will be cleared of all the blames.

Listen to this story.

STORY OF SHIVAVARMAN

There once lived a king named AadityaVarman.

He had a minister named ShivaVarman who was extremely wise.

At some time, one of the queens became pregnant. Coming to know of this news, the king asked the harem guards, "I enter the harem only once in two years. Then how did this queen become pregnant, tell me." They said, "Lord! No other man is allowed entrance here; but your minister ShivaVarmaa goes inside unhindered." Then the king thought, 'Indeed he is the culprit! If I get him killed openly, I will get reproached (because he is a Brahmin).' So thinking, he sent his minister ShivaVarmaa to a subordinate king named BhogaVarmaa, who was his friend.

He later wrote a letter ordering the execution of the minister, and he sent the letter secretly to BhogaVarmaa through a trusted messenger.

Seven days passed after the minister had gone.

The guards caught the queen running away with a man dressed as a female.

When AadityaVarmaa came to know of it, he felt remorseful and thought, 'Oh! Why did I get that minister of such a noble character executed, for no proper reason?'

Meanwhile, ShivaVarmaa had reached the court of BhogaVarmaa. The messenger with the execution order also had reached the presence of BhogaVarmaa.

As fate would have it, BhogaVarmaa read the letter in secret and later revealed the contents of the letter to ShivaVarmaa.

The noble minister said to the king- "Get me executed, or else I will kill myself."

Hearing his words, BhogaVarmaa felt surprised.

He said, "What is it? Tell me O Brahmin! If you don't, then you will incur my curse."

Then the minister said, "King! Wherever I get killed, the 'deity of waters' will not make it rain for twelve years in that place."

Hearing his words, BhogaVarmaa consulted his ministers and thought like this, 'That wicked king wants to ruin my country. Doesn't he have executors there itself who would do the job secretly? Therefore, this minister should not be killed; and he should be prevented from killing himself also'.

Having come to such a conclusion, BhogaVarmaa immediately sent away ShivaVarmaa from that country, along with some soldiers to offer him protection. In this manner, the minister returned alive because of his wisdom.

And his innocence was proved by some other means. *Dharma can never be erroneous.*

In this way, your innocence also will get proved, Kaatyayana! Till then stay at my house. The king will surely regret his act some day.

Consoled by Shakaṭāala, hiding in his house, I passed the days waiting for things to clear out.

"KaanaBhooti! Once, HiranyaGupta, YogaNanda's son went for hunting. His horse running fast took him far into the jungle away from his retinue.

Caught alone in the forest he spent the day wandering here and there. At night, he started to climb a tree. At that very moment, a bear also climbed that tree escaping from a lion. He saw the frightened prince and said in human language, "Do not be afraid. You are my friend!" and made him feel safe. Feeling relaxed by the bear's words, the prince fell asleep soon. The bear remained awake. The lion on the ground said, "Hey bear! Push the human down for me to eat. I will go away." The bear said, "Hey you wicked wretch! I will never get my friend killed." Later the bear slept; and the prince was awake and on guard.

The lion again said, "Hey human! Push the bear down for me to eat. I will go away."

Hearing his words the prince pushed the bear down to save himself and get the lion satiated. By good fortune, the bear woke up at that time and did not fall on the ground, though pushed by the prince. He cursed the prince, "Hey Betrayer of friend! Become insane!" and also predicted that the curse will last till some one could know of the entire occurrence at the forest.

The prince returned home and as soon as he got up in the morning, he turned completely insane. YogaNanda became sorrowful seeing his son's condition.

He spoke with remorse, "If VaraRuchi was alive today, he would have immediately understood what would have occurred. Fie on my hasty action of getting him executed!"

Hearing king's words, Shakaṭāala thought, 'Ha! This is the right time for Kaatyayana to come out into the open. Being a man of honour, he will not stay here any more, and the king will consider me trustworthy.'

So thinking he requested the king not to get offended and said, "King! Enough of this distress! VaraRuchi is alive." YogaNanda ordered that I should be brought to his presence immediately.

Brought before YogaNanda by Shakataala forcefully, I observed the prince who had turned insane. I informed the king that he had betrayed a friend and had got cursed as a consequence.

By the grace of Sarasvati I related to the king the entire incident that occurred in the forest. Immediately the prince was freed of the curse and he praised me.

The king asked me - "How do you know all this?" I said, "Raajan! Inferring through the observation of signs and through intellectual prowess, wise men come to know of everything. Just like I could find the missing mark in the queen's portrait, I could infer this also."

Hearing my words the king felt embarrassed and remorseful.

I declined all his conciliatory gifts; and feeling satisfied by my name in the clear, returned home.

Character alone is the wealth of the wise!

As soon the people in the house saw me, they all wept uncontrollably. I stood there bewildered.

UpaVarsha came near me and said, "When UpaKoshaa heard that you got executed by the king, she offered her body into the fire; and your mother was heart-broken by the grief and died."

Hearing this, I was overwhelmed by the newly risen sorrow and fell on the ground unconscious, like a tree broken by the stormy winds. I at that moment had tasted the utmost essence of all lamentations.

Who will not be scorched by the 'fire of sorrow' rising by the death of dear and near relatives!

"Alas! In this worldly existence, the only thing that is permanent is impermanence.

When you know the deluding power of the Supreme Lord, why do you still act deluded?"

Enlightened by such words of wisdom uttered by Varsha, I gained some stability.

Later, with dispassion filling the heart, I renounced all the binding attachments, and with only quiescence as my only support, took shelter in a penance grove (TapoVana).

STORY OF CHAANAKYA

After many days, once a Brahmin came there from Ayodhya and stayed with me.

I enquired him about YogaNanda and his kingdom.

The Brahmin recognized me and said this with much grief, "Listen to what happened to Nanda. As soon as you left, Shakataala had the opportunity to do what he wanted from a long time.

He was wondering how to get Nanda killed and at that time he met on the road, a Brahmin named Chaanakya digging the ground.

He asked him, "Why are you digging the earth?"

He replied, "I am uprooting the Darbha grass here, for my foot was injured by that."

Hearing his words, the minister understood his angry disposition and avenging nature; and decided to use him as an instrument to kill YogaNanda.

He asked his name and said, "Hey Brahman! I bestow this honour on you and request you to preside over the 'Shraaddha ceremony' (ceremony in honour of the dead) to be conducted on the thirteenth day of the lunar fortnight at the house of King Nanda. You will get one lakh of gold coins as your Dakshinaa (fee offered to a priest), and you will also enjoy the honour of sitting at the foremost place (Dhuri), which is more honoured than that of others. So come to my house now." So saying, Shakataala took Chaanakya to his house.

On the day of Shraaddha, he introduced Chaanakya to the king and the king approved of him.

Chaanakya then sat on the seat that was the most honoured, in the Shraaddha.

Another Brahmin named SuBandhu also coveted that highly honoured seat, and informed by Shakataala about this, king Nanda said, "No one else other than SuBandhu qualifies for that seat; let him only occupy the foremost seat meant for the most honoured Brahmin". Shakataala approached Chaanakya feigning fear, and told him what the king had declared and said, "I am not at fault here".

Chaanakya stood there as if he was burning everything around him with anger. He let loose his tied up tuft of hair and made a vow, "This king Nanda will be killed by me within seven days. Then only will I tie up my hair with my anger subsided."

YogaNanda was enraged.

Chaanakya escaped from there unseen by anybody. Shakataala hid him in his house.

Secretly the minister got him all the ingredients necessary for performing some magical rite.

Brahmin Chaanakya went to some unknown place and performed his rite. Because of that, YogaNanda was afflicted with a burning fever, and on the seventh day he died.

His son HiranyaGupta was also killed by Shakataala.

ChandraGupta, the son of the previous Nanda was consecrated as the ruler of the kingdom.

He appointed Chaanakya who was endowed with the wisdom equalling Brhaspati, as the minister.

His mission of avenging YogaNanda fulfilled, Shakataala entered a huge forest sorrowing for his dead sons."

"KaanaBhooti! After hearing the whole story from the Brahmin's mouth, I was freed of my own sorrow.

Observing everything as unstable, feeling despondent I have come here to visit the shrine of VindhyaVaasinee. By her grace I saw you and remembered my true identity.

I have now obtained divine knowledge (as the Gana of Shiva in my original identity).

I have told you the great story (which Shiva related to Paarvati).

I am free of the curse now. I will now make effort to discard this body.

You stay here itself, till a Brahmin named Gunaadya who has renounced all the three languages, approaches you accompanied by his disciples. He is also an excellent 'Gana' cursed by Devi in anger, like me.

His name is Maalyavaan and he became a mortal, for taking my side.

You have to narrate to him this 'great story related by Maheshvara to Devi'. Then you will be redeemed of the curse and so will he be."

VaraRuchi in this manner told all that was necessary to KaanaBhooti, and left for Badarikaashrama to renounce the mortal body.

STORY OF THE VEGETABLE-EATING SAGE

When on his way to the Aashram, he saw a Sage on the bank of Gangaa. The Sage lived only on vegetables. When he was with the Sage, the Sage got pricked by the sharp Kusha grass. Blood oozed out of his wound. VaraRuchi turned the blood into vegetable juice by his divine power, being desirous of testing the ego of the Sage and also feeling curious to know how he would react. The Sage saw his body oozing out vegetable juice from his wound.

He exclaimed immediately with arrogance, "I have achieved the impossible!"

Then VaraRuchi laughed a little and said,

"I turned your blood into vegetable juice just to understand whether or not you have renounced the 'Ahamkaara' completely, after all these years of penance.

In the path of knowledge, Ahamkaara (ego/self-imagined greatness of oneself) envelops a person completely and is difficult to cross over.

Without knowledge, liberation cannot be attained by following any of the hundreds of austerities. The transitory pleasures of Heaven cannot attract the mind of a person after liberation.

Therefore renounce the ego hey Sage, and strive for the attainment of knowledge."

Having advised the Sage to subdue his ego; praised and saluted by him; VaraRuchi went off to the peaceful site of Badaryaashrama.

In Badarikaashrama, desirous of getting freedom from his mortal state, he took shelter at the feet of 'Devi the shelter of all', with extreme devotion.

She appeared before him in her original form, and taught him the 'Mantra-meditation' (Dhaaranaa) which originates from fire, for freeing oneself from the mortal body.

He meditated likewise and burnt the body (without the pain of the burning fire).

VaraRuchi then attained his own divine status back.

Meanwhile KaanaBhooti stayed at the Vindhya forest region waiting for the arrival of Gunaadya.

END OF FIFTH WAVE

SIXTH WAVE

STORY OF GUNAADYA

Maalyavaan, who got a mortal body by the curse of Devi, was of the name of Gunaadya (enriched by virtues) on this earth. He wandered in many forests; served King SaataVaahana; in his presence vowed not use three languages including Sanskrit; and feeling distressed, came to visit the shrine of VindhyaVaasinee.

By her order, he went and saw KaanaBhooti. Immediately, he remembered his original identity(as Maalyavaan) and became enlightened. Using only the 'Paishachi dialect' which was different from the other three languages, he introduced himself as Gunaadya and said to KaanaBhooti, "My friend! Please tell me quickly, the divine story you heard from PushpaDanta, so that we both will be redeemed of the curse together."

Hearing his words, KaanaBhooti saluted him and feeling immense joy said to him, "I will tell you the story; but I have great curiosity to know about your life. So please bless me by narrating your entire story from the time of your birth." Thus requested by him, Gunaadya started telling his story.

In 'Praatishtaana' (pedestal of the earth), there is the famous city named 'Supratishitaa' (well-established).

There lived an excellent Brahmin named SomaSharma.

Friend! He had two sons named Vatsa and Gulmaka.

The third one was a daughter named 'Shrutarthaa'.

In course of time, the Brahmin died along with his wife.

The two brothers kept their sister under their care.

Once the brothers Vatsa and Gulmaka found out that she was pregnant. As there was no chance of another man being there, they doubted each other.

Then Shrutarthaa understood their mind and said, "Do not imagine any untoward sin committed by anybody. I will tell you both what happened.

There is a prince named KeertiSena who is the son of the brother of Vaasuki the king of Naagas (serpent clan). I was seen by him when I went to bathe in the river. He was overcome by passion; informed me about his lineage and name; made me his wife through the Gaandharva method of wedding. This pregnancy is caused by him, and is of the Brahmin caste."

Hearing their sister's words, the brothers asked her, "What proof is here for that?"

Then she remembered that snake-prince in her mind.

Appearing there just by her remembering him in her mind, he spoke to Vatsa and Gulmaka.

"This girl has been made a wife by me alone.

Your sister is an eminent Apsaraa, who underwent a curse.

You both also slipped from the heaven due to a curse. Your sister will give birth to a son for sure; then she will be redeemed of the curse and you both will be too."

So saying, he vanished.

Within a few days, Shrutarthaa gave birth to a son. Know that child as me, my friend!

"This one is the incarnation of a Shiva-Gana. He is a Brahmin named Gunaadya" - a divine voice rose like this from the sky. Redeemed of the curse, very soon my mother and uncles died.

I lost my courage. Somehow I controlled my grief and relying on myself, went towards the South to attain learning, though I was very young. In course of time, I mastered all the learning and returned to my country so that I could exhibit all my accomplishments.

When I entered the city of Supratishitaa along with my disciples, I saw a splendid scene.

Some 'singers in meter' (Chandas-reciters) were singing Saama (Veda) in the prescribed manner.

Some Brahmins were engaged in arguing about some conclusion in the Vedas.

“The treasure gets into the hand of the one who knows gambling-art here.”

Some fraudulent gamblers were praising the gambling game in such words, trying to fool the gullible ones.

Some merchants were discussing about their own talent in selling merchandise.

One merchant among them spoke like this-

STORY OF MERCHANT MOOSHAKA

“What wonder is there if one thriftily invests his money to gain more money?

I attained abundant wealth without investing any money!

When I was in the womb itself, my father died. The wicked relatives took away everything from my mother.

Frightened of them and wanting to safeguard her child in the womb, she took shelter in the house of

KumaaraDatta, who was a friend of her father. There she gave birth to me, who was to be her support when she aged. She took care of me by doing hard labour.

Requested by her, who owned no property of any sort, a teacher (who was compassionate towards her) taught me the writing and mathematics in a methodical manner.

My mother said to me, “Son! You are the son of a merchant. Therefore you must now engage in a trade of some sort. There is a very rich merchant in this country, who is named 'Vishaakhila'. For poor men of good families he gives capital in the form of wares for investing in a trade. Go and beg him for the capital-ware.” I went to him as my mother had suggested.

Vishaakhila at that time was shouting angrily at a merchant’s son, “See this dead rat (Mooshaka) on the ground. A talented man can make money even if he uses this as his capital ware. I gave you so much gold coins (Deenaars) in the past, you wretch! Keep away the fact that they never increased in your business; but you could not keep that money also safely.”

Hearing his words, I immediately said to Vishaakhila, “This rat has been received by me from you, as the capital-ware.” I took that dead rat in my hand; got that deal documented and went away. That merchant laughed (at my foolish venture.)

I sold that dead rat to a merchant to feed his cat in exchange for two handfuls of (Bengal) gram.

Then, I fried those seeds, and carrying that roasted gram and a pot of water, went out of the city and sat in the cross-way under the shade of a tree.

I humbly offered those roasted seeds and cool water to the tired group of wood carriers who came along that path. Each one of the wood-bearers gave me two pieces of wood in gratitude. I sold that wood in the market place. Whatever money I got by selling that wood, I again bought the gram seeds. Next day, I again gave the roasted seeds to the wood-bearers, and bought some wood in exchange.

I did this for many days, and collected a little capital.

I then purchased all their wood for three consequent days.

When there were sudden rains of profuse nature, there arose a shortage of wood. I sold my collection of wood for many hundreds of trading money. I again invested that money, and slowly developing the trade by using my talent, I became very rich.

I got a golden rat made and offered it to Vishaakhila. He offered his daughter in marriage to me.

That is why I am famed in this world by the name of ‘Mooshaka’ (rat).

Thus I acquired much wealth, though I had no money initially”.

Hearing his words, all the merchants assembled there were surprised.

Why will not the mind get amazed by the painting work done without a canvas?

[‘This world also is a picture painted by sense-input only on the emptiness-canvas’ - so state the Upanishads!]

STORY OF THE 'RECITER OF VEDA HYMNS'

One metrical singer (Chandoga) who was singing Saama (Veda) was gifted eight gold coins (of small measure - Maasha) by some one. Some sensualist rogue (Vita) advised him like this (in a friendly manner). "As a Brahmin you earn enough for your daily needs anyhow. Use this gold to learn the ways of the world."

"Who will teach me all that?" asked that naive Brahmin.

The 'Vita' said, "There is a prostitute named Chaturikaa. Go to her house".

The Brahmin asked, "What should I do there?"

The 'Vita' said, "Give her the gold, and put to use some amusing words of 'Saama' (conciliatory pleasing words) to persuade her."

(The Brahmin boy knew the meaning of 'Saama' as recitation only, and not the meaning of 'Saama' as the 'conciliatory method' that was in vogue among the ordinary people.)

Hearing his words, the 'Chandoga' quickly went to Chaturikaa's house.

He entered inside her house and sat down, and when she came towards him, he blabbered, "Teach me now the ways of the world by accepting this" and gave her that gold.

The people who were there laughed at his words. He thought for some time. Then that idiot folded his hands in the shape of cow's ear and holding it like a pipe (to make noise), started singing 'Saama' (recitation) in a shrill voice. All the rogues there, collected around him to enjoy the fun. They all said, "From where did this jackal end up here? Put the half-moon on his neck quickly, and throw him out." That Brahmin misunderstood the word 'half-moon' as the sharp edge of the arrow.

Frightened for his life he ran out screaming, "I have learnt the ways of the world."

He went back to that 'Vita' who had sent him to the house of Chaturikaa.

He reported to him all that had happened in her house.

The 'Vita' reprimanded him saying, "When I used the word 'Saama' I meant 'conciliate' her with pleasing words. What was the necessity for using '(Saama) Veda' there?"

Or maybe, a person who mechanically recites Vedas has stupidity elevated to the topmost point".

Laughing aloud at the stupidity of the Brahmin, the 'Vita' went to the house of that charming lady, and said, "Throw that 'grass of the gold' in front of that two-legged cow!"

She also laughed (at the stupidity of that Brahmin boy), and threw the gold out.

The Brahmin grabbed that gold and returned home as if he had been born again.

GUNAADYA'S STORY CONTINUES

In this manner, watching many amusing incidents, I reached the king's palace which was like Indra's mansion. I entered inside. My disciples went before me and informed the king of my arrival. I saw King SaataVaahana sated in the court on a jewel-throne and surrounded by ministers like SharvaVarmaa, like Indra by the Devas. I recited 'Svasti' and sat on the chair offered to me. The king worshipped me in the due manner.

SharvaVarmaa and others praised me like this-"Lord! This Brahmin is famous all over the world. He has mastered all the learning. The name Gunaadya suits him perfectly for he is rich with his virtues." Hearing the ministers praising me so much, King SaataVaahana was impressed, and appointed me as the minister.

I did my duties well and lived happily teaching my disciples; I also accepted a wife.

THE GARDEN CREATED BY THE GODDESS

Once I was walking on the bank of River Godaavari observing all places with curiosity. There I saw a garden famed as 'DeveeKriti' (Creation of Devi).

I observed that it was extremely beautiful like the Nandana garden of Indra placed on earth, and asked the garden- keeper as to how this garden came to be there.

He said to me, "Swaamin (Master)! This is what I heard from the aged elders.

Long ago a Brahmin came here. He observed the vow of silence and abstained from food. He alone created this divine garden along with a temple. All the Brahmins came here eager to see this garden. They all pressed him to tell his story. That Brahmin related his story thus-

STORY OF THE GARDEN

“There is a place called BharuKaccha (sea/river shore) here, on the bank of Narmadaa River. I was a Brahmin born there. In the past, no one would give me any alms, since I was wretched and lazy. I felt disgusted about life and went away sorrowful. After wandering in many pilgrimage centres I visited the shrine of VindhyaVaasinee. After seeing her, I thought like this. “All the people propitiate this Goddess, the giver of boons with the offering of animal-sacrifice. I will offer myself as the sacrifice; for after all, I am a stupid animal only.” Having decided thus, I took a weapon to slice off my head.

That very moment Devi appeared in front of me. She said by herself, “Son! You are a Siddha (higher category of Sage) now. Do not kill yourself. Remain near me.”

In this manner, I got the boon from Devi and attained divinity. From that day onwards, I felt no hunger or thirst. One day, Devi commanded me who was staying in that temple, “Son! Go and create an excellent garden in the city of Pratishtaana.” Having said this, she herself gave me a divine seed. Then, I arrived here and constructed this beautiful garden by the grace of Devi.

This garden is now yours to take care of”; saying these words (to those Brahmins), he vanished.

This garden was thus constructed by Devi herself in the past, hey Prabhu!” (concluded the garden-keeper).

I was surprised by hearing from the garden-keeper the greatness of the Goddess there, and returned home.

(Later in the future, he will stay in this garden only, waiting for the king’s approval of his work.)

SAATAVAAHANA, ONE WHO RODE SAATA

When Gunaadya spoke like this, KaanaBhooti said, “Prabhu! Why was the king named SaataVaahana?”

Then Gunaadya said, “Listen! I will tell you! There was once a famous king named DeepaKarni, who had abundant valour. He had a wife named Shaktimatee, who was dearer to him than life. When she was sleeping in the garden after the amorous sport, a snake bit her.

After she died, the king was always grieved about her. Though he had no progeny yet, he took to the vow of celibacy. (He did not marry any one else.)

He was sad that he had no son to rule the kingdom after his death.

Lord InduShekhara appeared to him in his dream and spoke like this, “When you wander in the forest, you will see a boy seated on a lion. Take him to your palace. He will be your son.”

The king woke up and felt happy by remembering his dream. Once he went to a distant forest for hunting. That king saw in that mid-noon time, on the bank of the lotus lake, a boy whose face shone lustrous like the sun, seated on a lion. The king remembered his dream. He made the boy climb down. When the lion went towards the lake to drink water, he killed it with a single arrow (as per Shiva’s instruction in the dream).

The lion discarded its lion’s form and stood as a man.

He was questioned by the king like this, “Ah the wonder! What is this, tell me!”. Then he said,

STORY OF SAATA

“King! I am a Yaksha named ‘Saata’ (Riches) and a friend of Kubera. Once I saw a Sage’s daughter bathing in River Gangaa. She also saw me and was attracted towards me. I wedded her through the Gaandharva method, and made her my wife.

Her relatives (other Sages) came to know of it and cursed both of us in anger. “Both of you are sinners having acted without restraint. Become lions.”

The Sages told her that her curse will last only till a son was born to her, and that mine will be redeemed afterwards, and last till the time I get hit by your arrow.

Later we became the lion-couple and lived here. In course of time she became pregnant and died when the son was born. I got him fed milk by another lioness and took care of him.

Therefore, accept this child of great character given by me. This had been predicted already by those Sages.”

Having said this, that ‘Guhyaka’ (Treasure-guard under Kubera’s rule) named ‘Saata’ vanished.

The king took the child and returned to his palace.

As the child had ridden Saata, he was named as SaataVaahana, one who had Saata as his vehicle.

In course of time, he was consecrated as the ruler.

After King DeepaKarni left for the forest, this King SaataVaahana became the emperor.”

GUNAADYA'S STORY CONTINUES

Having answered KaanaBhooti's question, the wise Gunaadya continued his own story which he had started narrating.

"Once at the time of the spring festival, that king SaataVaahana went to the garden created by Devi. After wandering for a long time like Mahendra (Indra) in the Nandana garden, he descended down into the pool-waters to sport there along with his female companions.

He threw handfuls of water at those girls in a playful manner.

They also threw water on him, like the cow elephants playing with the male.

With their faces wet; with collirium melted; with eyes reddened; with their whole body covered by waters; with the garments clinging to them revealing the beauty of their limbs; they vigorously pelted the king with waters. The king also splashed water on them and melted off their fore-head decorative marks. Their flowers dropped down and ornaments slipped from their body; and like the creepers stuck by the stormy wind and they ran into the forest (defeated in the sport).

One of the queens (daughter of VishnuShakti) who had huge breasts, and limbs extremely delicate like the Shireesha flowers, got exhausted by the play.

Unable to bear the continuous onslaught of waters on her by the king, she said, "Beat me Deva with Modakaas" (Modakair-deva- paritaadaya- maam) (actually meaning -not to beat her with waters).

Hearing her words, the king got the maids to bring lots of 'Modakaas' (sweets shaped like small balls) (to throw at her). Then the queen laughed aloud at his stupidity, and again said, "King! What use are the 'Modakaas' inside the water? 'Do not soak me with waters' this is what I said.

You do not even understand the grammar of two words 'maa' and 'udaka' joining together as one word (in Sandhi)! Can't you understand the context also? How can you be so stupid?"

When the king was thus ridiculed by that queen who had specialized in Shabda-Shaastra' (philology), all the attendants there laughed. The king at that instance was overcome by a sudden feeling of shame within. He stopped his water sports (half-way), and his pride broken, and feeling highly insulted, he entered his private chambers unseen by anyone.

Distressed at heart, abstaining from food and drinks, he remained seated like a painting, and stopped talking with anyone even when questioned.

'Either I should master all learning (Paandityam) or die' - lost in such thoughts, he kept away from the bed and kept worrying.

Observing the sudden change in the king's condition, his servants became apprehensive as to what could be the reason for that. By the time I and SharvaVarmaa were informed of the king's condition, the day was almost at an end.

Feeling that it would not be the right time to disturb the king, we called a man-servant of the king named RaajaHamsa (who was the king's close attendant).

When we both enquired him about the king's condition, he said like this.

"Never has the Lord been seen in such a depressed mood. Other queens are indignant too, and say that he was insulted by the daughter of VishnuShakti, who thinks too high of her learning."

I and SharvaVarmaa both felt worried by what we heard from the mouth of the king's personal attendant, and were wondering what action to act-

'If the king had a physical illness, it could be treated by medical professionals! If it is just a mental affliction, we do not know the reason for it. There is no trouble from the enemies, as the thorns of enmity have been completely destroyed. The people are also affectionate towards the king. Then what could be the reason for the king suddenly getting into such a depression state?'

At that time SharvaVarmaa, a person of great wisdom said-

"I know about the reason for the king's frustrated condition. It is his complex about his own ignorance and he always thinks that 'I am an ignorant fool!' He always has an innermost thirst to master all the learning. I already had understood his mind. It has also been heard that he was insulted by the queen for this only."

After exchanging our idea like this, after the night was over, we both went to meet the king at his residence. Though denied entrance by all the guards, somehow I managed to go inside and SharvaVarmaa also slipped in behind me.

I sat close to the king and asked him, “Deva! Why are you feeling so disturbed without any reason as such?” Though SaataVaahana heard me, he did not answer anything and remained silent. Then SharvaVarmaa said these amazing words.

“Deva! You had previously mentioned to me – “From somewhere I should get all learning (Shruti) somehow’! Keeping that in mind, I performed a ‘dream-charm’ (SvapnaMaanavaka - kind of charm effecting the realization of dreams) at night. Then I saw in the dream a lotus falling from the sky. Some young divine person (SwamyKumara) made it blossom. Out of it came a beautiful Goddess who was wearing white garments and entered your mouth instantly.

After this vision, I woke up. I believe she is Goddess Sarasvati herself who entered your mouth. There is no doubt about it.”

The moment SharvaVarma talked about his dream, SaataVaahana broke his silence and spoke to me in an earnest manner, “Tell me this! If a man gets taught properly and with effort, within how much time can he master all learning? All this splendourous wealth does not give me any distinguishing charm, except learning. *What use is prosperity to an ignorant fool, like a log of wood adorned by ornaments”!*

Then I said, “Raajan! Usually it takes a man twelve years to master ‘Vyaakarana (Grammar)’ which is the mouth of all learning. But I will teach you everything within six years, Lord!”

Hearing this, SharvaVarma objected with a touch of envy in his voice, “How can a person accustomed to comforts suffer hardship for so long? Deva! Therefore I will teach you everything within six months.”

Hearing from him about such an impossible feat, I retorted angrily, “If you can teach the king everything within six months, then I will renounce all the three languages of the humans namely Sanskrit, Praakrit and local dialect.” SharvaVarma then said, “If I do not accomplish it, I will vow to do this - I will carry your ‘Paadukaas’ (wooden sandals) on my head for twelve years!” He went away after that. I too returned home. The king felt consoled because he could master all learning either way.

SharvaVarmaa on the other hand was perplexed. He understood that it was impossible to complete the vow he had taken, and foresaw the consequences that would follow. He confided everything to his wife. She also was worried and said, “Prabhu! In this difficult time, there is no one to take shelter in but SwaamiKumaara.”

SharvaVarmaa agreed to her words and left his house in the last hour of that night, without partaking of any food, with the purpose of visiting that deity.

This, I came to know of from the spies and I reported it to the king in the morning. The king heard it, and was worried as to what would happen.

At that time, a prince named SimhaGupta who was a well-wisher of the king said, “Deva! When you were distressed, I felt very much disturbed. Therefore, I went out of the city to the temple of Chandikaa, and got ready to cut off my head and offer it to the Goddess, with only your welfare in my mind. Then a voice from the sky stopped me from doing so and said, ‘Do not do so! The king’s desire will be fulfilled for sure.’ Therefore I believe that your wish will be fulfilled.” After speaking thus, SimhaGupta took permission from the king and sent two spies behind SharvaVarmaa.

SharvaVarma meanwhile reached the shrine of SwaamiKumaara in time, living only on air, observing the vow of silence and very firm in his mind. He propitiated the deity through penance without caring for the bodily comforts. Lord Kaartikya blessed him with the fulfilment of his desire. The two spies sent by SimhaGupta reached the king before him, and reported the success of SharvaVarmaa to the king. Hearing this I was sad and the king was overjoyed, like the swan is sad by seeing the cloud, but Chaataka bird is joyous.

SharvaVarmaa now blessed with the boon of Kumaara offered the king all learning which flashed in him the moment he thought of them. Immediately they were revealed to King SaataVaahana.

What cannot be done in a second by the blessing of the Supreme lord!

When the people came to know that the king had obtained all learning, they all were delighted and there were grand celebrations all over the city. In each and every house, flags were hoisted which appeared as if they were dancing with joy when the wind shook them.

SharvaVarmaa was showered with heaps of royal jewels by the king as a humble offering to his Guru; and he was made the chief of the place called BharuKaccha, which existed in the vicinity of the bank of Narmadaa River.

The king offered wealth equalling his own to SimhaGupta, who through the spies had informed him beforehand about the boon given by ShanMukha, and had pleased him.

He made the daughter of VishnuShakti who had been the cause of his acquirement of learning, as his prominent queen above all others, and consecrated her himself with love.

END OF SIXTH WAVE

SEVENTH WAVE

I observed the vow of silence (as I had no language through which I could communicate), and went to the court of the king. There a Brahmin read a verse of praise (shloka) composed by himself. The king addressed him in proper Sanskrit dialect. All the people assembled in the court were very happy by seeing that.

ANUGRAHA OF SKANDA

The king then requested SharvaVarmaa humbly, "Tell me in your own words, how you obtained the favour of the Lord". Then SharvaVarmaa obliged the king's request and spoke about how he obtained the grace (Anugraha) from the deity-

"Raajan! I left from here without partaking of any food and observing the vow of silence. When I had almost reached the place, I fell on the ground unconscious, having observed very hard penance, emaciated by not taking any food, and exhausted by the journey.

I remember this much only that a 'divine form holding the Shakti weapon'(KumaraSwamy) approached me and clearly spoke these words, "Get up my son! Everything you wish will be yours!" I immediately got up as if drenched by a shower of nectar. I was completely healthy, and also freed of hunger and thirst. Then I entered the shrine of the Deva (Skanda), full of devotion; took bath; entered the sanctum sanctorum; felt overcome by joy and became intoxicated as it were. Then Lord Skanda gave me his vision in the heart. Then Sarasvati appeared and entered my mouth.

At that time the Lord himself recited with all his six lotus-faces, this aphorism- 'Assemblage or aggregate of letters (traditional usage) is ready'.

Alas! As soon as I heard it, due to the restless nature common to mankind, I guessed the next aphorism and recited it myself."

Then that Lord said to me, "If you had not interrupted and recited it yourself, this treatise would have surpassed that of Paanini. Now as it is constricted, it will be known as 'Kaatrantra' and also as 'Kaalaapaka', symbolizing the tail portion of my vehicle (peacock)."

Having thus directly revealed the ShabdaShaastra (philology), which was new and short, Lord spoke to me again, "Your king was also a Sage in his previous birth.

He was Sage Bharadvaja's disciple named Krishna, and a man of great penance.

He once saw a Sage's daughter who was also attracted towards him; and he was suddenly filled with love for her, being hit by the flower-arrow of Manmatha. Because of that, he was cursed by the elder Sages and came down here at present (incarnated as a king).

That Sage's daughter alone has descended down as his queen.

This king SaataVaahana is the incarnation of a Sage.

When he (just) sees you, he will acquire all the learning as per your desire.

For the great men, all good things are obtained without much hardship, as already they are attained in the previous birth and get acquired (in the next birth) by the great power of recollection."

Having spoken these words he vanished from the sight. I came out of the shrine. Deva!

The people who lived in the temple gave me some rice. The wonder is that the rice remained the same quantity though I ate it every day on my journey back."

After SharvaVarmaa related his story and remained silent, King SaataVaahana feeling happy, stood up to get ready for the bath.

GUNAADYA'S STORY CONTINUES

Hey KaanaBhooti!

As I had taken to the vow of silence, I was not included in any counselling. I took permission from the king with a bow though he was reluctant, and got out of the city followed by two of my disciples.

I desired to perform penance and came to the shrine of VindhyaVaasinee, in order to have her vision.

Devi appeared in my dream and ordered me to visit you. So I entered this terrifying Vindhya forest and came to see you.

With the help of a hunter, I joined the group of travellers and somehow, by my good fortune I arrived here; and saw a host of Pishaachas (a special forest tribe who lived on flesh). I could hear their conversations from a distance and I learnt the Pishaacha dialect. That is how I am able to break my silence and talk with you.

After coming here, I learnt that you had gone to Ujjayini. and I have been waiting for you, and you have come now. Having seen you, I welcomed you using the fourth dialect (PaishhcaBhaasaa) and I remembered my original identity. This is my story after I took birth on this earth.”

After Gunaadya finished his story like this, KaanaBhooti said,

“Listen to how I came to know of your arrival tonight.

I have a Raakshasa-friend named BhootiVarma, who has divine vision. I had gone to Ujjayini to meet him in the garden where he lived.

I asked him about the redemption of my curse. He said,“I do not have any power in the day-time. I will answer your question when the night falls.”

I agreed and stayed there. When it was night, and when he was dancing about, I asked him casually as to why all the spirits prance about joyously at night-time only.

Then BhootiVarma said to me,“Listen! I will tell you what Shankara said to Brahmaa in a conversation between them long back”, and continued like this,

“These Yakshas, Raakshasas, and Pishaachas do not have any power in the morning, being dazed by the Sun’s lustre. That is why, they feel happy at night.

These ones move about in places where Devas are not worshipped, where Brahmins are not revered, where people consume food contradictory to the prescribed rules (food that is stolen, or dirty, and or got by hurting living animals).

They do not go to places where a devoted wife is there, and where meat is not consumed.

They never possess people who are clean (in body and mind), who are brave, and who are enlightened.”

Having answered my question like this, BhootiVarma again said,“Go back! Gunaadya has come to your place. He will cause your redemption of the curse.”

Having heard this, I have come back and seen you also Lord!

I will now tell you the stories narrated by PushpaDanta. But still I have some curiosities left back. Tell me as to why he is known as PushpaDanta and you as Maalyavaan.”

Gunaadya answered KaanaBhooti like this,

“There is an ‘Agrahaara’ a colony of Brahmins named ‘BahuSuvarnaka’.

There lived a Brahmin named GovindaDatta who was well versed in all the scriptures.

He had a wife named AgniDattaa. She adored her husband like a God. The Brahmin, in course of time had five sons by her. They were good-looking; yet were stupid and arrogant.

Once, a Brahmin named Vaishvaanara like another Vaishvaanara (Fire-God), arrived at the house of GovindaDatta, as a guest.

GovindaDatta was out of the house on some work at that time.

He approached the sons and offered his salutation.

They accepted it with just a scornful laugh.

That Brahmin guest felt offended and started to walk out of the house.

At that time GovindaDatta came there. He found out the cause of his anger and tried to conciliate him. But the excellent Brahmin said,“Your foolish sons are polluted! So are you because of their contact. Therefore I will not also consume any food in your house. Then I have to purify myself with some atonement-rite (Praayascitta!)”

Then GovindaDatta made a vow,“I will not even touch these fallen sons.”

His wife who revered guests also took the same oath.

Then Vaishvaanara somehow accepted their hospitality.

One of the sons named DevaDatta regretted his behaviour after witnessing his father’s harshness.

He thought that the life condemned by the parents was not worth living.

Feeling dispassionate, he went to Badarikaashrama to perform penance.

At first he consumed only leaves; then only smoke and performed penance for a long time to propitiate Lord UmaaPati.

Pleased by his penance Shiva appeared in front of him.

He asked Shiva for a boon by which he could serve him like a servant in Shiva's world.

Shambhu ordered, "At first, master all the learning; then enjoy all the pleasures in the earth. Afterwards your wish will be fulfilled."

He then, seeking learning (as a student) went to the city of PaataliPutraka.

He served a teacher named VedaKumbha, in a proper manner.

While he stayed there, the wife of that teacher felt passionate towards him and embraced him forcefully.

The minds of women are always fickle.

Disgusted with that city gone astray in passion, DevaDatta went towards Pratiṣṭāana without giving up. He served an aged teacher named MantraSwaamy who had an aged wife, and acquired all learning from him. When his education was complete, the handsome youth was seen by the 'daughter of the king named SuSharma' with the name of 'Shree', like Shree (Lakshmi) seeing the divine form of Achyuta (Vishnu). He also saw the girl above the window, roaming in an air-vehicle, like the presiding goddess of the Moon.

They both were unable to get separated from each other, being bound together by the 'look-chains' of Manmatha.

The princess who was like the personified form of Manmatha's command, showed a sign with her one finger; and gestured him to come close to her. He went and stood closer to the harem-apartment. She from the harem window plucked a flower out of her teeth and threw it at him.

Not able to understand the secret meaning of that gesture shown by the princess, and not knowing how to react, he returned to his teacher's house.

He rolled on the ground unable to utter even a word, burning in the heat of the passion, like a dumb man who had been robbed off everything.

The wise teacher understood his signs of passion and enquired him in a casual manner.

He somehow managed to confide everything that had happened, to his teacher.

That teacher who was very wise said to him, "By plucking the fruit by the teeth she made a gesture to you, suggesting that you should go to the temple named 'PushpaDanta' (Flower-Tooth) which abounds in flowers, and wait for her there; so better go there now."

Understanding the meaning of the gesture through his words, the young man felt cheered; went to the temple and waited inside there. On the pretext that it was the eight day of the fortnight, the princess also arrived there alone to visit the deity and entered the sanctum sanctorum.

She saw him hiding behind the door-panel. Suddenly he got out and embraced her by the neck.

She asked, "It is really a wonder! How did you manage to understand my gesture?"

He said, "It was understood by teacher only, not by me".

"Leave me alone, you idiot!" she retorted in anger and hurried out of there, apprehensive that anyone should find her with another man.

Lost in the memories of his beloved, disappointed that she discarded him and went away, DevaDatta went off to some solitary place, with his life melting away in the fire of separation.

Shambhu (Shiva) saw him in that condition and felt compassionate. He ordered a Gana named PanchaShikha to help DevaDatta achieve his goal. That excellent of the Ganas came to DevaDatta, consoled him, and changed him into a woman. He himself took on the form of an aged Brahmin.

Then that chief of the Ganas approached King SuSharma who was the father of that beautiful girl and said, "My son has gone off somewhere on a journey. I have to go and search for him.

This is my daughter-in-law whom I would like to be safe-guarded by you.”

Afraid of incurring the Brahmin’s curse, SuSharma sent the young man in the form of a woman, to the harem to be in the company of other women. PanchaShikha returned to his abode. That Brahmin who lived in the harem in the form of a woman, soon gained the trust of his beloved.

One day, when she was slightly restless (remembering her lover), he revealed himself and wedded her according to the Gaandharva method secretly. Soon the princess became pregnant.

DevaDatta then remembered PanchaShikha, the excellent Gana.

He came instantly and took away the Brahmin (in the form of a woman) unseen by anybody.

Later, the Gana changed the Brahmin to his original form of a man, and changed himself into that of the old Brahmin. He took the young man and went to the court of King SuSharma in the morning.

He said, “Today I have got my son back, Return my daughter-in-law.”

The king was informed of her absence and the king thought that she had run away. Feeling apprehensive about getting cursed by the old Brahmin, he said to his ministers, “This one does not look like an ordinary Brahmin. He must be some divinity come here to deceive me. Such events usually are common occurrences.

STORY OF SHIBI

There was once a king named Shibi, who was a man of austerities, compassionate, generous, courageous, and gave sanctuary to all types of animals.

In order to test him, Indra took the form of a hawk; and Dharma (Yama) also took the form of a dove using his 'deluding power'. They both came down to the earth.

The dove flew to the lap of the king frightened of the hawk.

The hawk spoke to the king in the human dialect, “Raajan! I am hungry. Give off my food to me. Otherwise know me to be dead. What will be then be your fairness in judgement (Dharma)?”

Then Shibi said to him, “This dove has taken shelter in me. He cannot be sacrificed. I will give you another form of flesh equal to his weight.” The hawk said, “If it is so, then give me your own flesh.” The king was happy, and agreed to do so.

The king placed the dove on one side of the balance, and even as he kept adding his own cut flesh on the other side, the weight of the dove kept on increasing, and at last the king placed himself (his whole body) on the balance. “Well done, well done! The weights are equal now” - a divine voice spoke from the sky.

Indra and Dharma revealed their true forms pleased by the king’s generous nature.

They made King Shibi freed of all wounds. They blessed him with many boons and vanished.

(SuSharma continued his speech-)

In the same way, I believe some divinity is here to test my character.”

Having said this to the ministers, King SuSharma approached the excellent Gana in the form of a Brahmin, and humbly bowing down with fear said, “Please give me sanctuary. Today only, your daughter-in-law was taken away at night through some magic and has gone off somewhere, though she was carefully guarded day and night.”

The Brahmin pretended as if shocked by the news and acting compassionate towards the king said, “Raajan! Then give off your daughter to my son.”

Afraid of incurring his curse, the king offered DevaDatta his daughter. PanchaShikha returned to his abode.

DevaDatta acquired his beloved again openly in front of all and lived in splendour, happily enjoying the prosperities of his father-in-law, as the king had no other son to become the heir of the kingdom.

In course of time, the king consecrated the son of DevaDatta his grandson (Dauhitra) named MaheeDhara as the heir of the kingdom and retired to the forest.

DevaDatta also, satisfied that his son was endowed with all prosperities, retired to the forest along with the princess. He again propitiated Shambhu; discarded his mortal body, and by his grace attained the state of a Gana.

As he had not understood the gesture of throwing the flower from the teeth made by his beloved, he became known as 'PushpaDanta' in the group of Ganas. His wife became the Prateehaaree (door-keeper) of Devi and was named as Jayaa. This is the story of PushpaDanta.

Listen to my story now.

That Brahmin named GovindaDatta who was the father of DevaDatta, was my father also and my name was SomaDatta. Just like DevaDatta, I also got disheartened by what had happened and performed penance in the Himalayas, and worshipped Shankara by offering various types of beautiful garlands. Pleased by my worship InduShekhara appeared in front of me. As I had no desire for any other pleasures of the world, I requested him to make me one of his Ganas.

"I have been worshipped by you through garlands woven by your own hands with the flowers abounding in the mountain forests. Therefore you will be known as Maalyavaan and serve me one of my Ganas." So did GirijaaPati bless me.

Immediately I discarded the mortal body and obtained the scared state of his Gana. In this manner, by the grace of DhoorJhati (Shiva having abundant matted locks), my name became Maalyavaan.

And again from the Gana-state I got this state of a human being through the curse of the daughter of the mountain, KaanaBhooti!

Now tell me all the stories related by Hara, so that both of our curses get redeemed.

END OF SEVENTH WAVE

EIGHTH WAVE

Being requested thus by Gunaadya, these seven sections of the divine story was narrated by KaanaBhooti in his own dialect of Paishaacha. That alone was 'written down' by Gunaadya in the Paishaacha dialect, in seven years, into seven lakhs of verses.

Thinking that the Vidyaadharas should not steal it away, the great poet wrote them using his own blood, as there was no ink available in the forest.

Siddhas and Vidyaadharas came there to listen to these stories; and because of that the sky appeared always endowed with a canopy, as it were.

Seeing that Gunaadya had written down that great story in a completed form, KaanaBhooti also was redeemed of his curse, and he attained his original state.

All the Pishaachas whoever were there at that time as his companions, they all listened to this divine story and attained the heaven.

Gunaadya the great poet then thought,

“This BrhatKathaa (Giant story collection) has to become pre-eminent in this earth. This also was mentioned by Devi when she told me about the redemption of the curse.

How will I achieve that end, and to whom shall I give this?”

At that time, his two disciples who always were with him, one named GunaDeva and the other NandiDeva said to him, “Shree SaataVaahana alone can become the receptacle of this ‘Kaavya’. He is a ‘Rasika’ (has a taste for good literature). He will carry the Kaavya (spread it everywhere) like the fragrance carried by the wind.”

Gunaadya accepted their suggestion, and sent the book to the king with his two disciples who were endowed with virtues. He also went along with them, but stayed in the ‘garden constructed by the grace of Devi’ outside the city of Pratishtaana, and told them to meet him there.

Those two disciples approached King SaataVaahana and showed that ‘Kaavya- book’ informing him that it was composed by Gunaadya.

(The Kaavya-book was made of many Taala leaves that were stacked up together in a huge bundle, was stinking of dried up blood, was written in some weird script of Pishaachas, and was carried by some weird looking forest-dwellers.)

Hearing the story in the dialect of Pishaacha and seeing them both in such Paishaacha forms, the king arrogant of his own learning and filled with envy said, “Seven lakhs of verses in measure! Essence-less dialect of Paishaacha! Scripted by using blood! Fie on this story of Paishaacha!”

The two disciples took the book and returned the way they came (failing in their enterprise).

They met Gunaadya and told him all that had happened in the court of the king.

Gunaadya immediately felt sad by hearing all this.

Who will not feel the heat of disappointment when insulted by a learned person!

Then, accompanied by his two disciples, Gunaadya went to a tall hill which was beautiful with trees and creepers, which was nearby, and yet was far from population.

He made an ‘AgniKunda’ (hole or enclosed space for the consecrated fire) in front of him.

As the two disciples kept watching with moist eyes, he read page by page aloud so that the animals and birds could hear it; and dropped them all one after the other into the blazing fire, except for the 'history of King NaraVaahanaDatta, which had one lakh verses', for obliging his two disciples, who favoured that story. As he read the story aloud and burnt it, all the deer, boars, buffaloes stopped their eating of grass; came near him; sat around him without even moving; and listened to the story with tear-filled eyes.

Meanwhile King SaataVaahana suddenly became afflicted with illness. The medical experts told him that the illness had been caused by eating the dried up flesh of animals. The cooks were brought under enquiry for this, and they said that they got that type of dried flesh supplied by the hunters.

The hunters were brought under enquiry. The hunters said,
 “Some Brahmin in a nearby hill reads aloud the pages of a book and throws them into the fire one by one. All the animals sit around him and listen to his words, without even eating any grass. They do not move out of that place at all. Since their bodies are dried up by hunger, the flesh is also dry.”

Surprised by the words of the hunters, and guided by them, the king himself went to the hill where Gunaadya stayed, moved by curiosity.

(The books were all burnt off fully, and the smoke lines filled the air.)

He saw him fully covered with matted locks because of the long life he had led in the forest, as if he was surrounded by the smoke lines of the almost extinguished fire of the curse.

Recognizing him, who was surrounded by animals with tears in their eyes, the king saluted him and enquired about the occurrences in his life. That great man of knowledge told the king the life-stories of his and PushpaDanta’s caused by the curse, using the dialect of Paishaacha.

Understanding Gunaadya as the incarnation of a Gaṇa, the king saluted him with reverence. He begged him to offer the divine story told by Shiva to him.

Gunaadya then said to King SaataVaahana, “I have burnt off the six stories containing six lakh of verses already. There is only this one story left that is made of one lakh of verses. Take it. These two disciples of mine will narrate it to you.”

Having said this, taking leave of the king, Gunaadya who was freed of the curse, discarded the body through Yoga, and regained his original divine status.

Then the king returned to his city taking that story given by Gunaadya which was named BrhatKathaa and contained the story of King NaraVaahanaDatta.

He gifted land, gold, clothes, vehicles, mansions and money to GunaDeva and Nandi Deva, the two disciples of the great poet who wrote the story.

SaataVaahana first started reciting the ‘KathaaPeeta’ in his language, understanding the story with the help of those two disciples.

That story filled with varied tastes, which was so interesting that those who read it forgot the story of the Devas, was celebrated in the city by all, and became renowned in the three worlds for ever.

END OF EIGHTH WAVE

THE FIRST 'LAMBAKA' NAMED 'PEDESTAL OF THE STORY ' IS COMPLETE