

CHAPTER 41

Tulasī's curse to Viṣṇu

व्यास उवाच

नारायणश्च भगवान् वीर्याधानं चकार ह।

तुलस्याः केन यत्नेन योनौ तद्वक्तुमर्हसि॥ १॥

Vyāsa said, "How did Nārāyaṇa plant his semen into the vagina of Tulasī? You please tell me about it.

सनत्कुमार उवाच

नारायणो हि देवानां कार्यकर्ता सतां गतिः।

शङ्खचूडस्य रूपेण रेमे तद्रामया सह॥ २॥

Sanatkumāra said, "Nārāyaṇa is the protector of the noble people and performs the tasks of the gods. He enjoyed the company of Tulasī-- the wife of Śaṁkhacūḍa.

तदेव शृणु विष्णोश्च चरितं प्रमुदावहम्।

शिवसासनकर्तुश्च मातुश्च जगतां हरेः॥ ३॥

You listen to the relevant episode about Viṣṇu, who obeys the command of Śiva and Pārvatī.

रणमध्ये व्योमवचः श्रुत्वा देवेन शम्भुना।

प्रेरितः शङ्खचूडस्य गृहीत्वा कवचं परम्॥ ४॥

Listening to the divine voice of the battle-field, Śiva desired Viṣṇu to bring the *kavaca* of Śaṁkhacūḍa.

विप्ररूपेण त्वरितं मायया निजया हरिः।

जगाम शङ्खचूडस्य रूपेण तुलसीगृहम्॥ ५॥

Then Viṣṇu exercising his illusion, took to the form of a Brāhmaṇa and at once went to the Daitya-king and got the *kavaca* from him. Then Viṣṇu taking to the form of Śaṁkhacūḍa went to the abode of Tulasī.

दुन्दुभि वादयामास तुलसीद्वारसन्निधौ।

जयशब्दं च तत्रैव बोधयामास सुन्दरीम्॥ ६॥

The slogans of victory were shouted over the gate of Tulasī's palace, besides the drums were beaten, making Tulasī to wake up.

तच्छ्रुत्वा चैव सा साध्वी परमानन्दसंयुता।

राजमार्गं गवाक्षेण ददर्श परमादरात्॥ ७॥

Listening to those words, she felt delighted and with respect she started looking at the road outside.

ब्राह्मणेभ्यो धनं दत्त्वा कारयामास मङ्गलम्।

दुतं चकार शृङ्गारं ज्ञात्वाऽऽयातं निजं पतिम्॥ ८॥

She atonce gave away charities to the Brāhmaṇas she atonce started celebrating the occasion. Hoping the arrival of her husband, she atonce decorated herself.

अवरुह्य रथाद्विष्णुस्तदेव्या भवनं ययौ।
शङ्खचूडस्वरूपः स मायावी देवकार्यकृत्॥ ९॥

Descending from the chariot, Viṣṇu taking to the form of Śaṁkhaçūḍa, went to the place of Tulasī, for the performing of the task of the gods.

दृष्ट्वा तं च पुरः प्राप्तं स्वकान्तं सा मुदान्विता।
तत्पादौ क्षालयामास ननाम च रुरोद च॥ १०॥

Finding the arrival of her husband, she delightfully washed his feet and then started crying.

रत्नसिंहासने रम्ये वासयामास मङ्गलम्।
ताम्बूलं च ददौ तस्मै कर्पूरादिसुवासितम्॥ ११॥

Then she made him sit over the beautiful lion-throne and offered him the betel with camphor as the sign of welfare.

अद्य मे सफलं जन्म जीवनं सम्बभूव ह।
रणे गतं च प्राणेशं पश्यन्त्याश्च पुनर्गृहे॥ १२॥

Then she said, "My life has become a success to-days that I find my husband having returned from war, quite hale and hearty."

इत्युक्त्वा सकटाक्षं सा निरीक्ष्य सस्मितं मुदा।
पप्रच्छ रणवृत्तान्तं कान्तं मधुरया गिरा॥ १३॥

Thus spiking, she smilingly looked at him with unstable eye and enquired about the news of the battle ground, with sweet voice.

तुलस्युवाच

असङ्ख्यविश्वसंहर्ता स देवप्रवरः प्रभुः।
यस्याज्ञावर्तिनो देवा विष्णुब्रह्मादयः सदा॥ १४॥

Tulasī said, "Lord Mahādeva, is the destroyer of innumerable worlds and his command is always honoured by Brahmā and other gods.

त्रिदेवजनकः सोऽम त्रिगुणात्मा च निर्गुणः।
भक्तेच्छया च सगुणो हरिब्रह्माप्रवर्तकः॥ १५॥

He is the producer of all the three gods. In spite of his being *nirguṇa*, he is known as

Triguṇātma. At the instance of Brahmā and Viṣṇu, and at the desire of his devotees he takes to *Saḡuṇa* form.

कुबेरस्य प्रार्थनया गुणरूपधरो हरः।
कैलासवासी गणपः परब्रह्म सतां गतिः॥ १६॥

Śiva is the dweller of Kailāśa, lord of *gaṇas*, the Supreme Brahman, the movement of the noble people, had at the request of Kubera, taken to the *Saḡuṇa* form.

यस्यैकपलमात्रेण कोटिब्रह्माण्डसङ्क्षयः।
विष्णुब्रह्मादयोऽतीता बहवः क्षणमात्रतः॥ १७॥
कर्तुं सार्द्धं च तेनैव समरं त्वं गतः प्रभोः।
कथं बभूव सङ्ग्रामस्तेन देवसहायिना॥ १८॥

He can in a moment destroy crores of globes and in whose minutest time many Viṣṇus, Brahmās, and others pass away. It is with such a Śiva, that you had gone to fight.

कुशली त्वमिहायातस्तं जित्वा परमेश्वरम्।
कथं बभूव विजयस्तव ब्रूहि तदेव मे॥ १९॥

You have happily returned after defeating him— the great lord. How could you do it? Please tell me all about the same?"

श्रुत्वेत्थं तुलसीवाक्यं स विहस्य रमापतिः।
शङ्खचूडरूपधरस्तामुवाचामृतं वचः॥ २०॥

On hearing these words of Tulasī, the lord of Lakṣmī, who had taken to the form of Śaṁkhaçūḍa, laughed and sweetly spoke to her.

श्रीभगवानुवाच

यदाहं रणभूमौ च जगाम समरप्रियः।
कोलाहलो महान् यातः प्रवृत्तोऽभून्महारणः॥ २१॥

Lord Viṣṇu said, "When I, being fond of war, reached the battle-field, a great tumult was created, resulting in a great battle.

देवदानवयोर्युद्धं सम्बभूव जयैषिणोः।
दैत्याः पराजितास्तत्र निर्जैर्बलगर्वितैः॥ २२॥

Then the war between the gods and the Dānavas started. Both the sides were desirous of victory. Initially, the Daityas were defeated by the gods, who were proud of their strength.

तदाऽहं समरं तत्राकार्यं देवैर्बलौक्तैः।

पराजितश्च ते देवाः शङ्करं शरणं ययुः॥ २३॥

Then I faced the powerful and valorous gods. Getting defeated by me, the gods took refuge in Śiva.

रुद्रोऽपि तत्सहायार्थमाजगाम रणं प्रति।

तेनाहं वै चिरं कालमयौत्सं बलदर्पितः॥ २४॥

Śiva, in order to help them reached the battle ground to wage a war. Being proud of my prowess, I fought with him for a long time.

आवयोः समरः काले पूर्णमब्दं बभूव ह।

नाशो बभूव सर्वेषामसुराणां च कामिनि!॥ २५॥

My dear wife, both of us fought continuously for a year. O Loving damsel, all the *asuras* were destroyed.

प्रीतिं च कारयामास ब्रह्मा च स्वयमावयोः।

देवानामधिकाराश्च प्रदत्ता ब्रह्मशासनात्॥ २६॥

Then Brahmā brokered peace between the two. At his bidding, the powers of authority was re-assigned to the gods.

मयाऽऽगतं स्वभवनं शिवलोकं शिवो गतः।

सर्वस्वास्थ्यमतीवाप दूरीभूतो ह्युपद्रवः॥ २७॥

I have returned home, Śiva was returned to Kailāśa. Now there is normalcy everywhere, and all are healthy. The trouble has been vanquished.

सनत्कुमार उवाच

इत्युक्त्वा जगतां नाथः शयनं च चकार ह।

रेमे रमापतिस्तत्र रमया स तथा मुदा॥ २८॥

Sanatkumāra said, “After thus speaking the lord of the world lay down over the bed. Feeling delightful, Viṣṇu then indulged in sexual intercourse with Tulasī.

सा साध्वी सुखसम्भावाकर्षणस्य व्यतिक्रमात्।
सर्वं वितर्कयामास कस्त्वमेवेत्युवाच सा॥ २९॥

तुलस्युवाच

को वा त्वं वद मामाशु भुक्ताहं मायया त्वया।

दूरीकृतं मत्सतीत्वमथ त्वां वै शपाम्यहम्॥ ३०॥

Tulasī, on observing a change in the sex behaviour, endearment and attraction, she asked him, “Who are you?” Tulasī said, “Who are you? tell me quickly. You have enjoyed me deceitfully. You have outraged my modestly. Therefore, I am going to pronounce a curse on you.”

सनत्कुमार उवाच

तुलसीवचनं श्रुत्वा हरिः शापभयेन च।

दधार लीलया ब्रह्मन्वमूर्तिं सुमनोहराम्॥ ३१॥

Sanatkumāra said, “On hearing the words of Tulasī Viṣṇu became nervous. O Brāhmaṇa, Viṣṇu then resumed his own beautiful form.

तद्दृष्ट्वा तुलसी रूपं ज्ञात्वा विष्णुं तु चिह्नतः।

पातिव्रत्यपरित्यागात् क्रुद्धा सा तमुवाच ह॥ ३२॥

Observing him minutely, she came to realise that it was Viṣṇu and none else. Enraged at the outraging of her modesty, she said.

तुलस्युवाच

हे विष्णो! ते दया नास्ति पाषाणसदृशं मनः।

पतिधर्मस्य भङ्गेन मम स्वामी हतः खलु॥ ३३॥

Tulasī said, “O Viṣṇu, you are devoid of compassion. You are stone hearted. Desecrating my chastity, you have killed my husband.

पाषाणसदृशस्त्वं च दयाहीनो यतः खलः।

तस्मात्पाषाणरूपस्त्वं मच्छापेन भवाधुना॥ ३४॥

Since you are merciless like a stone, therefore with my curse you would be turned into a stone.

ये वदन्ति दयासिन्धु त्वां भ्रान्तास्ते न संशयः।
भक्तो विनाऽपराधेन परार्थे च कथं हतः॥ ३५॥

सनत्कुमार उवाच

इत्युक्त्वा तुलसी सा वै शङ्खचूडप्रिया सती।
भृशं रुरोद शोकार्ता विललाप पुनः पुनः॥ ३६॥

Those who describe you as the ocean of mercy, they are surely, confused and mistaken, why did you kill your own devotee for the sake of others?" Sanatkumāra said, "Thus speaking the grieved chaste wife of Śaṁkhacūḍa, started lamenting again and again.

ततस्तां रुदतीं दृष्ट्वा स विष्णुः परमेश्वरः।
सस्मार शङ्करं देवं येन सम्मोहितं जगत्॥ ३७॥

Finding her so crying, Viṣṇu remembered Śiva, with whose delusion the entire world gets confused.

ततः प्रादुर्बभूवाथ शङ्करो भक्तवत्सलः।
हरिणा प्रणतश्चासीत्सन्नतो विनयेन सः॥ ३८॥

Then Śiva, who is well-disposed towards his devotees appeared on the scene. Viṣṇu offered his salutation to him, eulogising him at the same time.

शोकाकुलं हरिं दृष्ट्वा विलपन्तीं च तत्प्रियाम्।
नयेन बोधयामास तं तां कृपणवत्सलाम्॥ ३९॥

Finding that Viṣṇu was feeling harassed, and the beloved of Śaṁkhacūḍa lamenting, Śiva who was kind to the poor tactfully enlightened both of them.

शङ्कर उवाच

मा रोदीस्तुलसि! त्वं हि भुङ्क्ते कर्मफलं जनः।
सुखदुःखदो न कोऽप्यस्ति संसारे कर्मसागरे॥ ४०॥

Śiva said, "O Tulasī, do not lament. Everyone has to reap the reward of his actions. In the ocean of *karmas* in this world, there is nothing like the pleasure and the pain.

प्रस्तुतं शृणु निर्दुःखं शृणोतु सुमना हरिः।
द्वयोः सुखकरं यत्तद्ब्रवीमि सुखहेतवे॥ ४१॥

Now both you and Viṣṇu, listen to the words being spoken by me, which will provide comfort to both of you.

तपस्त्वया कृतं भद्रे! तस्यैव तपसः फलम्।
तदन्यथा कथं स्याद्वै जातं त्वयि तथा च तत्॥ ४२॥

O Tulasī, you discarding this body shall achieve the divine body. Then you taking to the form of Lakṣmī, would enjoy the company of Viṣṇu daily.

इदं शरीरं त्यक्त्वा च दिव्यदेहं विधाय च।
रमस्व हरिणा नित्यं रमया सदृशी भव॥ ४३॥

Discarding this body, when you take to the divine form, then you would enjoy the company of Viṣṇu, like Lakṣmī.

तवेयं तनुरुत्पृष्ठा नदीरूपा भवेदिह।
भारते पुण्यरूपा सा गण्डकीति च विश्रुता॥ ४४॥

When your body comes to an end, then you would be known as the auspicious river Gaṇḍakī in Bhārata.

कियत्कालं महादेवि! देवपूजनसाधने।
प्रधानरूपा तुलसी भविष्यति वरेण मे॥ ४५॥

O Great goddess, because of my boon, for a long time you would become the means for the adoration of the gods.

स्वर्गे मर्त्ये च पाताले तिष्ठ त्वं हरिसन्निधौ।
भव त्वं तुलसीवृक्षो वरा पुष्पेषु सुन्दरी॥ ४६॥

You would always keep the company of Viṣṇu in the heaven, earth and Pātāla. O Beautiful one, among the flowering trees, you would become the beautiful Tulasī plant.

वृक्षाधिष्ठातृदेवी त्वं वैकुण्ठै दिव्यरूपिणी।
सार्द्धं रहसि हरिणा नित्यं क्रीडां करिष्यसि॥ ४७॥

Being the presiding deity of the trees, you would always remain with Viṣṇu in seclusion in Vaikuṇṭha.

नद्यधियातुदेवी या भारते बहुपुण्यदा।

लवणोदस्य पत्नी सा हर्यशस्य भविष्यसि॥४८॥

You will also remain on earth as the presiding deity of the rivers, the wife of the salt ocean and the bestower of all the merits.

हरिर्वै शैलरूपी च गण्डकीतीरसन्निधौ।

सङ्करिष्यत्यधिष्ठानं भारते तव शापतः॥४९॥

Lord Viṣṇu, because of your curse to him, would remain on your banks in the form of stone.

तत्र कोट्यश्च कीटाश्च तीक्ष्णदंष्ट्रा भयङ्कराः।

तच्छित्त्वा कुहरे चक्रं करिष्यन्ति तदीयकम्॥५०॥

The crores of terrible sharp-toothed worms shall penetrate and erode the stones and carve rings on it.

शालग्रामशिला सा हि तद्भेदादतिपुण्यदा।

लक्ष्मीनारायणाख्यादिश्चक्रभेदाद्भविष्यति॥५१॥

Because of the difference in the *cakras*, those stone will be termed as representing Lakṣmī–Nārāyaṇa etc. and will be treated as *auspicious and the bestower of the merits*.

शालग्रामशिला विष्णोस्तुलस्यास्तव सङ्गमः।

सदा सादृश्यरूपा या बहुपुण्यविवर्धिनी॥५२॥

The *Śālagrāma-silā* of Viṣṇu, and the confluence of Tulasī there, the place will enhance the merits.

तुलसीपत्रविच्छेदं शालग्रामे करोति यः।

तस्य जन्मान्तरे भद्रे! स्त्रीविच्छेदो भविष्यति॥५३॥

The one who removes the Tulasī-leaf (Holy basil) with *Śālagrāma-silā*, he will not face separation from his wife in the next birth.

तुलसीपत्रविच्छेदं शङ्खं हित्वा करोति यः।

भार्याहीनो भवेत्सोऽपि रोगी स्यात्सप्तजन्मसु॥५४॥

Leaving aside the conch, whosoever would pluck the leaves of Tulasī without using the conch, he would become a widower and a chronic patient for seven births.

शालग्रामश्च तुलसी शङ्खं चैकत्र एव हि।

यो रक्षति महाज्ञानी स भवेच्छ्रीहरिप्रियः॥५५॥

The one who keeps, *Śālagrāma*, Tulasī and the conch in one place, shall become wise and the favourite of Viṣṇu.

त्वं प्रिया शङ्खचूडस्य चैकमन्वन्तरावधि।

शङ्खेन सार्द्धं त्वद्भेदः केवलं दुःखदस्तव॥५६॥

You have been the beloved of *Śamkhacūḍa* for a period of a *Manvantara*. Therefore, your separation from *Śamkhacūḍa*, is really painful to you.”

सनत्कुमार उवाच

इत्युक्त्वा शङ्करस्तत्र माहात्म्यमूचिर्वास्तदा।

शालग्रामशिलायाश्च तुलस्या बहुपुण्यदम्॥५७॥

Sanatkumāra said, “Thereafter Śiva highlighted the auspicious glory of *Śālagrāma-silā* and Tulasī.

ततश्चान्तर्हितो भूत्वा मोदयित्वा हरिं च ताम्।

जगाम स्वालयं शम्भुः शर्मदो हि सदा सताम्॥५८॥

Then pleasing Viṣṇu and Tulasī- both, Śiva- who bestowed comforts on the noble people, disappeared from the scene.

इति श्रुत्वा वचः शम्भो प्रसन्ना तु तुलस्यभूत्।

तदेहं च परित्यज्य दिव्यरूपा बभूव ह॥५९॥

The words of Śiva delighted Tulasī. Discarding her body, she took to the heavenly form.

प्रजगाम तया सार्द्धं वैकुण्ठं कमलापतिः।

सद्यस्तद्देहजाता च बभूव गण्डकी नदी॥६०॥

Then Viṣṇu, accompanied with Tulasī, went to Vaikuṇṭha. At once she cast off body of Tulasī and was turned into the river Gaṇḍakī.

शैलोऽभूदच्युतः सोऽपि तत्तीरे पुण्यदो नृणाम्।

कुर्वन्ति तत्र कीटाश्च छिद्रं बहुविधं मुने॥६१॥

Viṣṇu was also turned into *Śālagrāma-silā*