

## CHAPTER THIRTYFOUR

*Śiva Loses to Pārvatī in a Game of Dice<sup>2</sup>*

*Lomaśa said:*

1. The lord of the universe, the lord of Devas, ruled the kingdom while dwelling on Kailāsa accompanied by many Gaṇas and in the company of the great (deity) Vīrabhadra.

2. Rudra was accompanied by the Sages and Devas beginning with Indra. Brahmā was engaged in eulogizing him. Viṣṇu remained there like a servant.

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1. As a propagandist of Śaivism, famous ancient persons are claimed as devotees of Śiva. The *Who's Who* of the kings mentioned in vv 100-102 is as follows:

(1) Bharata—son of Duṣyanta and Śakuntalā (Mbh, *Ādi*, 2.95-96) or the son of the 1st Jain Tirthaṅkara Ṛṣabha.

(2) Māndhātā—Son of Yuvanāśva of Ikṣvāku race (Mbh, *Vana*, Ch. 126).

(3) Dhundhumāri—Original name, Kuvalāśva, son of Bṛhadāśva of the Solar race (Mbh, *Droṇa*, 94.42). He killed demon Dhundhu and got the epithet Dhundhumāra (-māri) (Mbh, *Vana*, 204.32).

(4) Hariścandra—Son of Triśaṅku of Ikṣvāku race, famous for truthfulness and charity (Mbh, *Sabhā*, 12.10-18).

2. The author of SkP is a fine storyteller with a sense of humour. In this chapter and the next he describes how Śiva lost everything to Pārvatī in gambling and left his wife and palace in a huff. Pārvatī enticed him to return by assuming the guise of a young Śabarī girl.

3. Along with the groups of Devas, Indra devoted himself to the duties of serving him. Candra (the Moon-god) became the bearer of the umbrella and Vāyu (the Wind-god) that of chowries.

4. Jātavedas (the Fire-god) was his permanent cook; Gandharvas were the musicians, bards and panegyrists of the Pināka-bearing god Śiva.

5-6. Many Vidyādhara and the groups of celestial damsels danced in front of him. Thus Lord Śiva ruled the kingdom without any suspicion or fear on the mountain Kailāsa.<sup>1</sup> He was accompanied by his valorous sons, Gaṇeśa and Skanda, as well as Girijā. He moved about here and there (supervising everything).

7. The wicked mighty Daitya named Andhaka, a great enemy of Devas, was pierced by him with his trident and placed in the sky for a long time.

8. He killed the Asura in the form of an elephant and removed his hide which was (later) made by him his divine robe. The burning of the three Puras (the demon Tripura) was carried out by him. With Viṣṇu as the deity incharge of the protection of *Bhūtas* (living beings), the lord who was handsome in all his limbs, shone well.

9. (Once) desirous of seeing him, the holy lord Nārada of divine vision went to the excellent mountain Kailāsa which was white like the moon.

10. On seeing that highly powerful mountain served by the great *Sudhā* (Gaṅgā?), the mountain that had very great wonderful features and was white like camphor, Nārada was struck with wonder. He entered the Gandhamādana mountain.<sup>2</sup>

11. The mountain Gandhamādana was endowed with many wonderful features. It was rendered very splendid by means of blazing sun-stones. It possessed great splendour and it was filled with singing Vidyādhari maidens.

1. v.l. The 4th pāda of the verse:

*mahatā vikramena ca* 'with great valour'.

2. The Purāṇa identifies Gandhamādana and Kailāsa mountains. It indicates a later period for this Purāṇa, as the author was not aware of the different locations of the two mountains.

12. There were many *Kalpa* (i.e. wish-yielding)-trees round which creepers had entwined themselves. Excellent *Kāmadhenus* (were seen) in the thick shades (of those trees).

13. There were many bees greedily hankering after the fragrance of the *Pārijāta* grove. There were many swans of sweet voice (*Kalahāmsas*) sporting about in the lakes.

14. Peacocks made there loud sounds of *Kekā* joyously. All the birds chirping with the *Pañcama* note were very gay and delighted (as if inebriated).

15. Elephants of bright lustre rejoiced in the company of she-elephants. Similarly lions roared in the company of tigers.

16. Bulls, the chief among whom was Nandin, bellowed continuously. There were many divine trees and parks of sandal trees.

17. There were trees such as *Nāga*, *Punnāga*, *Bakula* and *Campaka*. There were wild rose-apple trees as well as golden *Ketakas*.

18-19. There were *Kalhāras* (i.e. white esculent water-lilies), *Karaviras*, *Kumudas* (lilies) of many types. There were *Mandāras*, *Badaris* (jujube), *Kramukas* and *Pāṭalas* (trumpet trees) and, many other trees along with the creepers winding round them. There were many parks (seen as) twice as many (i.e. double) on that mountain.

20. The wonderful flood of Gaṅgā suddenly coming out of the sky fell on the top of that mountain. It appeared very splendid.

21. A well (plenty) of waters whereby the universe becomes sanctified, was also seen double by the noble-souled Nārada.

22. Everything was seen double then on being looked at by that noble-souled great Nārada, O Brāhmaṇas.

23. Observing everything thus, the holy lord and sage Nārada hurriedly went ahead desirous of meeting Śiva.

24. When he stood at the entrance, he saw a very surprising thing. Two gate-keepers were seen there. (Actually) they had been made artificially by Viśvakarman.

25-26. Nārada was deluded by them. He asked them then: "I wish to enter. I am desirous of meeting Śiva. Hence permission should be granted to see Śiva."

On seeing them as if they had not heard (his words), Nārada became surprised.

27. With his vision born of knowledge he saw (the truth) and became silent. After realizing that they were artificial, the lofty-minded sage entered.

28. Similarly others, of the same form as those (two) were seen by that noble-souled (sage). Sage Nārada, the holy lord, was joyously bowed to by them.

29. He saw these and many other wonderful things (there). Then he clearly saw lord Tryambaka accompanied by Girijā.

30. The chaste lady, the daughter of the King of Mountains, was occupying half of the seat of the noble-souled Śaṅkara. The whole of the three worlds is pervaded by her.

31. The slender-bodied young woman Gaurī had sparkling bright eyes of great beauty. It was on account of her that Śaṅbhu, the great lord, was rendered worthy of being accepted.

32. The lord (who was really) without any emotional aberrations (*vikāras*) was made weak and imperfect through *vikāras*<sup>1</sup> (by her).

That goddess was seen by him as though joined to half of the body of Siva.<sup>2</sup>

33. Similarly Śaṅbhu, the lord of the three worlds, was seen by Nārada, as being served by Suras and Asuras. The lord had the lustre of pure gold.

34-35. His lotus-like feet were served by Śaṅkha, the excellent serpent. He was served by the following serpents: Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Takṣaka in particular, the great serpent Padma and Śeṣa in particular. He was continuously served by other excellent serpents. Vāsuki had become a necklace of great lustre and was retained in the neck.

36. Kambala and Aśvatara were his perpetual ear-rings. Other excellent serpents were ensconced at the root of his matted hair.

37-44. He was covered by serpents of many colours and types, e.g. Takṣaka, Kulika, Śaṅkha, Dhṛtarāṣṭra of great lustre,

1. '*vikāra*' may be taken as 'a change' of form or nature.

2. This is the *Ardhanārīśvara* concept. In Trika-Śaivism of Kashmir, Śiva and Śakti form one body as it were.

Padma, Dambha, Sudambha, Karāla, Bhiṣaṇa—these and many other serpents formed parts of Hara who was the most worthy of being worshipped in the three worlds.

Some excellent serpents shone with a single hood. Some had two hoods, some three hoods of great lustre. Similarly others had four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve, eighteen, nineteen hoods. Some serpents had forty hoods. Others fifty, sixty, seventy, eighty, ninety, hundred, thousand, ten thousand, hundred thousand, one hundred million, a hundred billion hoods.

Those serpents with endless number of hoods are the serpents adorning Śiva as ornaments. All these were seen then by the noble-souled Nārada.

45. All those serpents were endowed with learning and they possessed precious stones and jewels. They had unmeasured lustre. They were highly refulgent as the ornaments of the neck.

46. His (i.e. Lord Śiva's) excessively beautiful matted hair was marked (adorned) by the crescent moon. He shone well with his third eye in his forehead.

47-48. Mahādeva had five faces. He had ten arms and his neck was dark in colour like emerald. His broad chest was very beautiful. His hips were big. The highly great pair of feet of Rudra were extremely splendid.

49. The matchless lotus-like foot of Śāmbhu was seen (by the sage). It was resplendent and beautiful. With its reddish tinge of the (cloud at) dusk, it was highly auspicious. It dispelled distresses. It radiated masses of splendour. It was greater than the greatest. It was the seat and support of the graceful play of beauty. It was the cause of the increase of the happiness of all. The foot (i.e. the pair of feet) of Śāmbhu was very holy.

50. After seeing the lord greater than the greatest (he saw the goddess). The greatest goddess Satī endowed with beauty and charm was splendid and fascinating. She shone with the greatest prosperity of the auspicious state of wifehood and blessedness.

51-52. After seeing the couple who were pure and refulgent throughout the three worlds, were really non-different but had (apparent) difference, were really devoid of *Guṇas* but had (apparent) *Guṇas*, who were really devoid of shape and size but