

## CHAPTER TWENTYSIX

(Pārvatī-Jaṭila dialogue)

*Brahmā said :—*

1. When those sages returned to their abodes, lord Śiva, the cause of great enjoyment and protection wanted to test the penance of the goddess.

2. Under the pretext of testing, Śiva wanted to see her. With a delighted mind He assumed the form of a Jaṭila (an ascetic with matted hair) and went to the forest of penance of Pārvatī.

3. He took the form of a very old man with the body of a brahmin. His brilliance shone. He was delighted in mind. He had an umbrella and a staff (to support Him).

4. There He saw the goddess surrounded by her maids on the platform, as pure as the digit of the moon.

5. Śiva, who is favourably disposed towards His devotees, approached her with pleasure in the guise of a celibate.

6. On seeing that brahmin of wonderful refulgence come, goddess Pārvatī worshipped Him with all the articles of worship.

7. She worshipped him with great joy by means of well prepared and arranged articles of worship. Thereafter Pārvatī enquired after the health of the brahmin with respect.

*Pārvatī said :—*

8. Who are you and whence have you come in the guise of a Brahmacārin? You are making this forest refulgent by your splendour. Please speak, O foremost among Vedic scholars.

*The brahmin said :—*

9. I am an aged brahmin roaming about as I please. I am an intelligent ascetic bestowing happiness and helping others.

10. Who are you? What is your parentage? Why do you perform penance in this isolated forest? Your penance cannot be surpassed even by the sages of eminent status.

11. You are neither a small girl nor an old woman.