

## CHAPTER SEVEN

(*Sandhyā gets the name Arundhatī and marries Vasiṣṭha*)

*Brahmā said :—*

1. O sage, when Śiva vanished after granting her the boons, Sandhyā too went to the place where Medhātithi was performing sacrifice.

2. She entered the sacrificial hall without being observed by anyone, thanks to Śiva's favour. She recalled to her memory the brahmin boy who had instructed her in the procedure of penance.

3. O great sage, at the bidding of Brahmā, Vasiṣṭha had assumed the guise of a brahmin boy and instructed her in the rites of penance.

4-5. Meditating on that Brahmacārin, her tutor in the mode of austerities, Sandhyā thought of him as her future husband, and entered the blazing sacrificial fire unobserved by the sages. She was delighted that it was by Śiva's favour that she could enter the sacrificial fire.

6. Her body itself had become sacrificial offering in that sacrifice. When it was burnt it could not be distinguished from the ordinary Puroḍāśā since it too had the same fragrance.

7. At the bidding of Śiva, the god of fire sent forth her body to the pure zone of the sun.

8. The sun severed her body into two halves and placed the same on his own chariot for the propitiation of the Pitṛs and the Devas.

9-10. O great sage, the upper half of her body became the Prātaḥ Sandhyā (dawn) which is at the beginning or in the middle of a day and night. The lower half of her body became the Sāyaṃsandhyā (dusk) which is in the middle of a day and night. The period is always pleasing to the manes.

11. Before the sunrise, when the day breaks, the period is called Prātaḥsandhyā. It delights the Gods.

12. When the sun has set and assumed the hue of a red lotus, the period of Sāyaṃsandhyā sets in. It is delightful to the manes.