

*Sūta said :—*

30. On hearing these words of the sage Viṣṇu, the slayer of Madhu demon laughed and sympathetically replied, bearing in mind the overwhelming power of Śiva.

*Viṣṇu said :—*

31. “O sage, you can go to the place where you wish. I shall do what is beneficent to you in the manner of a physician doing what is good to the patient, since you are a great favourite of mine.”

32. After saying thus, Viṣṇu blessed the sage with a form like his own and the face of Hari (i.e. the monkey since the word Hari means a monkey also). The lord then vanished.

33. The sage thus consoled became highly delighted on receiving Hari’s form. He was contented but did not know the scheme behind the scene.

34. The great sage Nārada hastened to the place where Svayaṁvara was to be held and where the princes had assembled.

35. O great brahmins, the Svayaṁvara hall splendidly decorated and graced by so many princes shone like another council-chamber of Indra.

36. Nārada too went in and sat down in the hall of his king. With his mind surging with love he began to think like this.

37. “She will choose only me since I am in Viṣṇu’s form”. The poor sage did not know the ugly character of his face.

38. The men assembled there saw the sage only in his old form. O brahmins, the princes and others did not know the difference created therein.

39. Two of the attendants of Rudra knew this difference. They had come there in the guise of brahmins in order to protect him.

40. Considering the sage a fool, the two attendants sat near the sage and began to mock at him seemingly conversing between themselves.

41. “See Nārada’s features as splendid as Viṣṇu’s, but the face as that of a monkey deformed and awful.