

42. Being deluded by Kāma he wishes to marry the Princess''. With these and other veiled remarks they mocked at him.

43. The sage overwhelmed by love did not heed their whisper. He went on gazing at the princess Śrīmātī and was eager to get her.

44. In the meantime, the princess had come out of the harem surrounded by ladies in waiting. The comely maiden came to the hall.

45. With the beautiful golden garland in her hands, the princess of auspicious features, shone in the middle of the Svayamvara hall like Goddess Lakṣmī.

46. The princess in search of a suitable bridegroom went round the hall with the garland in her hands.

47. On seeing the sage with the face of a monkey and the body of Viṣṇu she was infuriated. Averting her eyes she went elsewhere being distressed in her mind.

48. Failing to find a bridegroom of her choice she was afraid. She remained in the middle of the hall and did not put the garland round the neck of any one.

49. Meanwhile Viṣṇu came there in the guise of a king. He was not seen by anyone. Only the princess saw him.

50. Then on seeing Viṣṇu, her lotus-like face beamed. The comely lady put the garland round his neck.

51. Lord Viṣṇu in the guise of a king took her with him and vanished from there immediately back to his own abode.

52. The assembled princes lost their hope of getting Śrīmātī. The sage oppressed by love became excessively agitated.

53. Immediately the two attendants of Rudra, of perfect wisdom, disguised as brahmins spoke to Nārada.

*The attendants said :—*

54. O sage Nārada, being deluded by love, you are desirous of getting her. Your effort is in vain. See, your face is as despicable as that of a monkey.

*Sūta said :—*

55. On hearing their words Nārada was surprised.