

slayer of Madhu demon,²⁶³ spoke to Śiva who assumes various forms during His divine sports and who is favourably disposed to his devotees.

Viṣṇu said :—

55. O great lord, the lord of devas, O Śiva the merciful, there is no doubt in this that what Brahmā has said constitutes what I have to say.

56. Hence, O great lord be merciful to me and carry out this request. Marrying her please make the three worlds blessed with a leader with benignant look.

Brahmā said :—

57. O sage, after saying this, the intelligent lord Viṣṇu kept silent. The great lord Rudra, favourably disposed to His devotees, smilingly said, "So be it."

58. Then both of us took leave of him and in a cheerful mood returned to our respective abodes along with our wives, the sages and the devas.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

(Sati granted the boon)

Brahmā said :—

1. O sage, thus I have told you about the prayer to Śiva offered by all the devas. How Sati obtained a boon from Śiva, you shall now listen with respect.

2. Then, in the month of Āśvina (September-October), Sati observed a fast on the eighth day of the bright half and worshipped Śiva with great devotion.

3. When her Nandā rites were concluded on the ninth day (Navamī), while she was engrossed in meditation, Śiva became visible to her.

263. The demons Madhu and Kaiṭabha sprang from the ear of Viṣṇu while he was asleep at the end of a Kalpa. As soon as born they tried to kill Brahmā who was lying on the lotus sprung from Viṣṇu's navel. Viṣṇu killed them and obtained the names Kaiṭabhajit and Madhu-sūdana.