

Short Story: Gauri's Anger Issues

Balu

Where does one begin a story, if not with the mighty Himalayas? Long ago, in these sacred mountains, there lived a king named Himavat, ruler of the Himalayas. Himavan was blessed with two remarkable daughters: Ganga, the divine river who flowed gracefully through the heavens—often seen as the personification of the Milky Way, that luminous path we glimpse in the night sky—and Parvati, also known as Gauri, embodying the boundless energy of both the visible and invisible universe. Proud and protective, Himavan cherished his daughters, knowing that they each held a vital, cosmic force within them.

Near Himavan's palace lived a man in deep meditation, who had kept his eyes closed and fasted for ages. No one dared disturb him, and Himavan strictly forbade anyone from approaching this man, fearing the consequences of breaking his profound stillness. Everyone knew who this was—none other than the great god Shiva. Renowned for his fiery temper and immense power, Shiva was in a state of *virakti*—a profound detachment, devoid of earthly desires—grieving the loss of his beloved wife, Sati.

From a young age, Gauri would look out from her palace every day, watching this man in meditation, aware of his story and his profound sorrow. Her sadness for him gradually deepened into affection, and over time, she fell in love with Shiva. Unbeknownst to others, Gauri was, in fact, Sati reborn—returned to the world for a single purpose: to reunite with her beloved once again.

This isn't a love story, so let me jump ahead to events after Shiva and Gauri were happily married, residing on the sacred Mount Kailasa. Everything began when Bhagiratha, king of Ayodhya, requested the divine river Ganga to descend from heaven to earth so he could perform the funeral rites for his ancestors, allowing their souls to find peace. Ganga, however, warned him that if she descended directly from heaven with all her force, her impact would shatter the earth. She advised Bhagiratha to find someone capable of withstanding her mighty descent.

Knowing that only one being could bear such a task, Bhagiratha approached Shiva and humbly asked if he would capture Ganga in his matted hair as she flowed to earth. Shiva graciously agreed. When Ganga descended, Shiva let her vast waters settle gently within his locks, holding back her powerful force before releasing her to flow gently across the earth.

Gauri was delighted to see her elder sister, Ganga, after such a long time. But as days went by, Ganga remained on Shiva's head, waiting for the right moment to be released gently onto the earth without causing destruction. Gauri, however, began to feel uneasy about her sister's extended stay—especially since it was on her husband's head, disrupting her time alone with him. Weeks passed, and Gauri's patience wore thin. Frustrated, she finally approached Shiva, saying, "You've been keeping my sister on your head for weeks! Do you have any plans to release her?"

Shiva looked into Gauri's eyes and noticed they were reddening as her breath quickened. He knew this was not a good sign—Gauri's anger was stirring. When her fury reaches its peak, she transforms into Kali, her

fierce, destructive form capable of ending existence itself. Shiva alone has the power to calm her, but even for him, it is no easy task.

Shiva found himself in an impossible dilemma, unsure how to resolve it. He couldn't release Ganga to earth just yet, but he also needed to calm Gauri, whose anger was rapidly building. Meeting her intense gaze, he realized the stakes—whether he chose Ganga or Gauri, disaster for the earth seemed inevitable. Shiva was in that rare moment where even he, the great god, was uncertain of what to do next.

Suddenly, Mount Kailasa began to shake violently. Gauri, gripped by fear, ran to Shiva and hugged him tightly. In the warmth of his embrace, her anger melted away, replaced by a profound sense of safety and calm. Shiva felt a wave of relief wash over him, grateful that their bond had triumphed over conflict.

Yet, as the tremors persisted, a surge of curiosity tugged at him. What could be causing this unprecedented earthquake? He scanned the area, his keen eyes narrowing as they fell upon a figure straining with immense effort to lift the great mountain. To his astonishment, he recognized the being: it was none other than the formidable, Ravana King of Lanka.

Ravana was not only a formidable warrior but also a great scholar, renowned for his immense knowledge and wisdom. His ten heads symbolized this vast intellect, each one representing a different field of study—music, astrology, philosophy, and more. However, with his vast intellect came a towering ego. He believed himself superior to all, and this arrogance often clouded his judgment, leading him to act on his impulses

without regard for the consequences. Ravana's dual nature—his brilliance and his pride—made him a complex and formidable figure in the realms of both knowledge and power.

Ravana had journeyed to the magnificent city of Alaka in the Himalayas to visit his stepbrother, Kubera. However, each time Ravana made these visits, he would forcefully take valuable treasures from Kubera, leaving the god of wealth increasingly displeased with his sibling's greed.

Frustrated by Ravana's behavior, Kubera resolved to teach him a lesson. He spoke to Ravana with feigned admiration, saying, “In this world, Mount Kailasa is the most sacred and revered place, the home of the great god Shiva and the goddess Gauri. Its majestic presence is unmatched.”

This remark ignited a spark of ambition in Ravana. “If Mount Kailasa is truly so powerful, how magnificent it would be to possess such a mighty mountain in my kingdom of Lanka!” he thought, envisioning the glory it would bring him. Determined to make this audacious idea a reality, Ravana set his sights on lifting the sacred mountain and claiming it for himself.

Shiva felt a mix of gratitude and concern for Ravana. While he appreciated Ravana's role in calming Gauri, he was troubled by the demon king's intention to lift Mount Kailasa. In response, Shiva stepped firmly onto the mountain, trapping Ravana beneath it for ages. During his imprisonment, Ravana's sense of superiority transformed into deep devotion to Shiva.

In his solitude, he crafted a veena (a string instrument) from his spinal cord and poured his emotions into its strings, creating melodies that resonated with Shiva's heart. Pleased by the music and Ravana's change

of heart, Shiva released him from his prison, forgave him, and gifted him the legendary sword **Chandrasaham**, a symbol of newfound respect and devotion.

Eventually, the time came to release the sacred Ganga to the earth, fulfilling Bhagiratha's long quest. As the waters flowed freely, Bhagiratha's ancestor's soul finally attained the peace it had sought for so long.

With this momentous event, Shiva and Gauri returned to their serene abode on Kailasa, where they lived in harmony and joy, their bond strengthened by the trials they had faced together. The mountain echoed with their laughter, a testament to the love and tranquility that surrounded them.

The End.