

Hindi / English / Gujarati

# માર્કण્ડેય પુરાણ

માર્કણ્ડેય ઋષિ



 મહાકાવ્ય





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## Introduction

The word ‘*purana*’ means old, ancient. The Puranas are old texts, usually referred to in conjunction with Itihasa (the Ramayana and the Mahabharata). <sup>1</sup> Whether Itihasa originally meant only the Mahabharata, with the Ramayana being added to that expression later, is a proposition on which there has been some discussion. But that’s not relevant for our purposes. In the Chandogya Upanishad, there is an instance of the sage Narada approaching the sage Sanatkumara for instruction. Asked about what he already knows, Narada says he knows Itihasa and Purana, the Fifth Veda. <sup>2</sup> In other words, Itihasa–Purana possessed an elevated status. This by no means implies that the word ‘purana’, as used in these two Upanishads and other texts too, is to be understood in the sense of the word being applied to a set of texts known as the Puranas today. The Valmiki Ramayana is believed to have been composed by Valmiki and the Mahabharata by Krishna Dvaipayana Vedavyasa. After composing the Mahabharata, Krishna Dvaipayana Vedavyasa is believed to have composed the Puranas. The use of the word composed immediately indicates that Itihasa–Purana are ‘smriti’ texts, with a human origin. They are not ‘shruti’ texts, with a divine origin. Composition does not mean these texts were rendered into writing. Instead, there was a process of oral transmission, with inevitable noise in the transmission and distribution process. Writing came much later.

Frederick Eden Pargiter’s book on the Puranas is still one of the best introductions to this corpus. <sup>3</sup> To explain the composition and transmission process, one can do no better than to quote him. ‘The Vayu and Padma Puranas tell us how ancient genealogies, tales and ballads were preserved, namely, by the *sutas*, <sup>4</sup> and they describe the suta’s duty . . . The Vayu,

Brahmanda and Visnu give an account, how the original Purana came into existence . . . Those three Puranas say—Krsna Dvaipayana divided the single Veda into four and arranged them, and so was called Vyasa. He entrusted them to his four disciples, one to each, namely Paila, Vaisampayana, Jaimini and Sumantu. Then with tales, anecdotes, songs and lore that had come down from the ages he compiled a Purana, and taught it and the Itihasa to his fifth disciple, the suta Romaharsana or Lomaharsana . . . After that he composed the Mahabharata. The epic itself implies that the Purana preceded it . . . As explained above, the sutas had from remote times preserved the genealogies of gods, rishis and kings, and traditions and ballads about celebrated men, that is, exactly the material—tales, songs and ancient lore—out of which the Purana was constructed. Whether or not Vyasa composed the original Purana or superintended its compilation, is immaterial for the present purpose . . . After the original Purana was composed, by Vyasa as is said, his disciple Romaharsana taught it to his son Ugrasravas, and Ugrasravas the *sauti* <sup>5</sup> appears as the reciter in some of the present Puranas; and the sutas still retained the right to recite it for their livelihood. But, as stated above, Romaharsana taught it to his six disciples, at least five of whom were brahmans. It thus passed into the hands of brahmans, and their appropriation and development of it increased in the course of time, as the Purana grew into many Puranas, as Sanskrit learning became peculiarly the province of the brahmans, and as new and frankly sectarian Puranas were composed.’ Pargiter cited reasons for his belief that the Mahabharata was composed after the original Purana, though that runs contrary to the popular perception about the Mahabharata having been composed before the Puranas. That popular and linear perception is too simplistic, since texts evolved in parallel, not necessarily sequentially.

In popular perception, Krishna Dvaipayana Vedavyasa composed the Mahabharata. He then composed the Puranas. Alternatively, he composed an original core Purana text, which has been lost, and others embellished it through additions. The adjective ‘purana’, meaning old account or old text, became a proper noun, signifying a specific text. To be classified as a Purana, a Purana has to possess five attributes—*pancha lakshmana*. That is,



five topics must be discussed—*sarga*, *pratisarga*, *vamsha*, *manvantara* and *vamshanucharita*. The clearest statement of this is in the Matsya Purana. Unlike the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, there is no Critical Edition of the Puranas.<sup>6</sup> Therefore, citing chapter and verse from a Purana text is somewhat more difficult, since verse, if not chapter, may vary from text to text. With that caveat, the relevant shloka (verse) should be in the fifty-third chapter of the Matsya Purana. Sarga means the original or primary creation. The converse of sarga is universal destruction, or *pralaya*. That period of sarga lasts for one of Brahma's days, known as *kalpa*. When Brahma sleeps, during his night, there is universal destruction.

In measuring time, there is the notion of a *yuga* (era) and there are four yugas—*satya yuga* (also known as *krita yuga*), *treta yuga*, *dvapara yuga* and *kali yuga*. Satya yuga lasts for 4,000 years, treta yuga for 3,000 years, dvapara yuga for 2,000 years and kali yuga for 1,000 years. However, all these are not human years. The gods have a different timescale and these are the years of the gods. As one progressively moves from satya yuga to kali yuga, virtue (dharma) declines. But at the end of kali yuga, the cycle begins afresh, with satya yuga. An entire cycle, from satya yuga to kali yuga, is known as a *mahayuga* (great era). However, a mahayuga is not just 10,000 years. There is a further complication. At the beginning and the end of every yuga, there are some additional years. These additional years are 400 for satya yuga, 300 for treta yuga, 200 for dvapara yuga and 100 for kali yuga. A mahayuga thus has 12,000 years, adding years both at the beginning and at the end. 1,000 mahayugas make up one kalpa (eon), a single day for Brahma. A kalpa is also divided into fourteen manvantaras, a manvantara being a period during which a Manu presides and rules over creation. Therefore, there are 71.4 mahayugas in a manvantara. Our present kalpa is known as the Shveta Varaha Kalpa. Within that, six Manus have come and gone. Their names are (1) Svyambhuva Manu, (2) Svarochisha Manu, (3) Uttama Manu, (4) Tapasa Manu, (5) Raivata Manu and (6) Chakshusha Manu. The present Manu is known as Vaivasvata Manu. Vivasvat, also written as Vivasvan, is the name of Surya, the sun god. Vaivasvata Manu has that name because he is Surya's son. Not only do

Manus change from one manvantara to another, so do the gods, the ruler of the gods and the seven great sages, known as the *saptarshis* (seven rishis). Indra is a title of the ruler of the gods. It is not a proper name. The present Indra is Purandara. However, in a different manvantara, someone else will hold the title. In the present seventh manvantara, known as Vaivasvata manvantara, there will also be 71.4 mahayugas. We are in the twenty-eighth of these. Since a different Vedavyasa performs that task of classifying and collating the Vedas in every mahayuga, Krishna Dvaipayana Vedavyasa is the twenty-eighth in that series. Just so that it is clear, Vedavyasa isn't a proper name. It is a title conferred on someone who collates and classifies the Vedas. There have been twenty-seven who have held the title of Vedavyasa before him and he is the twenty-eighth. His proper name is Krishna Dvaipayana, Krishna because he was dark and Dvaipayana because he was born on an island (*dvipa*). This gives us an idea of what the topic of manvantara is about. This still leaves pratisarga, vamsha and vamshanucharita. The two famous dynasties/lineages were the solar dynasty (*surya vamsha*) and lunar dynasty (*chandra vamsha*) and all the famous kings belonged to one or other of these two dynasties. Vamshanucharita is about these lineages and the conduct of these kings. There were the gods and rishis too, not always born through a process of physical procreation. Their lineages are described under the heading of vamsha. Finally, within that cycle of primary creation and destruction, there are smaller and secondary cycles of creation and destruction. That's the domain of pratisarga. In greater or lesser degree, all the Puranas cover these five topics, some more than the others.

There are Puranas, and there are Puranas. Some are known as Sthala Puranas, describing the greatness and sanctity of a specific geographical place. Some are known as Upa-Puranas, minor Puranas. The listing of Upa-Puranas has regional variations and there is no countrywide consensus about the list of Upa-Puranas, though it is often accepted that there are eighteen. The Puranas we have in mind are known as Maha-Puranas, major Puranas. Henceforth, when we use the word Puranas, we mean Maha-Puranas. There is consensus that there are eighteen Maha-Puranas, though it

is not obvious that this number of eighteen existed right from the beginning. The names are mentioned in several of these texts, including a shloka that follows the shloka cited from the Matsya Purana. The listing is also included in the last sections of the Bhagavata Purana itself. Thus, the eighteen Puranas are (1) Agni (15,400); (2) Bhagavata (18,000); (3) Brahma (10,000); (4) Brahmanda (12,000); (5) Brahmavaivarta (18,000); (6) Garuda (19,000); (7) Kurma (17,000); (8) Linga (11,000); (9) Markandeya (9,000); (10) Matsya (14,000); (11) Narada (25,000); (12) Padma (55,000); (13) Shiva (24,000); (14) Skanda (81,100); (15) Vamana (10,000); (16) Varaha (24,000); (17) Vayu (24,000); and (18) Vishnu (23,000). A few additional points about this list. First, the Harivamsha is sometimes loosely described as a Purana, but strictly speaking, it is not a Purana. It is more like an addendum to the Mahabharata. Second, Bhavishya (14,500) is sometimes mentioned, with Vayu excised from the list. However, the Vayu Purana exhibits many more Purana characteristics than the Bhavishya Purana does. There are references to a Bhavishyat Purana that existed, but that may not necessarily be the Bhavishya Purana as we know it today. That's true of some other Puranas too. Texts have been completely restructured hundreds of years later. Third, it is not just a question of Bhavishya Purana and Vayu Purana. In the lists given in some Puranas, Vayu is part of the eighteen, but Agni is knocked out. In some others, Narasimha and Vayu are included, but Brahmanda and Garuda are knocked out. Fourth, when a list is given, the order also indicates some notion of priority or importance. Since that varies from text to text, our listing is simply alphabetical, according to the English alphabet. In its listing of Puranas given in the last chapter (Chapter 134), the Markandeya Purana tells us that it is seventh in the list of Puranas.

The numbers within brackets indicate the number of shlokas each of these Puranas has, or is believed to have. The range is from 9,000 in Markandeya to a mammoth 81,100 in Skanda. The aggregate is a colossal 409,500 shlokas. To convey a rough idea of the orders of magnitude, the Mahabharata has, or is believed to have, 100,000 shlokas. It's a bit difficult to convert a shloka into word counts in English, especially because Sanskrit

words have a slightly different structure. However, as a very crude approximation, one shloka is roughly twenty words. Thus, 100,000 shlokas become 2 million words and 400,000 shlokas, four times the size of the Mahabharata, amounts to 8 million words. There is a reason for using the expression ‘is believed to have’, as opposed to ‘has’. Rendering into writing is of later vintage, the initial process was one of oral transmission. In the process, many texts have been lost, or are retained in imperfect condition. This is true of texts in general and is also specifically true of Itihasa and Puranas. The Critical Edition of the Mahabharata, mentioned earlier, no longer possesses 100,000 shlokas. Including the Harivamsha, there are around 80,000 shlokas. The Critical Edition of the Mahabharata has of course deliberately excised some shlokas. For the Puranas, there is no counterpart of Critical Editions. However, whichever edition of the Puranas one chooses, the number of shlokas in that specific Purana will be smaller than the numbers given above. Either those many shlokas did not originally exist, or they have been lost. This is the right place to mention that a reading of the Puranas assumes a basic degree of familiarity with the Valmiki Ramayana and the Mahabharata, more the latter than the former. Without that familiarity, one will often fail to appreciate the context completely. More than passing familiarity with the Bhagavadgita, strictly speaking a part of the Mahabharata, helps. <sup>7</sup>

Other than the five attributes, the Puranas have a considerable amount of information on geography and even geological changes (changes in courses of river) and astronomy. Therefore, those five attributes shouldn’t suggest the Puranas have nothing more. They do, and they have therefore been described as encyclopedias. Bharatavarsha is vast and heterogeneous and each Purana may very well have originated in one particular part of the country. Accordingly, within that broad compass of an overall geographical description, the extent of geographical information varies from Purana to Purana. Some are more familiar with one part of the country than with another. Though not explicitly mentioned in the five attributes, the Puranas are also about pursuing dharma, *artha*, *kama* and *moksha*, the four objectives of human existence, and about the four *varnas* and the four



*ashramas*. The general understanding and practice of dharma is based much more on the Puranas than on the Vedas. Culture, notions of law, rituals, architecture and iconography are based on the Puranas. There is beautiful poetry too, including in parts of the Markandeya Purana.

Perhaps one should mention that there are two ways these eighteen Puranas are classified. The trinity has Brahma as the creator, Vishnu as the preserver and Shiva as the destroyer. Therefore, Puranas where creation themes feature prominently are identified with Brahma (Brahma, Brahmanda, Brahmavaivarta, Markandeya). Puranas where Vishnu features prominently are identified as Vaishnava Puranas (Bhagavata, Garuda, Kurma, Matysa, Narada, Padma, Vamana, Varaha, Vishnu). Puranas where Shiva features prominently are identified as Shaiva Puranas (Agni, Lingas, Shiva, Skanda, Vayu). While there is a grain of truth in this, Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva are all important and all three feature in every Purana. Therefore, beyond the relative superiority of Vishnu vis-à-vis Shiva, the taxonomy probably doesn't serve much purpose. The second classification is even more tenuous and is based on the three *gunas* of *sattva* (purity), *rajas* (passion) and *tamas* (ignorance). For example, the Uttara Khanda of the Padma Purana has a few shlokas along these lines, recited by Shiva to Parvati. With a caveat similar to the one mentioned earlier, this should be in the 236th chapter of Uttara Khanda. According to this, the Puranas characterized by *sattva* are Bhagavata, Garuda, Narada, Padma, Varaha and Vishnu. Those characterized by *rajas* are Bhavishya, Brahma, Brahmanda, Brahmavaivarta, Markandeya and Vamana, Those characterized by *tamas* are Agni, Kurma, Linga, Matysa, Skanda and Shiva.

Within a specific Purana text, there are earlier sections, as well as later ones. That makes it difficult to date a Purana, except as a range. Across Purana texts, there are older Puranas, as well as later ones. Extremely speculatively, the dating will be something like the following. (1) Agni (800–1100 CE); (2) Bhagavata (500–1000 CE); (3) Brahma (700–1500 CE); (4) Brahmanda (400–600 CE); (5) Brahmavaivarta (700–1500 CE); (6) Garuda (800–1100 CE); (7) Kurma (600–900 CE); (8) Linga (500–1000 CE);

(9) Markandeya (250–700 CE); (10) Matsya (200–500 CE); (11) Narada (900–1600 CE); (12) Padma (400–1600 CE); (13) Shiva (1000–1400 CE); (14) Skanda (600–1200 CE); (15) Vamana (450–900 CE); (16) Varaha (1000–1200 CE); (17) Vayu (350–550 CE); (18) Vishnu (300 BCE to 450 CE); and (19) Bhavishya (500–1900 CE). Reiterating once again that there is no great precision in these ranges, by this reckoning, the Vishnu Purana is the oldest and some parts of the Bhavishya Purana are as recent as the nineteenth century.

As mentioned earlier, there is no Critical Edition for the Puranas. Therefore, one has to choose a Sanskrit text one is going to translate from. If one is going to translate all the Puranas, it is preferable, though not essential, that one opts for a common source for all the Purana texts. The common source for the Markandeya Purana, and all the Purana translations, is the one brought out by Nag Publishers, with funding from the ministry of human resource development.<sup>8</sup> To the best of my knowledge, other than this translation, there are two unabridged translations of the Markandeya Purana in English. The first was by Manmatha Nath Dutt in 1896.<sup>9</sup> The second was by F.E. Pargiter in 1904.<sup>10</sup> For the record, there were partial translations by B. Hale Wortham in 1881 and Charu Chandra Mukherjee in 1893. Broadly, there were three editions of the Sanskrit text—Bombay, Poona and Calcutta. The Bombay and Poona editions differ marginally from each other, and essentially this is the text we have followed. Manmatha Nath Dutt followed the Calcutta edition. Pargiter also followed the Calcutta edition, but incorporated chapters from the Bombay/Poona editions. Our Sanskrit text is very similar to the Pargiter Sanskrit text, with some differences. There are 6,449 shlokas, nowhere near the 9,000 the Markandeya Purana is believed to have had. Sometimes, it is also a question of how one counts a shloka. Even if the content is identical, the text may be counted as one shloka in one place and as two shlokas elsewhere. Our numbering is exactly the same as in the Sanskrit text we have followed. Even then, there are some 2,500 shlokas fewer than the 9,000. Indeed, Chapter 134 of the Markandeya Purana tells us it had 6,800

or 6,900 shlokas. If those missing shlokas ever existed, they have simply got lost.

In his introduction to the translation of the Markandeya Purana, Pargiter quotes from Horace Hayman Wilson's translation of the Vishnu Purana, where Wilson had comments about the Markandeya Purana, though the translation was of the Vishnu Purana.<sup>11</sup> 'This Purana has a character different from that of all the others. It has nothing of a sectarian spirit, little of a religious tone; rarely inserting prayers and invocations to any deity; and such as are inserted are brief and moderate. It deals little in precepts, ceremonial or moral. Its leading feature is narrative; and it presents an uninterrupted succession of legends, most of which when ancient are embellished with new circumstances, and when new partake so far of the spirit of the old, that they are disinterested creations of the imagination, having no particular motive being designed to recommend no special doctrine or observance. Whether they are derived from any other source, or whether they are original inventions, it is not possible to ascertain. They are most probably, for the greater part at least, original; and the whole has been narrated in the compiler's own manner; a manner superior to that of the Puranas in general, with exception of the Bhagavata.' This might generally be true, but it is not true of the *Devi Mahatmya* section.

The K.M. Banerjea introduction identified five segments into which the 134 chapters can be divided. (1) Chapters 1–9, with Markandeya answering the four questions posed to him by Jaimini; (2) Chapters 10–41, with further questions asked by Jaimini, but answered by Sumati/Jada and not by Markandeya directly; (3) Chapters 42–77, with a conversation between Markandeya and Kroushtuki; (4) Chapters 78–90, the *Devi Mahatmya* section; and (5) Chapters 91–134, a continuation of the conversation between Markandeya and Kroushtuki, which was left dangling in Chapter 77. There is a discontinuity in the text and scholars agree that the original Markandeya Purana had segments (3) and (5). In the second stage, segments (1) and (2) were composed and pre-fixed to segments (3) and (5). In segment (2), in the Alarka and Madalasa account, there is an excellent exposition of yoga and some beautiful poetry that no translation can aspire

to accurately convey. Finally, in the third stage, segment (4), the *Devi Mahatmya* was added. At least three stages in the composition of the Markandeya Purana can thus be discerned. Scholars also agree that the text originated in the western parts of India, the valleys of the Narmada and the Tapti and the region around the Vindhyas. This is also true of the *Devi Mahatmya* segment. ‘The Devi-mahatmya must have originated in some place dedicated to the goddess in her terrible form. The poem has now become a text-book of the worshippers of Kali throughout Northern India and in Bengal, especially at the great Durga-puja festival, but it did not originate in Bengal.’ <sup>12</sup>

Pargiter can also be quoted on the date of composition. ‘The question of the date of the Purana is more difficult, since all questions of chronology in Sanskrit writings are most uncertain. One definite and important date may be first noticed. Mahamahopadhyaya Haraprasad Sastri found a copy of the Devi-mahatmya in old Newari characters in the Royal Library in Nepal, and it is dated 998 A.D. (See his Catalogue). It may be safely inferred therefrom, that this poem must have been composed before the beginning of the 10th century at the latest. The Devi-mahatmya cannot therefore be later than the 9th century and may be considerably earlier. Since it is the latest part of the Purana, the other parts must have been composed earlier, and the question for consideration is, how much earlier? . . . Prof. Wilson in his preface to his Translation of the Visnu Purana pointed out that this Purana is later than the Mahabharata but anterior to the Brahma, Padma, Naradiya and Bhagavata Puranas, and conjectured that it may be placed in the ninth or tenth century A.D. This, as already noticed, is too recent, moreover it has been discovered since that his estimates of the composition of the several Puranas under-reckon their age, and that the periods assigned by him should be moved some centuries earlier . . . Mahamahopadhyaya Haraprasad Sastri found in the Royal Library in Nepal a copy of the “Skanda Purana” written in the later Gupta characters of the 6th or 7th century A.D. From that it is obvious that the composition of the Skanda Purana must have taken place four or five centuries earlier than Prof. Wilson’s estimate. Hence it is possible that a corresponding modification of his estimate regarding the



Markandeya Purana should be made, and that would place it about the 4th century A.D. . . . From all these considerations it seems fair to draw the following conclusions. The Devi-mahatmya, the latest part, was certainly complete in the 9th century and very probably in the 5th or 6th century A.D. The third and fifth parts, which constituted the original Purana, were very probably in existence in the third century, and perhaps even earlier; and the first and second parts were composed between those two periods.’ This explains the dating of 250–700 CE we cited for the Markandeya Purana.

In the translations of the Bhagavad Gita, the Mahabharata, the Harivamsha, the Valmiki Ramayana and the Bhagavata Purana, <sup>13</sup> we followed the principle of not using diacritical marks. The use of diacritical marks (effectively the international alphabet of Sanskrit transliteration) makes the pronunciation and rendering more accurate, but also tends to put off readers who are less academically inclined. Since diacritical marks are not being used, there is a challenge of rendering Sanskrit names in English. Sanskrit is a phonetic language and we have used that principle as a basis. Applied consistently, this means that words are rendered in ways that may seem unfamiliar. Hence, Kraushtuki will appear as Kroushtuki here. This is true of proper names, and, in a few rare cases, of geographical names. The absence of diacritical marks causes some minor problems. How does one distinguish Vasudeva Krishna from Krishna’s father, Vasudeva? Often, the context will make the difference clear. If not, we have written the son as Vaasudeva and the father as Vasudeva. In translating, the attempt has been to provide a word for word translation, so that if one were to hold up the Sanskrit text, there would be a perfect match. In the process, the English is not as smooth as it might have been, deliberately so.

The intention is also to offer a translation, not an interpretation. That sounds like a simple principle to adopt, and for the most part, is easy to follow. However, there is a thin dividing line between translation and interpretation. In some instances, it is impossible to translate without bringing in a little bit of interpretation. Inevitably, interpretation is subjective. We have tried to minimize the problem by (a) reducing

interpretation; (b) relegating interpretation to footnotes; and (c) when there are alternative interpretations, pointing this out to the reader through those footnotes.

But all said and done, there is no substitute to reading these texts in the original Sanskrit.

# The Markandeya Purana

*Chapter 1: 54 shlokas*

*Chapter 2: 66 shlokas*

*Chapter 3: 86 shlokas*

*Chapter 4: 59 shlokas*

*Chapter 5: 26 shlokas*

*Chapter 6: 37 shlokas*

*Chapter 7: 69 shlokas*

*Chapter 8: 286 shlokas*

*Chapter 9: 33 shlokas*

*Chapter 10: 97 shlokas*

*Chapter 11: 32 shlokas*

*Chapter 12: 48 shlokas*

*Chapter 13: 21 shlokas*

*Chapter 14: 96 shlokas*

*Chapter 15: 82 shlokas*

*Chapter 16: 183 shlokas*

*Chapter 17: 43 shlokas*

*Chapter 18: 58 shlokas*

*Chapter 19: 106 shlokas*

*Chapter 20: 51 shlokas*

*Chapter 21: 118 shlokas*

*Chapter 22: 46 shlokas*

*Chapter 23: 62 shlokas*

*Chapter 24: 34 shlokas*

*Chapter 25: 37 shlokas*  
*Chapter 26: 48 shlokas*  
*Chapter 27: 25 shlokas*  
*Chapter 28: 67 shlokas*  
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*Chapter 44: 37 shlokas*  
*Chapter 45: 45 shlokas*  
*Chapter 46: 80 shlokas*  
*Chapter 47: 97 shlokas*  
*Chapter 48: 123 shlokas*  
*Chapter 49: 31 shlokas*  
*Chapter 50: 43 shlokas*  
*Chapter 51: 32 shlokas*  
*Chapter 52: 23 shlokas*  
*Chapter 53: 26 shlokas*  
*Chapter 54: 64 shlokas*  
*Chapter 55: 81 shlokas*  
*Chapter 56: 29 shlokas*  
*Chapter 57: 15 shlokas*



*Chapter 58: 79 shlokas*  
*Chapter 59: 31 shlokas*  
*Chapter 60: 65 shlokas*  
*Chapter 61: 19 shlokas*  
*Chapter 62: 29 shlokas*  
*Chapter 63: 42 shlokas*  
*Chapter 64: 7 shlokas*  
*Chapter 65: 46 shlokas*  
*Chapter 66: 69 shlokas*  
*Chapter 67: 39 shlokas*  
*Chapter 68: 29 shlokas*  
*Chapter 69: 42 shlokas*  
*Chapter 70: 16 shlokas*  
*Chapter 71: 61 shlokas*  
*Chapter 72: 77 shlokas*  
*Chapter 73: 59 shlokas*  
*Chapter 74: 42 shlokas*  
*Chapter 75: 35 shlokas*  
*Chapter 76: 13 shlokas*  
*Chapter 77: 11 shlokas*  
*Chapter 78: 78 shlokas*  
*Chapter 79: 70 shlokas*  
*Chapter 80: 44 shlokas*  
*Chapter 81: 38 shlokas*  
*Chapter 82: 79 shlokas*  
*Chapter 83: 20 shlokas*  
*Chapter 84: 26 shlokas*  
*Chapter 85: 61 shlokas*  
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*Chapter 87: 28 shlokas*  
*Chapter 88: 51 shlokas*  
*Chapter 89: 38 shlokas*  
*Chapter 90: 17 shlokas*

*Chapter 91: 31 shlokas*  
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*Chapter 93: 48 shlokas*  
*Chapter 94: 38 shlokas*  
*Chapter 95: 10 shlokas*  
*Chapter 96: 71 shlokas*  
*Chapter 97: 45 shlokas*  
*Chapter 98: 27 shlokas*  
*Chapter 99: 22 shlokas*  
*Chapter 100: 15 shlokas*  
*Chapter 101: 38 shlokas*  
*Chapter 102: 27 shlokas*  
*Chapter 103: 65 shlokas*  
*Chapter 104: 11 shlokas*  
*Chapter 105: 29 shlokas*  
*Chapter 106: 78 shlokas*  
*Chapter 107: 43 shlokas*  
*Chapter 108: 18 shlokas*  
*Chapter 109: 25 shlokas*  
*Chapter 110: 37 shlokas*  
*Chapter 111: 36 shlokas*  
*Chapter 112: 23 shlokas*  
*Chapter 113: 76 shlokas*  
*Chapter 114: 51 shlokas*  
*Chapter 115: 21 shlokas*  
*Chapter 116: 19 shlokas*  
*Chapter 117: 39 shlokas*  
*Chapter 118: 23 shlokas*  
*Chapter 119: 30 shlokas*  
*Chapter 120: 27 shlokas*  
*Chapter 121: 65 shlokas*  
*Chapter 122: 32 shlokas*  
*Chapter 123: 47 shlokas*

*Chapter 124: 39 shlokas*

*Chapter 125: 36 shlokas*

*Chapter 126: 39 shlokas*

*Chapter 127: 25 shlokas*

*Chapter 128: 51 shlokas*

*Chapter 129: 34 shlokas*

*Chapter 130: 63 shlokas*

*Chapter 131: 37 shlokas*

*Chapter 132: 15 shlokas*

*Chapter 133: 38 shlokas*

*Chapter 134: 42 shlokas*

*Total 6449*

# Chapter 1

I bow down to the illustrious Vasudeva. <sup>1</sup> Hari manifested himself and his lotus feet strode over earth, heaven and the intervening region. <sup>2</sup> Those feet possess the power to destroy the fear of the cycle of worldly existence. Yogis and those who are detached in their minds approach and greatly worship them. May they purify us. He is accomplished in purifying us of all our sins. In his embodied form, he lies down in the coils of the serpent <sup>3</sup> in the ocean of milk. The serpent's breathing makes the dreadful spray from the water tremble and the agitated ocean seems to keep company and dance. May he save us. I bow down before Narayana. I bow down before Nara, supreme among men. I bow down before the goddess Sarasvati. I then bow down to Vyasa and recite the account of victory. <sup>4</sup>

The great sage, Markandeya, was engaged in austerities and studying. Jaimini, Vyasa's <sup>5</sup> immensely energetic disciple, asked him. 'O illustrious one! The great-souled Vyasa spoke about the Bharata account. <sup>6</sup> It is full of spotless and auspicious collections from many sacred texts. It is full of many kinds of auspicious metres and is ornamented with many kinds of auspicious words. It has assertions based on prima facie arguments <sup>7</sup> and is full of knowledge. Just as Vishnu is to the gods, *brahmanas* are to bipeds, an excellent crest-jewel is to the best among ornaments, Indra's thunderbolt is to weapons and the mind is to the senses, in that way, the excellent Mahabharata is to all the sacred texts. Dharma, *artha*, *kama* and *moksha* have been separately described in it and also their mutual relationships and consequences. It is best among sacred texts of dharma and supreme among sacred texts of artha. It is foremost among the sacred texts of kama. It is excellent among the sacred texts of moksha. O immensely fortunate one! In this, the intelligent Vedavyasa has spoken about the dharma, conduct,



positions and means for the four ashramas. <sup>8</sup> O father! <sup>9</sup> Vyasa, generous in his deeds, composed this extensive and large sacred text so that it is not overcome by any contradictions. The torrent of Vyasa's words has destroyed the trees of perverse reasoning. They descended from the mountain of the Vedas and removed all dust from the earth. The melodious sounds are like large swans, the great accounts are like supreme lotuses, the stories are like large expanses of water and what Krishna <sup>10</sup> composed is like a large lake based on the Vedas. O illustrious one! Such is the Bharata account, with many kinds of meaning and extensive in its knowledge. Therefore, I have presented myself before you, desiring to know the truth. Why did Janardana, who possesses no qualities, <sup>11</sup> assume a human form? Vasudeva is the reason behind the creation, preservation and destruction of the universe. Why did Drupada's daughter, Krishna, <sup>12</sup> become the single wife to the five sons of Pandu? We have a great doubt on this score. In search of atonement for the sin of killing a brahmana, why did the immensely strong Baladeva, <sup>13</sup> with the plough as a weapon, travel to the *tirthas*? <sup>14</sup> The sons of Pandu were the protectors of the great-souled *maharatha* sons of Droupadi. <sup>15</sup> While they were still unmarried, how were they slain, as if they did not have a protector? You should explain all of this to me in detail. You are the one who brings understanding to those who are stupid in intelligence.'

The great sage, Markandeya, was devoid of the eighteen taints. <sup>16</sup> Hearing his words, he started to speak.

Markandeya replied, 'O excellent among sages! The time has arrived for us to perform our rituals. This is not applauded as a time when one should speak a lot. O Jaimini! However, I will tell you about the ones who will speak to you now and dispel your doubts. That is what those birds will do. Their names are Pingaksha, Vibodha, Supatra and Sumukha. They are Drona's sons and the best among birds. They know the truth and think about the sacred texts. Their intelligence is unobstructed and they know the purport of the Vedas and the sacred texts. They live in a cave in the middle of the Vindhya mountains. Go there and ask them.'

Thus addressed by the intelligent Markandeya, the tiger among rishis dilated his eyes in wonder. Jaimini asked, ‘O brahmana! This is extremely wonderful that birds should speak like men and that these birds have obtained a knowledge that is extremely difficult to obtain. Having been born as inferior species, how did they obtain this knowledge? Why are these birds spoken of as Drona’s sons? Who is the person who had these four sons and is famous by the name of Drona? These great-souled ones know about dharma and possess the qualities. How did they come to acquire these?’

Markandeya replied, ‘Listen attentively to what happened in Nandana <sup>17</sup> in earlier times. Shakra, <sup>18</sup> the *apsaras* and Narada met there. In Nandana, Narada saw that Shakra, the king of the gods, was among these courtesans <sup>19</sup> and that his glance was riveted on their faces. As soon as Shachi’s consort saw his senior, he arose and affectionately gave him his own seat. On seeing that the slayer of Bala and Vritra <sup>20</sup> had stood up, the celestial maidens bowed down before the divine rishi. They stood there, bent down in humility. He was worshipped by them. He honoured Shatakratu and both of them sat down and conversed about agreeable subjects. When the conversation was over, Shakra addressed the great sage. Shakra said, “Command any of them to dance, whichever one appeals to you—Rambha, Karkasha, Urvashi, Tilottama, Ghritachi or Menaka.” Hearing Shakra’s words, Narada, best among brahmanas, thought about the *apsaras* who were standing there, bowed down in humility. “Among all of you, whichever one thinks herself to be superior in beauty, generosity and qualities, let her dance in front of me. A person who is devoid of qualities and beauty cannot obtain success in dancing. Dancing requires a graceful stance. Without that, dancing is a mockery.” As soon as he said this, all of them spoke simultaneously. They told the others, “I am superior in qualities, not you, or you.” The illustrious chastiser of Paka <sup>21</sup> noticed their agitation and said, “Let the sage be asked about who is superior in qualities.” They obeyed Shakra’s wishes and asked him. O Jaimini! Hear from me the words that Narada spoke in reply. “Durvasa, best among sages, is performing austerities on an Indra among mountains. If anyone possesses the force to

agitate him, I shall consider her to be superior in qualities.” Hearing his words, all of them shook their heads. “We are incapable of doing what he has said.” However, there was an apsara named Vapu. She was proud enough to think that she was capable of agitating the sage. She replied, “I will go where the sage resides. He has controlled his body, which is like a chariot, and has reined in his senses, which are like horses. However, the weapons of love will make him lose his reins and render him a bad charioteer today. Even if Brahma, Janardana and Nilalohita come, I will pierce his inner organs with the arrows of love today.” Saying this, Vapu went to Mount Praleya.<sup>22</sup> Because of the power of the sage’s austerities, the predatory beasts in his hermitage were also peaceful. The supreme apsara remained a *krosha*<sup>23</sup> away from where the great sage was. She assumed the voice of a male cuckoo and started to sing sweetly. The sage heard the sound of singing and his mind was surprised. He went to the place where the maiden with the beautiful face was. On seeing her, beautiful in all her limbs, he composed his mind. Knowing that she had come there to agitate him, he was filled with rage and intolerance. The great ascetic, the *maharshi*,<sup>24</sup> addressed her in these words. “O evil-minded one! O one who travels through the sky! You have come here to cause me unhappiness. By seeking to create an obstruction in the austerities, you have earned misery for yourself. You have been tainted by my rage and will be born in the race of birds for a period of sixteen years. O one who is vile in intelligence! You will give up your own form and assume the form of a bird. O worst among apsaras! You will have four sons. However, since you will be purified by a weapon and return to heaven again, you will not obtain any delight from them. Do not reply to me about what I have said about your residence.” His rage was irresistible and his eyes were red with anger. With her bangles tinkling and trembling, the proud lady heard these words. The brahmana abandoned the earth, with the trembling waters of the Ganga, and went to the Ganga in heaven, famous for the large number of qualities it possesses.’

## Chapter 2

Markandeya said, ‘Arishtanemi had a son named Garuda and he was the king of the birds. Garuda had a son who was famous as Sampati. His son was the brave Suparshva, who was as valiant as Vayu.<sup>26</sup> Suparshva’s son was Kunti and Kunti’s son was Pralolupa. He<sup>27</sup> had two sons, Kanka and Kandhara. On the summit of Kailasa, Kanka saw a *rakshasa*, famous by the name of Vidyudrupa. His eyes were like lotus petals and he was Dhanada’s<sup>28</sup> follower. He was drinking and was attired in sparkling garlands and garments. With his wife, he was seated on a clear and auspicious slab of stone. As soon as he saw Kanka, the rakshasa was filled with rage. He said, “O worst among those born from an egg! Why have you come here? I am in my wife’s company. Why have you approached me? When a task has to be accomplished in private, this is not the dharma an extremely intelligent person should follow.” Kanka replied, “This Indra among mountains is common and belongs to me as much as it belongs to you, and to other creatures too. What ownership can you claim over it?” While Kanka was speaking in this way, the rakshasa severed him with a sword. He looked terrible, blood issuing from the wounds, writhing and unconscious. Hearing that Kanka had been killed, Kandhara became senseless with rage. The king of the birds made up his mind to quickly kill Vidyudrupa. He went to the summit of the mountain, where the slain Kanka was. There, the roamer of the skies performed the funeral rites for his elder brother. His eyes dilated in rage and intolerance and he sighed like an Indra among serpents. He went to the place where the rakshasa, his brother’s killer, was. Because of the wind raised by his wings, the large and excellent mountains started to tremble. His eyes were blood-red and his force flung aside the nets of clouds. The mountains suffered from the beating of his wings. He was one

who could make the enemy lie down in an instant. He saw the roamer in the night, <sup>29</sup> with his mind attached to the idea of drinking. His face and eyes were coppery red and he was lying down on a golden couch. His head was adorned with garlands and he was smeared with reddish-brown sandalwood paste. Inside his mouth, his teeth looked terrible, like the inside of a *ketaki* flower. <sup>30</sup> He saw his large-eyed wife, named Madanika, seated on his left thigh, with a voice that was as melodious as that of a male cuckoo.

Overwhelmed with anger, Kandhara spoke to the one who was in that cave. “O extremely evil-minded one! Come and fight with me. You killed my elder brother when he trusted you. Killed by me today, you will go to the hells that are meant for people who violate trust and those who are the killers of women and children.” The Indra among the birds spoke to the rakshasa in this way, in his wife’s presence. Filled with rage, he replied to the bird. “I have displayed my manliness by killing your brother. O traveller in the sky! Using this sword, I will kill you today. O worst among birds! Remain here for a while. You will not be able to leave with your life.”

Saying this, he seized his sparkling sword, which was like a mass of collyrium. There was an unmatched battle between the king of the birds and the servant of the lord of the *yakshas*, <sup>31</sup> like that between Garuda and Shakra. <sup>32</sup> Angry, the rakshasa powerfully hurled his sword, which possessed the complexion of burnt coal, towards the Indra among the birds and struck him. The Indra among the birds leapt up a little from the ground and seized the sword in his beak, the way Garuda seizes a serpent. The one born from an egg shook it between his beak and talons and broke it. When the sword was broken, a hand-to-hand combat commenced. The king of the birds attacked the rakshasa on his chest and swiftly severed his hands, feet and head. When he was slain, his wife sought refuge with the bird. Scared a bit, she said, “I will be your wife.” Taking her with him, the best among the birds again returned to his own house. With Vidyudrupa having been killed, there was atonement for his brother’s death. Menaka’s daughter <sup>33</sup> possessed beautiful eyebrows and could assume any form at will. Having gone to Kandhara’s residence, she assumed the form of a bird. There, she gave birth to a daughter named Tarkshi. The excellent apsara named Vapu had been

touched by the fire of the sage's curse. Hence, the bird gave her the name of Tarkshi.<sup>34</sup>

‘Mandapala had four extremely intelligent sons. They were excellent brahmanas. Jaritari was the eldest and Drona was the youngest. The youngest had dharma in his soul and was accomplished in the Vedas and the Vedangas.<sup>35</sup> With Kandhara's permission, he married the beautiful Tarkshi. After some time, Tarkshi conceived. When the conception was seven fortnights old, she went to Kurukshetra. The extremely terrible battle between the Kurus and the Pandavas was going on then. With destiny determining her movements, she entered amidst the chariots. She witnessed the battle between all the kings on earth there. There were terrible showers of arrows, spears and swords, like that in the battle between the gods and the *asuras*. She saw the battle between Bhagadatta and Kiriti there.<sup>36</sup> The sky was covered with an incessant shower of arrows, as if by locusts. From Partha's<sup>37</sup> bow, a broad-headed arrow was released with great force, as dark as a serpent, and it pierced the skin of her stomach. When her side was pierced, four eggs with the complexion of the moon fell down on the ground. However, since their lifespans had not yet been exhausted, it was as if they had fallen down on a mass of cotton. There was a giant bell around the neck of Supratika, the excellent elephant.<sup>38</sup> At the same time, an arrow severed its bonds and it fell down. Severed, it fell down on the ground and evenly covered the eggs of the bird, which were lying down on the flesh.<sup>39</sup> After King Bhagadatta, lord of men, was killed, the battle between the Kuru and Pandava soldiers went on for many days. When the war was over, Dharma's son<sup>40</sup> went to Bhishma, Shantanu's son, to hear the great-souled one speak extensively on dharma.<sup>41</sup> O best among brahmanas! A self-controlled one named Shamika arrived at the spot where the eggs were, under the bell. He heard the sound of chirping. Though they possessed supreme knowledge, since they were still infants, their voices were indistinct. With his disciples, the surprised rishi picked up the bell and saw the infants, without the support of a father or mother. On seeing them there, on the ground, Shamika, the illustrious sage, was filled with wonder. He told the brahmanas who were following him, “Shukra Ushanas saw that



afflicted by the gods, the *daitya* soldiers were intent on running away.<sup>42</sup> The foremost among brahmanas addressed them in the right words. ‘Do not run away. Return. O distressed ones! Why are you fleeing? Abandoning your fame and valour, where are you going? You will not die. Whether one perishes or whether one lives, the creator has already ordained how long one will live for, and that does not depend on what one’s mind wants. One person dies in his own home. Another person dies while he is running away. There are those who encounter their deaths when they are eating food or drinking water. Others are without disease, but die when they are indulging in passion, desire and lust. With their limbs not mangled by weapons, they come under the subjugation of the king of the dead.’<sup>43</sup> There are others who are devoted to austerities, but are conveyed to the king of the dead by his followers. Others are devoted to the practice of yoga, but they too have not attained immortality. Earlier, the wielder of the *vajra*<sup>44</sup> hurled his vajra towards Shambara. Though he was struck in the heart with this, the asura did not die. However, when the right time came, that very Indra struck the *danavas* with that very vajra and the daityas instantly headed towards their destruction.<sup>45</sup> Knowing this, you should not be terrified.’ At this, the daityas gave up their fear of death and returned. These best among birds have also made Shukra’s words come true. Despite having faced that superhuman battle, they did not die. O brahmanas! Who made the eggs fall? Who made the bell fall at the same time? Who caused this ground to be strewn with flesh, fat and blood? O brahmanas! Whoever they are, they aren’t ordinary birds. When destiny favours people, it shows them extremely good fortune.” Having said this, he glanced at them again and said, “When you return to the hermitage, take these young birds with you. Keep these birds, born from eggs, in a place where there is no fear from cats, rats, hawks or mongooses. O brahmanas! There is no point in taking excessive care. Depending on their own deeds, all beings are killed or saved. It is the same with these young birds. Nevertheless, in every kind of task, men must try. If a person exhibits manliness, we, the virtuous, praise him.” Urged in this way by the excellent sage, those sons of sages picked up those birds. The ascetic himself also returned to the beautiful hermitage,

with clusters of bees on the branches of the trees. As he wished, he collected wild roots, flowers, fruits and *kusha* grass. The excellent brahmana performed many virtuous rites sanctioned by the sacred texts in honour of the one who has the *chakra* as a weapon, <sup>46</sup> Rudra, <sup>47</sup> the creator, Indra of the gods, Vaivasvata, <sup>48</sup> Agni, <sup>49</sup> the lord of the waters, <sup>50</sup> the lord of speech, the protector of riches, <sup>51</sup> the god of the wind, Dhatri, <sup>52</sup> Vidhatri and the Vishvadevas.’

## Chapter 3

Markandeya said, ‘O Indra among brahmanas! From one day to another day, the excellent sage gave them food and water and protected and nurtured them. Within a single month, while the young sages looked on with tremulous eyes full of curiosity, they rose up into the path of the sun’s chariot. From there, the earth had the size of the wheel of a chariot and they saw it, with its cities, waterbodies and excellent rivers. After this, they returned to the hermitage. Those great-souled ones, not born from wombs, were exhausted in their minds and bodies. Because of their energy, their knowledge was manifested there. Out of compassion towards the disciples, the rishi <sup>53</sup> was speaking to them about the determination of dharma. All of them <sup>54</sup> circumambulated him and bowed down at his feet. They said, “O sage! We were saved by you from a terrible death. You have given us a home, food and water. You are our father and preceptor. Our mother died while we were still in the womb. Nor have we been protected by a father. You are the one who gave us life when we were infants and the one who protected us. O one whose energy does not decay! Like worms, we were drying up on the ground. You raised the elephant’s bell and removed our miseries. ‘How will these weak ones be reared? When will I see that they are well? When will I see them fly from the ground to a tree and from one tree to another? When will they flutter their wings and roam around near me? When will the dust they raise cover up my natural complexion?’ O father! As you protected us, you thought in this way. Having grown up, we have come before you now. Having become wise, what shall we do?” These words were polished and clearly articulated.

‘Surrounded by all his disciples, and with his son, Shringi, he <sup>55</sup> became filled with great curiosity. It was as if he was clad in a garment with erect

body hair. <sup>56</sup> He asked, “Tell me the truth. What is the reason that you are able to speak? Whose curse has led to this perversity in your form and speech? You should tell me about this.” The birds replied, “There used to be an excellent sage, known as Vipulasvat. He had two sons, Sukrishna and Tumburu. We are the four sons of the self-controlled Sukrishna. We were always humble, faithful and submissive in our behaviour towards that rishi. He was devoted to performing austerities and controlled his senses. Depending on his wishes, we undertook whatever was needed to be done for him. We brought kindling, flowers and everything else required for subsistence. We thus resided in the grove there. At that time, the lord of the gods <sup>57</sup> assumed the form of a bird and arrived there. He was gigantic in size and his wings were broken. He was old in age and his eyes were coppery red. He seemed scared. The rishi possessed truth, purity, forgiveness, character, intelligence and generosity of mind. It was as if he wanted to test the best among rishis and curse us. The bird <sup>58</sup> said, ‘O Indra among brahmanas! I am overwhelmed by hunger. You should save me. I have come to you for food. O immensely fortunate one! Be an unmatched refuge for me. I was on the summit of Vindhya and was flung down by a gust of wind generated from the bird’s wing. <sup>59</sup> O immensely fortunate one! I fell down. I lost my senses and lay down on the ground for one week, having lost my memory. I remained there and regained my senses on the eighth day. Having regained my consciousness, I am filled with hunger and have come to you for refuge. I have lost all joy and desire to eat. My mind is afflicted. O one with a sparkling intelligence! Turn your unwavering intelligence towards the task of saving me. O brahmana rishi! Give me food to eat. I am unable to remain alive.’ Thus addressed, he replied to Indra, who was in the form of a bird. ‘For the sake of saving your life, I will give you the food that you desire.’ Having said this, the excellent brahmana spoke again. ‘What kind of food will I devise for you?’ He replied, ‘I obtain great satisfaction from the flesh of men.’ The rishi responded, ‘O one born from an egg! Your childhood has passed and so has your youth. Indeed, you are ripe in age now. At this time, all desires cease among men. Despite being aged in appearance, why are you so exceedingly cruel? Now that you

are in the last stage of your life, why do you wish to eat human flesh? Those who are wicked in sentiments should never be given a chance to oppress. Or perhaps, what is the need for me to say anything? One must always give what has been promised. That is the way we think.’ Having said this, the Indra among brahmanas made up his mind. He quickly summoned us and praised our qualities. All of us stood there humbly, our hands faithfully joined in salutation. With a distressed heart, the sage spoke these extremely cruel words. ‘O best among brahmanas! <sup>60</sup> Free me and yourselves from the debt. O brahmanas! You are the best among my offspring and you are just like me. If you are of the view that I am your revered preceptor and your excellent father, then act in accordance with my words, without any deceit in your minds.’ While he spoke, all of us simultaneously honoured his words and responded, ‘What you tell us will certainly be done.’ The rishi said, ‘This bird is filled with hunger and thirst and has sought refuge with me. At least for some time, let him be satisfied with your flesh. Act quickly, so that his thirst is satisfied with your blood.’ At this, we were distressed and trembled in fear. We exclaimed, ‘O misery! O distress! This cannot be done by us. Which intelligent person will give up his own body for the sake of someone else’s body? If one destroys it, one not only destroys one’s own self, but one’s sons too. <sup>61</sup> A son repays the debts that are due to ancestors, gods and humans. <sup>62</sup> Notwithstanding this duty of a son, a son does not give up his body. Therefore, we will not do this, even if the ancients have practised it. If one is alive, one receives beneficial things. If one is alive, one can perform auspicious acts. When one dies, the body is destroyed and all dharma is extinguished. Therefore, those who know about dharma say that one must protect oneself in every possible way.’ Hearing our words, the sage blazed in rage. As if burning us down with his sight, he spoke to us again. ‘You will not act in accordance with the promise that I have made. Therefore, you will be scorched by my anger and will be born as inferior species.’ Having addressed us in this way, he spoke to the bird. ‘I will follow the sacred texts and perform my own funeral rites. O excellent among birds! After that, without any hesitation, eat me. I am offering my body to you as food. O foremost among those from the bird species! It is

said that a brahmana possesses the traits of being a brahmana as long as he follows the truth. A brahmana obtains great merit through protecting the truth, not through sacrifices, receiving *dakshina* <sup>63</sup> or performing other rites.’ Hearing the rishi’s words, Shakra, in the form of a bird, was filled with surprise. He replied to the sage, ‘O Indra among brahmanas! Resort to yoga and give up your own body. O Indra among brahmanas! I never eat a being who is still alive.’ Hearing his words, the sage immersed himself in yoga. Having ascertained his intentions, Shakra assumed his own form again. ‘O Indra among brahmanas! You possess intelligence and you have used your intelligence to understand what must be understood. O unblemished one! With a desire to test you, I have committed this crime against you. O one with unblemished intelligence! Pardon me, or do whatever you desire. Since you sought to protect the truth of your words, I am extremely pleased with you. From today, you will possess a knowledge that is like that of Indra’s. There will be no obstruction in the path of your austerities and dharma.’ Having said this, Shakra departed, but our father, the great sage, was still full of anger. We bowed our heads down before him and said, ‘O father! O immensely intelligent one! We were terrified of dying. We are distressed. You should pardon us. We love our lives. We are devoted to something one should not be attached to—this mass of skin, bones and flesh, filled with pus and blood. O immensely fortunate one! We have heard how people are confounded by desire and anger and come under the strong subjugation of these sins. Wisdom is like a rampart and the bones are like giant pillars. The skin is like a large fortification that is plastered with flesh and blood. With sinews on every side and nine gates, it can make great efforts. <sup>64</sup> King Purusha, the possessor of consciousness, resides there. However, the two ministers, intelligence and the mind, act in opposite directions. Taking each other to be the enemy, they seek to destroy each other. There are four enemies who seek the king’s destruction—desire, anger, greed and confusion as the last enemy. When the king closes those nine gates, his forces are well-protected and there is no reason for fear. As long as there is no attachment, the enemy cannot overcome him. However, when the gates are open, he releases the enemy known as attachment, which



then attacks the gates formed by the eyes. It courses everywhere and enters through five gates. <sup>65</sup> Following that path, three terrible enemies enter. <sup>66</sup> Entering through the gates known as the organs of sense, attachment forms an alliance with mind and the others. It becomes extremely difficult to bring the senses and the mind under subjugation. Having conquered the gates, it <sup>67</sup> destroys the ramparts. On seeing that the mind has been vanquished, the intelligence is instantly destroyed. He <sup>68</sup> is deprived of advisers. The citizens abandon him. The enemies search out weaknesses and the king desires to destroy himself. Attachment, confusion, greed and anger act in this way. They rage among evil-souled ones and destroy the memories of men. Anger results from attachment. Anger gives rise to greed. Confusion results from greed. Destruction of memory results from confusion. When memory is destroyed, intelligence is destroyed. <sup>69</sup> When intelligence is destroyed, the being is destroyed. In this way, when intelligence is destroyed, attachment and greed follow. We were greedy to remain alive. O excellent one! Show us your favours. O illustrious one! You have cursed us. Let it not work quite like that. O supreme among sages! Let us not proceed along the miserable path of darkness.’ <sup>70</sup> The rishi replied, ‘What I have said can never be false. O sons! Till today, none of my words have ever been rendered false. Shame on futile manliness. I think that destiny alone is supreme. Because of its strength, without thinking, I have done what should not have been done. However, you bowed down before me and sought my favours. Therefore, even though you are born as inferior species, you will possess supreme knowledge. Knowledge will show you your paths and your miseries and sins will be cleansed. Your doubts will be dispelled because of my favours and you will obtain supreme success.’ In earlier times, under the subjugation of destiny, our illustrious father cursed us in this way. We have been born as this inferior species for a long period of time. We were born in the midst of the battle and have been nurtured by you. O best among brahmanas! Thus it was that we became birds. In this world, there is no one who is not bound down by destiny. Every kind of being is moved by fate.” Hearing their words, the illustrious sage, the immensely fortunate Shamika, spoke these words to the brahmanas who were near him. “In your presence,

I said this earlier. O best among brahmanas! These are not ordinary birds. Since they did not die in the battle, they are superhuman.” With his permission, they went to the Vindhya, best among peaks and full of trees and creepers. The great-souled one was delighted and allowed them to leave. Those virtuous birds remain there, on that mountain, even today. They are engaged in austerities and studies there, having made their minds up to meditate. Those sons of a sage became birds and a best among sages took good care of them. They are there, in a deep part of that excellent mountain, where the waters are extremely sacred. Controlling their minds, they reside on Vindhya’s slopes.’

## Chapter 4

Markandeya said, ‘The birds, Drona’s sons, became learned in this way. They reside on Mount Vindhya. Go and ask them.’

Hearing the rishi Markandeya’s words, Jaimini went to the summit of Vindhya, where those virtuous birds dwelt. Approaching the place, he heard the sound of something being read. On hearing this, Jaimini was astounded and started to think. ‘This is a beautiful spot. Without any breaks, they have controlled their breathing. These excellent birds <sup>71</sup> are reciting clearly, without any faults. These sons of the sage have now been born as a different species and I think it is wonderful that Sarsavati <sup>72</sup> has not abandoned them. The large number of relatives and friends, and everyone else who is cherished at home—all these can abandon a person and go away. But Sarasvati does not go away.’ Thinking this, he entered the cavern in the mountain. Having entered, he saw those birds on a slab in the mountain. He saw that they were reading, their faces devoid of any blemishes. Overcoming both joy and sorrow, <sup>73</sup> he addressed all of them. ‘O best among birds! May you be fortunate. Know me to be Jaimini. I am Vyasa’s disciple and have come here, eager to see you. Do not be angry. Indeed, because your father was angry, you were cursed and obtained this state of being birds. But everything is driven by destiny. In a family that was wealthy and possessed many objects, some spirited people were born. When those objects were destroyed, those Indras among brahmanas were comforted by a Shabara. <sup>74</sup> Having given to others, some men subsequently become beggars. Having killed, some are themselves subsequently killed. Having brought others down, some are themselves subsequently brought down. Austerities are destroyed in this way. I have myself witnessed many such contrary indications. The universe is agitated by the dust of existence

and non-existence. Thinking these things in your minds, you should not grieve. The fruit of knowledge is an ability to be indifferent to joy and misery.’ At this, all of them worshipped Jaimini with *padya* and *arghya*.<sup>75</sup> Asking about his welfare, they prostrated themselves before the great sage.

Vyasa’s disciple, the store of austerities, seated himself comfortably. The birds fanned him with their wings and removed his exhaustion. The birds then said, ‘We have lived good lives and our births have become successful today. We have seen your lotus feet, worshipped even by the gods. The fire resulting from our father’s anger rages in our bodies. O brahmana! However, the sight of you is like water that has quenched it. O brahmana! We hope that all the animals, birds, trees, creepers, shrubs, groves of bark and grass in your hermitage are well. Or perhaps by asking this, we have shown disrespect towards you. How can those who are with you not be well? Show us your favours and tell us the reason why you have come here. Your arrival is wonderful. It is like a companionship with the gods. What great good fortune has brought you into our range of vision?’

Jaimini replied, ‘O tigers among brahmanas! Listen to the reason behind my coming to this beautiful cavern in Vindhya, sprinkled with drops of water from the Reva.’<sup>76</sup> I had some doubts about the sacred text of Bharata.<sup>77</sup> To ask about those, I first went to the great-souled Markandeya, the extender of the Bhrigu lineage. Despite asking him, I could not dispel my doubts about Bharata. When I asked him, he said, “The great-souled sons of Drona reside in the great mountain of Vindhya. They will tell you about the meaning in detail.” Urged by his words, I have come to this great mountain. Hear about everything from me. You should then explain it to me.’

The birds said, ‘If it is a subject we know about, we will make you hear it, without hesitation. Why will we not tell you what is within the purview of our intelligence? O supreme among brahmanas! The four Vedas, the Dharmashastras, all the Angas<sup>78</sup> and everything that is in conformity with the Vedas is within the range of our intelligence. However, despite this, we can’t quite promise you. Therefore, without any hesitation, tell us about the doubts in the Bharata. O one who knows about dharma! We will tell you. Otherwise, there will be confusion.’

Jaimini replied, ‘O ones without blemish! Hear about the subjects in Bharata that have led to my doubts. Having heard, you should explain them to me. Why did nirguna <sup>79</sup> Janardana assume a human form? Vasudeva is the support for everything. He is the cause behind all causes. How did Drupada’s daughter, Krishna, <sup>80</sup> alone become the wife of the five sons of Pandu? I have an extremely great doubt about this. The immensely strong Baladeva uses the plough as a weapon. How did he atone for the sin of killing a brahmana by going on a visit to the tirthas? Droupadi’s great-souled maharatha sons had the sons of Pandu as protectors. Like those without protectors, how could they have been killed even before they were married? These are all the doubts that I have about Bharata. Explain all these to me. Having attained my objective, I will then happily return to my own hermitage.’

The birds said, ‘We bow down to the immensely powerful Vishnu, the lord of the gods, the immeasurable being, the eternal and undecaying one, the one who exists in four forms, <sup>81</sup> the one who possesses the three gunas, <sup>82</sup> but is also devoid of gunas, the supreme, the greatest, the one who deserves to be worshipped, the one who is immortal, the one who is smaller than the minutest, the one who is greater than the greatest, the one who pervades the universe, the one without a beginning, the one who is the beginning of the universe, the one who represents appearance and disappearance, the one who possesses the attributes of being seen and not being seen, the one who is spoken of as the creator, the preserver and the destroyer; we meditate on and bow down to Brahma, the original god, the one who purifies the three worlds <sup>83</sup> by uttering the Rig and Sama hymns through his mouth; and we bow down before Ishana, who with a single arrow, destroyed the large number of asuras, who were creating obstructions to sacrifices. <sup>84</sup> We will completely explain the views of Vyasa, the performer of extraordinary deeds. For the sake of dharma and other objectives, he is the one who made Bharata manifest. The sages who know about the truth refer to water as Nara. Because that was his place of refuge earlier, he is known as Narayana. <sup>85</sup> The illustrious lord and god, Narayana, pervades everything. O brahmana! He is established in four forms. He is

both *saguna* and *nirguna*.<sup>86</sup> One of his forms cannot be discerned. Those who are learned perceive it as white. Those who are supremely devoted to yoga see this form as one whose limbs are covered in garlands of flames. It is far and it is near. It has to be known as something that is beyond *gunas*. It is known as Vasudeva and it can be seen when one is devoid of any sense of ego. Its form and complexion are not real, but are fashioned out of one's imagination. Its existence is always pure, established in an extremely consecrated way. The second form of Shesha<sup>87</sup> holds up the earth on its hood, from below. It is spoken of as being characterized by *tamas*<sup>88</sup> and is one where there has been the use of an inferior species. The third form is devoted to the nurturing of subjects and acts accordingly. It should be known as one that is immersed in *sattva*. It is one that establishes *dharma*. The fourth form lies down in the water, using a serpent as a couch. Using the *guna* of *rajas*, it always indulges in creation. Hari's third form is always devoted to protecting subjects. In this form, he always establishes *dharma* on earth. He also slays the *asuras*, the destroyers of *dharma*, when they arise. Devoted to protecting *dharma*, he saves the gods and other virtuous people. O Jaimini! Whenever there is a decline in *dharma* and a rise in *adharma*, he creates himself.<sup>89</sup> Earlier, assuming the form of a boar,<sup>90</sup> he parted the water with his snout and like a lotus, raised up the earth on a single tusk. Assuming the form of Narasimha,<sup>91</sup> he killed Hiranyakashipu and brought down other *danavas*, with *Viprachitti* at the forefront. There are *vamana*<sup>92</sup> and other incarnations we are not interested in enumerating. His latest *avatara* was the one in Mathura.<sup>93</sup> When he descends in a form that is full of *sattva*, he is known as Pradyumna and is engaged in the task of preservation. Depending on his wishes, Vasudeva always assumes divine, human and subhuman forms and thus accepts their corresponding natures. You have been told what the lord did, the tasks that needed to be accomplished. Next, listen to us again, about how Vishnu assumed a human form.'



## Chapter 5

The birds said, ‘O brahmana! In earlier times, when Indra killed Tvashta’s son, he was overwhelmed by the sin of killing a brahmana and his energy suffered greatly.<sup>94</sup> Because of his wicked conduct, Shakra’s energy entered Dharma. With his energy having left for Dharma, Shakra lost all his energy. Hearing that his son had been killed, Prajapati<sup>95</sup> Tvashta was enraged. He tore off a lock of his hair and uttered these words. “Today, let the three worlds and the gods witness my valour. Let the evil-minded chastiser of Paka, the slayer of a brahmana, also witness it. When my son was engaged in his own tasks, he brought him down.” His eyes were red with rage. Saying this, he offered that lock of hair as an oblation into the fire. The great asura Vritra arose, garlanded in flames. He was gigantic in size. His teeth were large and his complexion was like that of a mass of collyrium. Invigorated by Tvashta’s energy, Indra’s enemy was immeasurable in his soul. From one day to another day, the immensely strong one grew by the length of a bow. Shakra saw that the great asura, Vritra, was meant for his destruction. Afflicted by fear, he dispatched the *saptarshis*<sup>96</sup> to bring about an alliance. The rishis were engaged in the welfare of all creatures. Hence, happy in their minds, they brought about an agreement between him and Vritra. However, though the agreement existed, Shakra violated it and killed him. The sin of Vritra’s death diminished his strength. That strength was dislodged from Indra’s body and entered the air, the divinity of strength, who pervades everything, even though he cannot be seen. After this, the Indra of the gods assumed Goutama’s form and violated Ahalya.<sup>97</sup> At this, his beauty vanished. The beauty of the limbs and divisions of his body were extremely captivating, but it abandoned the wicked Indra of the gods and went to the Nasatyas.<sup>98</sup> The lord of the gods was deprived of dharma and

energy. He lost his strength and beauty. Knowing this, the daityas sought to vanquish him. O great sage! Desiring to defeat Indra of the gods, the extremely strong daityas were born in the lineages of noble and prominent kings. On one such occasion, the earth suffered because of her burdens and went to the summit of Mount Meru, where the residents of heaven were. Suffering because of the burden, she told them that the cause of her hardship was the sons of Danu and the daityas. “These asuras, extensive in their energy, have been slain by you. But all of them have been born in the world of humans, in the houses of kings. There are many *akshouhinis*.<sup>99</sup> Suffering from the burden, I am sinking downwards. O gods! Therefore, act so that I can obtain peace.” Using parts of their energy, the gods thus descended from heaven to earth, for the sake of ensuring the welfare of subjects and removing the earth’s burden. There was the energy that had been released from Indra’s body. Using this, Dharma was himself born through Kunti, as the greatly energetic King Yudhishtira. Pavana<sup>100</sup> released his strength and gave birth to Bhima. Partha Dhananjaya was born from Shakra’s energy. The two extremely radiant twins,<sup>101</sup> who were like Shakra in form, were born through Madri. The illustrious Shatakratu thus descended in five forms.<sup>102</sup> His immensely fortunate wife, Krishna,<sup>103</sup> was born from the fire. Krishna was only Shakra’s wife and not that of anyone else. The lords of yoga can assume many different bodies. You have thus been told how five came to have a single wife. Now hear about why Baladeva went to the Sarasvati.’

## Chapter 6

The birds said, ‘Knowing that Krishna was extremely affectionate towards Partha, Rama, <sup>104</sup> the wielder of the plough, thought a lot. “What will bring about benefit? Without Krishna, I cannot go to Duryodhana’s side. How can I side with the Pandavas and bring down King Duryodhana? The lord of men is my disciple and my son-in-law. <sup>105</sup> Therefore, I will go neither to Partha, nor to King Duryodhana. Thus, until the destruction of the Kurus and the Pandavas takes place, I will be content within my own self and bathe in the waters of the tirthas.” Taking leave of Krishna, Partha and Duryodhana, and surrounded by his own soldiers, Shouri <sup>106</sup> went to Dvaraka. Rama went to Dvaravati, <sup>107</sup> which was full of happy and healthy people. On the next day, the wielder of the plough was going to travel to the tirthas. Therefore, he started to drink. Holding the beautiful Revati, who was like an apsara, by the hand, he went to the prosperous garden of Raivata. Amidst that cluster of women, since he was intoxicated, he stumbled as he walked. The brave one saw a beautiful and excellent grove, filled with flowers and fruits from every season. The place was populated by monkeys. The large forest was filled with lakes and there were clumps of auspicious lotuses. He heard many auspicious and intoxicating sounds that were pleasant to hear. Those beautiful and sweet sounds were uttered through the mouths of birds and entered his ears. There were burdens of fruits from every season. There were blazing flowers from every season. He saw the trees there, resounding with the calls of birds. There were mangoes, *amratakas*, <sup>108</sup> *bhavyas*, <sup>109</sup> coconuts, *tindukas*, <sup>110</sup> *abilvakas*, <sup>111</sup> cumin, pomegranates, *bijapurakas*, <sup>112</sup> jackfruit, *lakuchas*, <sup>113</sup> plantain trees, extremely beautiful *nipas*, <sup>114</sup> *paravatas*, <sup>115</sup> *kankolas*, <sup>116</sup> *nalinas*, <sup>117</sup> *amlavetasas*, <sup>118</sup> *bhallatakas*, <sup>119</sup> *amalakas*, <sup>120</sup> *tindukas* with large fruit,

*ingudas*,<sup>121</sup> *karamardakas*,<sup>122</sup> *haritakas* and *vibhitakas*. The descendant of the Yadu lineage saw these and other trees—*ashoka*,<sup>123</sup> *punnaga*,<sup>124</sup> *ketaki*,<sup>125</sup> *bakula*,<sup>126</sup> *champak*,<sup>127</sup> *saptaparna*,<sup>128</sup> *karnikara*,<sup>129</sup> *malati*,<sup>130</sup> *parijata*,<sup>131</sup> *kovidara*,<sup>132</sup> *mandara*, *badari*,<sup>133</sup> blossoming *patalas*,<sup>134</sup> beautiful *devadaru* trees,<sup>135</sup> *sala*,<sup>136</sup> *tala*,<sup>137</sup> *tamala*,<sup>138</sup> *kimshuka*<sup>139</sup> and excellent *vanjula*.<sup>140</sup> He heard the sweet callings, pleasant to the ears, of many kinds of birds that were present there—*chakoras*,<sup>141</sup> *shatapatras*,<sup>142</sup> *bhringarajas*,<sup>143</sup> parrots, cuckoos, *kalavinkas*,<sup>144</sup> *haritas*,<sup>145</sup> *jivajivakas*,<sup>146</sup> *priyaputras*<sup>147</sup> and *chatakas*.<sup>148</sup> There were lakes with sparkling waters, pleasing to the mind, with water lilies, lotuses, auspicious blue water lilies, white water lilies and lotuses in every direction.<sup>149</sup> In every direction, the place was populated by *kadambas*, *chakravakas*, waterfowl, *karandavas*, *plavas*, swans, tortoises, *madgus* and many other aquatic creatures.<sup>150</sup> As he progressively passed through this beautiful forest, Shouri looked at it and then, followed by the women, entered an excellent residence made out of creepers. He saw brahmanas who were accomplished in the Vedas and the Vedangas there—from the lineages of Koushika, Bhargava, Bharadvaja and Goutama. There were other excellent brahmanas, born from many kinds of lineages. Seated there, the great ones were attentively listening to what was being said. They were seated on spreads of shining kusha grass and their upper garments were made out of black antelope skin. In their midst, Suta was telling them about auspicious accounts from the Puranas and about the conduct of the original gods and rishis. All the brahmanas saw Rama, whose eyes were as red as the rising sun because he had been drinking liquor. Realizing that the wielder of the plough was intoxicated, with the exception of the descendant of the suta lineage, all of them quickly arose and honoured him. At this, the immensely strong wielder of the plough became angry. Dilating his eyes, the one who had killed a large number of danavas, slew him. When Suta had been brought down, all the brahmanas, clad in black antelope skin, left the forest, chanting the name of the *brahman*. The wielder of the plough took himself to be unclean.<sup>151</sup> He thought, “I have committed an extremely great sin. I have brought down Suta, who has left for Brahma’s world. Therefore, all these brahmanas have

glanced towards me and have departed. There is an unpleasant smell on my body and it is like that of blood. I understand that I am as reviled as a person who kills a brahmana. Shame on my intolerance, the drink, my great pride and rashness. Overwhelmed by these, I have committed this great sin. To atone for it, I will observe a vow for twelve years. As supreme atonement, I will myself speak about what I have done. Therefore, I will now start on a visit to the tirthas. I will leave for Pratiloma <sup>152</sup> Sarasvati.” Hence Rama went to Pratiloma Sarasvati. After this, listen to the account of the Pandaveyas.’ <sup>153</sup>

## Chapter 7

The birds who followed dharma said, ‘In earlier times, in treta yuga, <sup>154</sup> there was a royal sage named Harishchandra. He had dharma in his soul and protected the earth. His excellent fame glittered. There was no famine or disease. Men did not die before their appointed time. As long as he ruled as the king, citizens were not prone to acts of adharma. They were not intoxicated and insolent because of their riches, valour or austerities. Until she had attained youth, no woman gave birth to a child.

‘Once, the mighty-armed one was pursuing a deer in the forest. He heard the sound of some women crying, “Save us.” Abandoning the deer, the king exclaimed, “Do not fear. When I rule, which evil-minded person is performing a wicked act?” He headed in the direction of the cries. The terrible Vighnaraj <sup>155</sup> is one who creates impediments for every kind of initiative. At that time, he thought, “The valiant Vishvamitra has resorted to unmatched austerities. He is undertaking vows so that he can obtain success in acquiring the knowledge of Bhava <sup>156</sup> and others, not mastered by anyone earlier. He is observing forgiveness, silence and control over his intelligence, striving for success. Afflicted by fear, those different kinds of learning are screaming. What shall I do now? The best among the Koushika lineage <sup>157</sup> is energetic and we are extremely weak. They are scared and are shrieking. It seems to me that this is extremely difficult to overcome. In addition, the king has arrived here and is repeatedly exclaiming, ‘Do not be scared.’ I will quickly enter his body and accomplish what I wish.” The terrible Vighnaraj thought this. Permeated by him, the king angrily spoke these words. “Who is this wicked man who has tied up a fire at the end of his garment? <sup>158</sup> I am the master, blazing in my strength and energy, and I am present. The arrows released from my bow will light up the ends of the

directions. Whose limbs will they mangle and who will enter a long period of sleep?” Hearing the king’s words, Vishvamitra became angry. When the rishi was enraged, all those different kinds of learning instantly disappeared. The king saw Vishvamitra, a store of austerities. Suddenly scared, he trembled, like an *ashvattha* <sup>159</sup> leaf. The sage said, “O evil-souled person! Remain here.” Humbly, the king prostrated himself and replied, “O illustrious one! This is my dharma. O lord! Do not find fault with me. O sage! You should not be angry with me. I have been engaged in following my own dharma. Lords of the earth who know about dharma must donate and protect. Following the sacred texts of dharma, he must raise his bow and fight.” Vishvamitra asked, “O king! Whom must you give to? Whom must you protect? If you are scared of dharma, quickly tell me this.” Harishchandra replied, “One must give to the best of brahmanas and others whose means of subsistence is suffering. Those who are scared must always be protected. One must fight against those who cause obstructions.” Vishvamitra said, “If you are a king who places the dharma of kings at the forefront, I am a brahmana. I desire something. Give me the dakshina I wish for.” Hearing these words, the core of the king’s heart was delighted. He thought that he had been born again and spoke to Koushika. “O illustrious one! Without any hesitation, tell me what I should give you. Even if it is extremely difficult to obtain, I must give it to you—silver, gold, a son, a daughter, my body, my life, the kingdom, the city, prosperity, or anything else that you might desire.” Vishvamitra said, “O king! The gift that you have given has been accepted by me. However, you must first give me the dakshina for the royal sacrifice.” Harishchandra replied, “O brahmana! I will give you that dakshina. O tiger among brahmanas! Tell me what you desire.” Vishvamitra said, “O brave one! This earth, with its oceans, land, villages, habitations and your entire kingdom with its chariots, horses, elephants, treasures and every other kind of wealth that you possess. O unblemished one! Your wife, your son and your own body are the only things that are exempted. O one who knows about all kinds of dharma! Your dharma follows you wherever you go. <sup>160</sup> There is no need to speak a lot. Give me all of this.” Showing no agitation on his face, the king



heard the rishi's words. With a delighted mind, he joined his hands in salutation and said that he agreed. Vishvamitra said, "O royal sage! You have given me the kingdom, the land, the army and the riches. If the kingdom has been vested in an ascetic like me, who is its lord now?" Harishchandra replied, "O brahmana! Since the time I handed over the kingdom to you, you are the lord. Who else can be the king now?" Vishvamitra said, "If you have given me your kingdom and the entire earth and if I am the lord of this dominion, then you should leave it. Unfasten your belt <sup>161</sup> and free yourself of all these ornaments. With your wife and your son, only wear the bark of trees." The king agreed to what he had said and got ready to leave, with his wife, Shaibya, and his infant son.

'However, as he was about to leave, he <sup>162</sup> obstructed the path and addressed the king. "Without having given me the dakshina for the royal sacrifice, where are you going?" Harishchandra replied, "O illustrious one! I have conferred the kingdom on you, bereft of thorns. O brahmana! It is only these three bodies that are left with me now." Vishvamitra said, "Nevertheless, you must give me the dakshina for the sacrifice. In particular, if a pledge made to brahmanas is not kept, this leads to destruction. O king! Until brahmanas are satiated at a royal sacrifice, until then, the dakshina of royal sacrifices must continue to be given to them. You have promised to give, fight against assassins and protect the afflicted. You have already pledged this." Harishchandra replied, "O illustrious one! I have nothing to give you now. I will give it to you in the course of time. O brahmana rishi! Think about virtuous behaviour and show me your favours." Vishvamitra asked, "O lord of men! How long will I have to wait for? Tell me quickly, so that the fire of my curse does not burn you down." Harishchandra replied, "O brahmana rishi! I will give you the riches for the dakshina within a month. I have no wealth to give now. Therefore, you should grant me permission to leave." Vishvamitra said, "Go. O best among kings! Go and protect your own dharma. May you be fortunate and let there be no obstructions along the route." Having obtained permission, the lord of the earth left. His beloved did not deserve to walk on foot, but followed him. With his wife and son, the best among kings emerged from the city. On

seeing this, all the citizens cried out and followed the king. “O protector! Alas! Why are you abandoning us? We are always afflicted and oppressed. O king! You have always been devoted to dharma and have shown your favours towards the citizens. O royal sage! If you follow dharma, take us too. O Indra among kings! Stay for an instant, while, like bees, our eyes drink in your lotus face. When will we see you again? When you proceeded, kings advanced in front and at the rear. Holding your infant son, your wife is following you now. When you proceeded, servants astride elephants used to advance in front of you. That Harishchandra, Indra among kings, is proceeding on foot now. Alas! O king! You are delicate. Your face has excellent eyebrows, excellent skin and a peaked nose. What will happen to it, when it suffers from the dust along the road? Wait. O best among kings! Wait. Follow your own dharma. Non-violence is supreme dharma, especially among *kshatriyas*.<sup>163</sup> O protector! What will we do with wives, sons, riches and grain? Giving up all this, we will be like your shadows. O protector! Alas! O great king! Alas! O lord! Alas! Why are you forsaking us? We will be wherever you are. Happiness is wherever you are. The city is where you are. Heaven is where our king is.” Hearing these words of the citizens, the king was overwhelmed with sorrow. Overcome by compassion towards them, he stood on the road.

‘Vishvamitra saw that he was disturbed by the words of the citizens. His eyes dilated in rage and intolerance. He approached and spoke these words. “Shame on you. You are wicked in conduct. You have spoken false and deceitful words. Having conferred the kingdom on me, you wish to take it back again.” Addressed in these harsh words, the distressed king said, “We are going.” Saying this, he left swiftly, dragging his beloved by the hand. His wife was being dragged in this way and was exhausted and miserable. Koushika suddenly struck her with a wooden staff. Seeing that she was struck in this way, King Harishchandra was wretched and miserable. He said, “I am going,” and said nothing else. Filled with compassion, five Vishvadevas<sup>164</sup> said, “How will this extremely wicked Vishvamitra easily obtain any worlds? He has uprooted the best among those who sacrifice from his own kingdom. Who will faithfully ensure the purification of *soma*

plant at great sacrifices, to the accompaniment of mantras, so that we can drink it and obtain delight?” Hearing their words, Koushika became extremely angry. He cursed them, “All of you will become humans.” When they placated him, the great sage again said, “Though you will be humans, you will not have any offspring. You will not have any wives, nor will you suffer from jealousy. You will be free of desire and anger and you will become gods again.” Portions of those gods were born in the home of the Kurus. Those were the five descendants of the Pandu lineage who were born from Droupadi’s womb. Because of this reason, the five maharatha Pandaveyas did not have any wives. This was the result of the great sage’s curse. Everything about the account of the Pandaveyas has thus been described to you. Answers to your four questions have been chanted. What else do you wish to hear?’

## Chapter 8

Jaimini asked, ‘In response to my questions, you have progressively described this. I have a great curiosity about Harishchandra’s account. Alas! The great-souled one suffered this great hardship. O best among birds! Did he ever regain his former happiness?’

The birds replied, ‘Hearing Vishvamitra’s words, the miserable king proceeded slowly, followed by his wife, Shaibya, and his young son. The lord of the earth went to the divine city of Varanasi. Since this had been created by the wielder of the trident, <sup>165</sup> it was not meant to be enjoyed by humans. Followed by his wife, he advanced miserably on foot. As he was about to enter, he saw Vishvamitra present there. Seeing that he had arrived, he bowed down in humility. Joining his hands in salutation, Harishchandra spoke to the great sage. “O sage! My life, my wife and my son—out of these, quickly accept whichever is the best arghya for you. Grant me permission to undertake whatever else I must do.” Vishvamitra replied, “O royal sage! A month has elapsed. If you remember your own words at the time of the *rajasuya* sacrifice, give me my dakshina.” Harishchandra said, “O brahmana! O store of austerities that do not fade away! The month will be completed today. Wait for half a day. You won’t have to wait for a long time.” Vishvamitra replied, “O great king! So be it. I will come again and I will curse you if you do not give it to me today.” Having said this, the brahmana left.

‘Then, the king started to think. “How will I give him the promised dakshina? Where do I have prosperous friends? Where can I get the wealth now? Tainted by the sin of receiving, <sup>166</sup> how can I prevent my downfall? I have nothing. Which direction will I go to? Shall I give up my life? If I am destroyed without giving what I have pledged, I will commit the sin of

stealing a brahmana's possessions and become a worm, the worst among the worst. It may be better to sell myself into servitude." Distressed and anxious, the king reflected, his face cast downwards. With her voice choking with tears, his wife replied. "O great king! Give up these thoughts and protect the pledge you have yourself given. Like a cremation ground, a man separated from the truth must be shunned. O tiger among men! For men, it is said that there is no dharma superior to that of protecting a pledge one has oneself made. If a person's words become futile, his *agnihotra*,<sup>167</sup> studies, donations, rites and everything else bear no fruit. Those with knowledge about texts of dharma say that truth always leads to salvation and untruth leads to the downfall of those who have not cleansed their *atmans*. O king! In addition to seven horse sacrifices, you have performed a rajasuya sacrifice. Because you do not fulfil a single pledge, will you be dislodged from those deeds and heaven? O king! I have had offspring."<sup>168</sup> Having said this, she wept and tears started to flow from her eyes. King Harishchandra said, "O fortunate one! Free yourself from this torment. The child is here. O one with the gait of an elephant! You should speak what you wish to say." The wife continued, "O king! I have had a son. The virtuous have wives for the sake of sons. Sell me and obtain riches. Give that as dakshina to the brahmana." On hearing these words, the lord of the earth lost his senses. When he regained his senses, he was extremely miserable and lamented. "O fortunate one! I grieve greatly because of what you have said. Am I such a sinner that I have forgotten your sweet smiles? Alas! O one with the beautiful smiles! Alas! How were you capable of speaking like this? These are wicked words. How can I be capable of acting in accordance with these words?" Having uttered these words, the best among men exclaimed, "Shame! Shame on me!" He completely lost his senses and fell down on the ground. Seeing that King Harishchandra was lying down on the ground, the king's wife was filled with great sorrow and spoke in these piteous words. "O great king! Alas! The unthinkable has happened. Though you deserve to lie down on the hides of *ranku* deer,<sup>169</sup> you are lying down on the ground. My husband, the lord of the earth, donated crores of cattle and wealth to brahmanas. Such a person is lying

down on the ground. What great misery! O god! What has this king done? He is the equal of Indra and Upendra. <sup>170</sup> Yet, like a sinner, he has been reduced to this state.” Saying this, the one with the excellent hips lost her senses and fell down. She suffered because the great burden of her husband’s misery was intolerable to her. The child was without a protector and saw that his parents had fallen down on the ground. He suffered because of his great hunger. Grieving greatly, he spoke these words. “O father! Give me food. O father! O mother! Give me food. O mother! My hunger is extremely strong and the tip of my tongue is drying up.” At this time, the great ascetic, Vishvamitra arrived there.

‘He was as angry as the Destroyer and had arrived there to collect the wealth. He saw that Harishchandra was lying down on the ground, senseless. He revived the king by sprinkling water on him and spoke to him. “Arise! O Indra among kings! Arise! Give me my desired dakshina. If one bears a debt, the consequent misery increases from one day to another day.” The king was sprinkled with water that was as cold as ice. He regained his senses. However, on seeing Vishvamitra, he lost his senses again. At this, the sage was filled with rage. The supreme brahmana comforted the king and spoke these words. “If you look towards dharma, give me the dakshina. It is through truth that the sun radiates heat. It is through truth that the earth exists. It is said that truth is supreme dharma. Heaven is established in truth. If truth and one thousand horse sacrifices are held up on a weighing scale, truth is heavier than the one thousand horse sacrifices. Why should I utter these comforting words to you? You are a powerful king, but you are ignoble. You are evil in your resolution and cruel. You do not speak the truth. Listen to the virtuous words I speak to you. O king! If you do not give me my dakshina today, before the sun goes beyond Mount Asta, <sup>171</sup> I will certainly curse you.” Having said this, the brahmana departed and the king was afflicted by fear. “I have been reduced to this state, without any riches and possessing nothing. Those who possess riches are cruel and slight me. Which direction will I head towards?” His wife said again, “Please act in accordance with my words. Do not get consumed in the fire of the curse. Do not embrace death.” The king’s wife urged him in this way, repeatedly.

‘He replied, “O fortunate one! I will undertake the heartless deed of selling you. I will do what even the cruel are incapable of doing, as long as I am capable of uttering words that are impossible to speak.”<sup>172</sup> Having spoken to his wife in this way, miserable, he went to the city. With his voice choking and tears flowing from his eyes, the king said, “O citizens! Listen to my words. Why are you asking me who I am? I am a cruel man. No, I am an extremely hard-hearted rakshasa. Indeed, I am more wicked than that. I am ready to sell my beloved, but have not given up my life. I love her more than my own life. Does anyone have need for a servant-maid? Please let him speak quickly. I can only sustain myself till evening.” At this, an aged brahmana arrived and spoke to the king. “Give me this servant-maid. I will buy her and give you riches. I possess plenty of wealth. My beloved<sup>173</sup> is delicate and is incapable of undertaking household work. Give her to me, so that she can do it instead. Your wife is young, beautiful and good in conduct. She can do those tasks. Give me this woman and accept the appropriate riches in return.” Thus addressed by the brahmana, King Harishchandra’s heart was shattered and he could say nothing in reply. The brahmana firmly tied the wealth to the bark the king wore. He seized the king’s wife by her hair and started to drag her away. Rohitashva<sup>174</sup> saw that his mother was being dragged away in this fashion and started to weep. The child’s sidelocks were like a crow’s wing.<sup>175</sup> With his hand, he clung on to her garment. She said, “O noble one! Release me so that I can take a look at my child. O son! It will be extremely difficult for you to see me again. O child! Behold. Your mother has now become a servant-maid. O prince! Do not touch me. I should not be touched by you now.” The child saw that his mother was being dragged away violently. With tears flowing from his eyes, he rushed forward, exclaiming, “O mother!” As he advanced, the brahmana angrily kicked the child with his foot. Nevertheless, he kept saying “O mother” and did not let go of his mother. The king’s wife said, “O master! Show me your favours. Buy this child too. Otherwise, without him, even if you purchase me, I will be of no use to you. I am unfortunate. Look favourably towards me and show me this kindness. I am like a cow with a calf. Do not separate me from him.” The brahmana replied, “Take this



wealth and give me the child. Those who know the sacred texts of dharma have determined the value of either a man or a woman at one hundred, one thousand, one hundred thousand or one crore.” <sup>176</sup> Having tied up the riches in his <sup>177</sup> upper garment, he seized them and bound mother and child together.

‘The king saw that his wife and child were being dragged away. He lamented in great misery and sighed repeatedly. “Earlier, my wife was not seen by the wind, the sun, the moon, or any other man. She has now become a servant-maid. The child was born in the solar dynasty and his fingers are delicate. But he has been sold now. Shame on my wicked intelligence. Alas, beloved! Alas, infant child! I am ignoble and have followed a wicked policy. Destiny has reduced you to this state. Despite that, I have not died. Shame on me.” While the king was lamenting in this way, taking them with him, the brahmana quickly disappeared amidst the tall trees and houses. Vishvamitra arrived there and sought the riches from the king and Harishchandra gave him that wealth. Koushika saw that the riches obtained from selling the wife had not amounted to much. He spoke angrily to the king, who was overwhelmed with grief. “O *kshatra-bandhu*! <sup>178</sup> In connection with the sacrifice, is this an appropriate dakshina for me? If that is what you think, you will swiftly witness my supreme strength. These unblemished and fierce powers of the brahman have been obtained by severely tormenting myself through austerities and purifying myself through studying.” The king replied, “O illustrious one! I will give you some more. Please wait for some more time. I possess nothing now and have sold my wife and my infant son.” Vishvamitra said, “O lord of men! One fourth of the day still remains. That is the time I will wait for and you should not say anything in reply.” He spoke these cruel words, devoid of qualities, to the Indra among kings. Taking the wealth, the angry Koushika swiftly departed.

‘When Vishvamitra had left, the king was overcome by grief and fear. He resolved to sell himself. With his face cast downwards, he spoke. “In return for riches, is there a man who wishes to buy me as a servant? Let him speak quickly, before the sun sets.” Assuming the form of a *chandala*, Dharma

swiftly arrived there. <sup>179</sup> He was malformed and possessed a bad odour. He was rough, with a beard and large teeth. He was loathsome. He was dark, with a stomach that hung down. His eyes were coppery red and his voice was harsh. He clutched some birds in his hand and he wore garlands taken from corpses. He held a skull in his hand and his long face was horrible. With a staff in his hand, he was terrible. He was surrounded by dogs and it was as if he had no form at all. The chandala said, “I want you. Quickly tell me your price, a little or a lot. How can I get you?” His glance was cruel and extremely rough. Extremely miserable, the king looked at him and asked, “Who are you?” The chandala replied, “I am a chandala and in this excellent city, I am known as Pravira. I am famous as one who kills those who deserve to be killed. I take the blankets away from dead bodies.” Harishchandra said, “I do not wish to be the servant of such a contemptible chandala. Instead of coming under the subjugation of a chandala, it is better that I should be consumed by the fire of the curse.” While he was speaking in this way, Vishvamitra, the store of austerities, arrived there. With eyes dilated in rage, he spoke to the lord of men. Vishvamitra said, “The chandala has come here to give you plenty of riches. Why should you not give me the dakshina for the sacrifice?” Harishchandra replied, “O illustrious one! O Koushika! Know that I am descended from the solar dynasty. Desiring money, how can I become the servant of a chandala?” Vishvamitra said, “If you do not give me the riches you receive from selling yourself to the chandala, when the time comes, there is no doubt that I will curse you.” King Harishchandra’s mind was full of various thoughts. Confounded, he clasped the rishi’s feet and spoke to him. “Show me your favours. I am your servant. I am afflicted. I am terrified. In particular, I am devoted to you. O brahmana rishi! Show me your favours. Association with a chandala is difficult. Though my riches are exhausted, for every task, I will be under your control. O tiger among sages! I will be your servant and follow every inclination of yours.” Vishvamitra said, “If you are my servant, I am handing you over to the chandala. Since he will give me riches worth one *arbuda*, <sup>180</sup> you will become his servant.” Harishchandra replied, “If the brahmana Koushika is satisfied with this, if you are capable

of doing so, accept me today as your servant and I will act accordingly.” The chandala said, “I will protect this land, which extends for one hundred yojanas and is ornamented with many villages. I will give this to Koushika.” Having said this, happy in his mind, the *shvapacha* <sup>181</sup> gave Vishvamitra that object and tied up the lord of men.

‘The king’s senses were in a whirl. Beaten with a stick, he was extremely scared. He was separated from his beloved relatives. He was taken away to the chandala’s house. King Harishchandra resided in that house. At the time of morning, noon and evening, he sang, “With a miserable face, the maiden sees the child in front of her, also with a miserable face. Seated in that unhappy state, she remembers me and thinks that the king will free her. He will earn riches. He will give the brahmana an even greater amount of wealth. The one with eyes like a fawn does not know, and has not heard, of the greater evil. The kingdom has been destroyed. The well-wishers have left me. I have had to sell my wife and son. I have now been reduced to the state of a chandala. Alas! This has been a succession of calamities.” He resided there and always remembered his beloved wife and son, who were in his heart. With all his possessions gone, he was despondent.

‘The chandala stripped garments from dead bodies in the cremation ground and he was under his subjugation. After some time had passed, the chandala instructed King Harishchandra to strip garments from corpses. “Remain here night and day, waiting for the dead bodies to arrive. One-sixth of what is obtained from corpses is to be given to the king. Half is my share and one-third is your salary.” Thus instructed, he went to the place where the corpses were housed, then located to the south of Varanasi. The terrible cremation ground resounded to the howling of hundreds of jackals. The heads of dead bodies were strewn around. There was a terrible stench and a lot of smoke. The place was infested with *pishachas*, *bhutas*, *vetalas*, *dakinis* and *yakshas*. <sup>182</sup> Large numbers of great bhutas created a tumultuous noise. It was infested with vultures and jackals and surrounded by packs of dogs. There were heaps of bones and there was an extremely foul stench. There was the terrible sound of relatives of dead people lamenting. “Alas, son! Alas, friend! Alas, relative! Alas, brother! Alas, beloved! Alas,

husband! Alas, sister! Alas, mother! Alas, maternal uncle! Alas, paternal grandfather! Alas, maternal grandfather! Alas, father! Alas, grandson! Alas, kin! Where have you gone? Come here.” Such great lamentations were uttered and heard. The eyes of the dead bodies no longer blinked. One was permeated with fear. Some closed their eyes and thought of the relatives who were lying down on the pyres. The flesh, fat and marrow burned and that sound filled the directions. There were half-burnt corpses, dark and displaying rows of teeth. In the midst of fires, they seemed to smile and say, “This is the state that bodies are reduced to.” There was the crackling sound of the fire and that of crows seated on piles of bones. There were the cries of relatives, mixed with the delighted sound made by *pulkasas*.<sup>183</sup> Large numbers of bhutas, vetalas, pishachas and rakshasas sang. Those extremely terrible sounds were heard, like the sound that comes at the end of a *kalpa*. In some places, there were giant piles of dung from buffaloes and cows on piles of ashes, surrounded by heaps of bones. There were masses of gifts, garlands and lamps and offerings given to the crows. There were many kinds of sounds and the cremation ground was like hell. In some places, the mouths of the jackals seemed to be full of flames. In some places, from within caves, jackals emitted inauspicious howls. Even fear seemed to be terrified at the terrible lamentations made by people in that fearful cremation ground. Having reached there, the miserable king started to lament. “Alas! Where are the servants, ministers and brahmanas? Everything has been lost to destiny. Alas, Shaibya! Alas, infant child! I am unfortunate! Because of the taint caused by Vishvamitra, where have you gone, abandoning me?” In this way, he repeatedly thought about the state of being a chandala that he had been reduced to. His body was rough and coarse all over. He had a mass of hair and exuded a bad odour. Resembling the Destroyer, he rushed around here and there, with a staff in his hand. “This is the entire price I have obtained for this corpse. This is my share. This belongs to the king. This belongs to the chief chandala.” Saying this, the king rushed around in different directions. He had assumed a different kind of life. He was clad in a garment made by stitching together tattered rags. His face, arms, stomach and feet were smeared with ash from funeral

pyres. He sighed, with many kinds of fat, oil and marrow smearing his fingers. He was satisfied with the many kinds of food that were offered to the corpses. His head was ornamented with garlands that he gathered from them. Night or day, he did not sleep and repeatedly exclaimed, “Alas! Alas!” In this way, twelve months passed and they were like one hundred years.

‘On one occasion, separated from his relatives, the best among kings was exhausted. Immobile and rough in his limbs, he fell asleep. While sleeping, he saw an extremely wonderful dream. Perhaps this was because he was used to the cremation ground. Or perhaps it was because of destiny being more powerful. He saw that he paid the dakshina due to his guru in a different body. After having spent twelve years in misery, he saw himself being freed and being born in the womb of a *pulkasi*.<sup>184</sup> While he was inside the womb, the king thought, “When I emerge from here, I will follow the dharma of donating.” After this, he was born as a pulkasa child. In cremation grounds, he was always ready to perform the funeral rites for dead bodies. When he was seven years old, he saw that a dead brahmana was brought to the cremation ground. He possessed qualities, but was poor and had been brought there by his relatives. When he asked for his fee, the brahmanas<sup>185</sup> reprimanded him. The brahmanas said, “This is because of what Vishvamitra has done. O one who undertakes wicked tasks! You are undertaking this evil and inauspicious task. Earlier, you were King Harishchandra and Vishvamitra has made you a pulkasa. That brahmana’s curse destroyed the merits of all your good deeds.” However, since he did not show them mercy,<sup>186</sup> they angrily cursed him. “O worst among men! Instantly go to a terrible hell.” He then saw Yama’s messengers arrive, with terrible nooses in their hands. They gathered him up and forcibly dragged him away. He saw himself screaming, “Alas, mother and father! This is my state now.” While he was speaking, in that hell, he was flung into a tub filled with oil. He was cut with saws that were sharp at the edges. Grieving with misery, he was thrown into blinding darkness and fed on pus and blood. For seven years, as a pulkasa, his atman had been dead. He saw himself in hell. From one day to another day, he was burnt somewhere,

cooked elsewhere. In some places, he was miserable. In others, he was agitated. He was struck in some places and brought down in others. In some places, he was immersed in corrosive substances. In others, he was burnt. In other parts, he was struck by winds and cold. One day in hell seemed to be like one hundred years. From the servants in hell, he heard that one hundred years had passed. Thereafter, he was flung down on the ground and was born as a dog that lived on excrement. Feeding on excrement and vomit, he suffered from cold and died within a month. Thereafter, he saw himself in the body of an animal—an ass, an elephant, a monkey, a goat, a cat, a heron, a cow, a ram, a bird, a worm, a fish, a turtle, a boar, a porcupine, a cock, a parrot, a *sharika*,<sup>187</sup> a snake and the bodies of other immobile entities. From one day to another day, he saw himself being born in one kind of species and another kind of species and was tormented by grief. A day was like one hundred years. A full one hundred years passed as such inferior species. Then, on one occasion, the king saw himself being born in his own lineage. While he was there, the king lost his kingdom while gambling. Having lost his wife and son, he went alone to the forest. There, he saw a dreadful lion with a gaping mouth. Along with a *sharabha*,<sup>188</sup> it was advancing to devour him. As he was being devoured, he grieved and exclaimed to his wife, “O Shaibya! Alas! Leaving me in this misery, where have you gone now?” However, he next saw his wife, along with his own son, screaming, “O Harishchandra! Save us. O lord! Why do you gamble? Your son, along with your wife Shaibya, has been reduced to this state of misery.” He rushed around here and there, but could no longer see them. After this, the lord of men saw himself in heaven again. With dishevelled hair and naked, she was miserable and was being dragged away forcibly. She wailed in these words, “Alas! Save me. Alas!” He next saw those who followed Dharmaraja’s<sup>189</sup> commands. They were in the sky and shouted, “O lord of men! Come. For your sake, Vishvamitra has sent word to Yama.” Having been addressed in this way, the lord was dragged away, bound in nooses made out of snakes. Shraddhadeva<sup>190</sup> was recounting what Vishvamitra had done. In this way, he directly saw all these miserable states in his dream. Nevertheless, there was no increase in his perverse



inclinations and adharma. He endured all this for twelve years. After the twelve years were over, the servants forcibly conducted the lord of men. He saw Yama's form and he said, "This rage of the great-souled Vishvamitra cannot be quenched. Koushika will bring about the death of your son. Go to the world of men and endure the remaining miseries. O Indra among men! When you go there, you will obtain what is good for you. O lord of men! When twelve years are over, your miseries will come to an end." Urged by Yama's messengers, he fell down from the sky. As he fell down from Yama's world, because of his great fear and terror, he woke up. "Alas! This is great sorrow. What I have seen is like sprinkling an alkaline solution over a wound. I have witnessed great miseries in my sleep and there is no end to those. While I witnessed these in my sleep, have twelve years passed?" In fear, he went to the pulkasas and asked them about it. Some said, "No." Others said, "It may have." Hearing this, the grieving king sought refuge with the gods. "O gods! Please ensure safety for me, Shaibya and the child. I bow down to the great Dharma. I bow down to Krishna, the one who ordains. I bow down to the supreme one. I bow down to the pure one. I bow down to the ancient one. I bow down to the one without decay. I bow down to Brihaspati. I bow down to Vasava." <sup>191</sup> Having said this, the king engaged himself in the tasks of a pulkasa.

'Like a person who has again lost his memory, he started to fix prices for the corpses. He was dirty. His hair was matted. The king was dark, wielding a staff. He was bewildered. He no longer remembered his wife or son. Having lost his enterprise and having lost his kingdom, he resided in the cremation ground. At that time, the king's lamenting wife arrived there, bringing his own dead son with her. The boy had been bitten by a snake. "O child! Alas! O son! Alas! O infant! Alas!" She repeatedly wailed in this way. She was lean and wan. She was distracted and her hair was covered with dust. The king's wife said, "O king! Alas! Behold. Your son is lying down on the ground now. Earlier, you have seen him play. Bitten by a snake, he is dead now." The lord of men heard the sounds of her lamenting. Thinking, "I will take the blanket from the corpse," he quickly went there. The king did not recognize his wailing wife. Having lived away for a long



time, he was tormented. It was as if he had been born again and did not recognize the lady. The princess did not recognize the king either. Earlier, the ends of his hair used to be beautiful. They were matted now. The king resembled a dried up tree. He saw the child lying down on a black garment, suffering from the snake's venom. The lord of men saw the signs of royalty and started to think. "Alas! Which lord of men has suffered this grief? Whose lineage was this child born in? His face is like the lunar disc. His eyebrows are excellent. His nose is beautiful and high. His locks of hair are dark and curly. The strands are long and equal. His eyes are like lotuses. His lips are like *bimba* fruit. He possesses beautiful teeth and beautiful forearms. <sup>192</sup> His face is long. His arms are long. There are four marks on his palms—a fish, a corn of barley and a mountain. <sup>193</sup> The nerve behind his neck is deep and runs all the way down to his feet. His skin is thin and he has three lines on his navel. Bound, he has been brought here wilfully by the evil-souled Destroyer. Seeing this child lying down on his mother's lap, I am reminded of the lotus-eyed child, Rohitashva. Unless the terrible Destroyer has brought him under his subjugation, my child would also have been of a similar age." The king's wife wailed, "Alas! O child! Whose great sin has taken you away? I am immersed in this grief and there is no end to it. O protector! Alas! Where are you now! I am miserable. Without comforting me, how can you remain there? O destiny! What have you done to the royal sage, Harishchandra? His kingdom has been destroyed. His well-wishers have left him. His wife and child have been sold." Hearing her words, the king fell down from his spot. He recognized his beloved son and saw that he was dead. The king started to think. "What is her name and which household is she from? Perhaps she is my excellent wife. Who is this child who has died? What grief! This is Shaibya and this is my son." Tormented by grief, he wept and lost his senses. She also recognized him and the state that he had been reduced to. Miserable, she fell down on the ground, senseless and immobile. Having regained their senses, the Indra among kings and the king's wife started to lament together, miserable and suffering from that burden of grief. The king said, "Alas! O child! Your eyes, eyebrows, nose and locks are delicate. On seeing that face, why is my

heart not getting shattered? ‘Father! Father!’ Uttering these sweet words, who will come to me on his own? Whom will I affectionately embrace and address as ‘Child! Child!’? Whose thighs will bring the yellow dust from the ground and stain my upper garment, my lap and my limbs? Your limbs were generated from my limbs and you were the one who enhanced the delight of my mind. O child! Alas! Since I sold you like an object, I am a wicked father. Cruel destiny has taken away my great kingdom, my relatives, my riches and everything from me. In the form of a snake, it has now bitten my son. Alas! I am looking at my child’s lotus face, bitten by destiny in the form of a snake. Because of the terrible poison, I have now become blind.” He said this, his voice choking with tears. He gathered up the child and embraced him. He lost his senses and fell down, motionless. The king’s wife said, “From his voice, it is evident that he is that tiger among men. There is no doubt that this is Harishchandra, who is like a moon to the minds of the learned. His mouth and peaked nose are like his. It is tall at the top and curves downwards. His teeth resemble buds, just like those of the great-souled one, famous for his deeds. But why has that lord of men come to this cremation ground now?” She forgot the grief on account of her son and looked at her fallen husband. Having seen him, she was surprised and distressed because of her husband and son. She looked and saw her husband’s reprehensible staff. “This is deserving of a shvapacha.” Her mind filled with confusion, the large-eyed one lost her senses. When she regained her senses, she spoke softly, in a quavering voice. “Shame on destiny. It is extremely cruel, dishonourable and hated. The king who was an equal of the immortals has been reduced to the state of a shvapacha. The kingdom was destroyed. The well-wishers left him. His wife and son were sold. Even then, the king was not released and has been made a chandala. O king! Alas! I am tormented. Why are you not raising me up from the ground now and placing me on a couch? Why don’t you say anything? Nor can I see your umbrella, auspicious marks, fan or whisk now. What is this perversion in fate? Earlier, when he advanced, all the kings advanced ahead of him, like servants, cleaning the dust from the ground with their upper garments. Suffering from misery, that Indra among kings

now resides in a cremation ground. He is in constant touch with skulls and pots and vessels here. It is extremely terrible because garlands, threads and body hair from corpses is strewn around, smeared with fat and half-burnt dry wood on the ground. There is a loathsome mixture of ashes, coal, half-burnt bones and fat. The small birds have departed, suffering from the howls of vultures and jackals. The smoke that arises from funeral pyres has made the directions blue. Those who roam in the night are delighted at the prospect of devouring dead bodies. That is the place where he wanders around.” Having said this, the princess embraced the king’s neck. Her voice suffered from hundreds of different kinds of grief. The king’s wife lamented. “O king! Is this real, or do you think it is a dream? O immensely fortunate one! Tell me. My mind is confounded. O one who knows about dharma! If this is destiny, then there is no help for dharma. There is no point to worshipping gods, brahmanas and others on earth. Without dharma, what is the point of truth, uprightness and non-violence? You were supremely devoted to dharma, but have been deprived of your own kingdom.” Hearing her faltering words, he sighed and told her how he had been reduced to the state of a shvapacha. The timid one wept for a long time. She sighed and miserably told him how her son had died. Hearing those words, the king fell down on the ground. He started to lick his dead son’s mouth with his tongue. The king said, “We are miserable and hanker after our son. Let us beg Yama for him. Therefore, let us quickly go to the place where our beloved son has gone. O beloved! The idea of suffering for a long time does not appeal to me. O one delicate in limbs! But behold my misfortune. I am not even my own master. If I enter the fire without taking the chandala’s permission, in the next birth, I will again become the servant of another chandala. Or I will descend into hell and become an insect that feeds on worms. Or I will fall into the Vaitarani,<sup>194</sup> which is slippery with a great mass of pus, fat, sinews and entrails. Or I will reach *asipatravana*<sup>195</sup> and be severely cut. Or I will reach *maha-rourava* or *rourava* and be burnt.<sup>196</sup> I am immersed in this ocean of grief and the only way to cross over is by giving up my life. This child is the only son who could extend the lineage. However, he has also been submerged in the powerful force of the waters of

my destiny. But how can I give up my life? I am under someone else's control. Perhaps a man who is suffering and afflicted should not consider sin. How can the grief from birth as an inferior species, asipatravana or the Vaitarani be comparable to that from the loss of one's son? O one who is slender in limbs! Therefore, I will fling myself into the fire that burns my son's body. Please pardon anything wicked I have done. O one with the beautiful smiles! I grant you leave. Go to the brahmana's house. O one who is slender in limbs! With a concentrated mind, listen to my words. If I have donated, if I have offered oblations and if I have satisfied my preceptor, in the world hereafter, I will again be united with you and with my son. How can my wishes be satisfied in this world? O one with the sweet smiles! Or perhaps it is best for you to follow me, along the path taken by our son. I seek one thing. If I have said anything in jest or spoken something coarse in private, you should pardon all that. Because you are a king's wife, you should not show disrespect towards the brahmana. O auspicious one! You should make every effort to satisfy him, like a husband or a divinity." The king's wife replied, "O royal sage! This burden of grief is impossible to bear. Today, along with you, I will also head towards the blazing fire here. Whether it is heaven or hell, we will enjoy it together." Hearing the words of the one who was devoted to her husband, the king agreed.

'After this, the king created a funeral pyre and with his wife and son, ascended it. He joined his hands in salutation and thought about Narayana Hari, the supreme *paramatman*. Vasudeva, the lord of the gods, without a beginning and without an end, resides within the heart. He thought about the auspicious Krishna, attired in the yellow garment, about Brahma and about all the gods, along with Vasava. All of them swiftly arrived there, with Dharma at the forefront. Having arrived, all of them said, "O king! O lord! Listen. The illustrious grandfather <sup>197</sup> is himself here. So are Dharma, the Sadhyas, the Vishvas, <sup>198</sup> the Maruts, the guardians of the worlds, the *charanas*, <sup>199</sup> the *nagas*, the Siddhas, the *gandharvas*, <sup>200</sup> the Rudras and the two Ashvins. There are many others here. Vishvamitra, with whom the three worlds could not contract a friendship earlier, is also here. <sup>201</sup> All of them, including Vishvamitra, are eager to have you as a friend." Dharma,

Shakra and Gadhi's son <sup>202</sup> ascended and came before the king. Dharma said, "O king! Do not be rash. I am Dharma and I have come before you. I am satisfied with your fortitude, self-control, truthfulness and other qualities." Indra said, "O Harishchandra! O immensely fortunate one! I am Shakra and I have come before you. With your wife and son, you have won the eternal worlds. With the king's wife and her son, ascend up to heaven. This is extremely difficult for other men to obtain, but you have won it through your own deeds." From the sky, the lord Indra showered down amrita, which destroyed death. There was a great shower of flowers and the drums of the gods were sounded. In that assembly of the gods, the son of the great-souled king arose. His delicate body was hale and his mind and senses were soothed. King Harishchandra immediately embraced his son. Along with his wife, he became full of beauty, attired in divine garlands and garments. Having completely obtained this pleasant state, his heart was filled with great delight. At that moment, Indra spoke again. "With your wife and son, you will attain the supreme destination meant for the virtuous. O immensely fortunate one! Ascend. These are the fruits of your own deeds." Harishchandra replied, "O king of the gods! Without the permission of my master, the shvapacha, I am not free. Therefore, I cannot go to the abode of the gods." Dharma said, "When I got to know about the state of hardship you were in, I used the powers of my own yoga and came before you in the form of a shvapacha, displaying my fickleness." Indra said, "O Harishchandra! This is the supreme region desired by all men on earth. Ascend to the region meant for men who perform auspicious deeds." Harishchandra replied, "O king of the gods! I bow down before you. But listen to the words I am about to speak to you. Since you have spoken to me in words that display your favours, I am assured that I can tell you this. As a result of grief over me, the people in the city of Kosala are submerged in misery. Leaving them there, how can I now ascend to heaven? It has been said that the sin of abandoning someone who is devoted is comparable to the sin from killing a brahmana, a preceptor, a cow or a woman. If I abandon the innocent ones who worship me and are devoted to me, I do not see any happiness in this world or in the next world. O Shakra! Therefore,

go to heaven. O lord of the gods! I will go to heaven only if they can go there with me. Or I will go to hell with them.” Indra said, “There are many kinds of good deeds and sins and they are varied. How can you go to heaven if so many are to enjoy it?” Harishchandra replied, “O Shakra! A king enjoys his kingdom because of the powers of those who are dependent on him. I have performed great sacrifices and I have undertaken civic works. However, I have been able to undertake all these because of their powers. I do not desire heaven if I have to give up those who have done me favours. O lord of the gods! There may be a little bit of good merit I have acquired through donations, sacrifices and meditating. Let all of us generally <sup>203</sup> share that together. I may have enjoyed the fruits of my good deeds over a long period of time. Through your favours, let me enjoy those equally with them, even if it is for a single day.” Shakra, the lord of the three worlds, said that it would be that way.

‘With cheerful minds, he, Dharma and Vishvamitra, Gadhi’s son, and everyone else quickly went to the city. In Harishchandra’s presence, the lord of the gods told all those from the four varnas. “O people! Swiftly come to the world of heaven, which is so very difficult to obtain. Through dharma’s favours, <sup>204</sup> all of you have obtained this.” An array of crores of *vimanas* <sup>205</sup> came down to earth from the world of heaven. “O people of Ayodhya! Ascend these and rise up to heaven.” Hearing these words of Indra and pleased with the king, Vishvamitra, the great ascetic, brought Rohitashva. He instated the king’s son in the beautiful and famous city of Ayodhya. After the consecration, along with the gods, the sages, the Siddhas, the lord of men, together with all the healthy and cheerful people, and the sons, servants and wives of these people, ascended up to heaven. The people took steps and moved from one vimana to another. King Harishchandra was delighted. The lord of the earth obtain unmatched riches and vimanas. He lived in a city that was surrounded by walls and ramparts. <sup>206</sup> Beholding his prosperity, Ushanas, <sup>207</sup> the immensely fortunate preceptor of the daityas who knew the truth about all the sacred texts, chanted a shloka. Shukra said, “There has never been a king like Harishchandra, nor will there ever be. If a man listens to it devotedly, he does not suffer.” Controlling himself, if a

person listens to this account, he obtains the fruits obtained through the Vedas, the Puranas and all the collections of mantras. The fruits are the same as those obtained by visiting tirthas like Pushkara, Prayaga, the confluence of the Sindhu with the ocean, Kurukshetra, Varanasi and specific temples of the gods. If a person controls himself and listens to it attentively, he obtains double the fruits obtained by chanting during an eclipse at the time of the vernal equinox. O Jaimini! Having heard this, if a person worships an excellent brahmana who knows about the Puranas, he obtains cattle, land, gold, garments and many other things that I am incapable of recounting. How wonderful was his fortitude. How wonderful was his greatness. How wonderful were the great fruits of his donations. Harishchandra obtained for himself the fruit of Indra's city and went there. We have told you everything about what Harishchandra did. If a person listens to this, even if he is greatly afflicted, he obtains happiness and greatness. A person who desires heaven obtains heaven. A person who desires a son obtains a son. A person who desires a wife obtains a wife. A person who desires a kingdom obtains a kingdom. O excellent sage! After this hear about the rest of the account, about how the disturbance at the time of a rajasuya sacrifice was the cause of the destruction of the earth. That disturbance resulted from a great battle between an *ati* and a *baka*.' <sup>208</sup>



## Chapter 9

The birds said, ‘After Harishchandra was deprived of his kingdom, he went to heaven. The immensely energetic sage, Vasishtha,<sup>209</sup> arose from inside the Ganga after twelve years, having resided inside the water. He heard everything that Vishvamitra had done—how King Harishchandra, generous in his deeds, had been destroyed, about how he had been reduced to the state of a chandala and about the sale of his wife and son. Hearing this, the extremely fortunate one was pleased with the lord of the earth. But the energetic one was angry at the rishi Vishvamitra. Vasishtha said, “Vishvamitra destroyed one hundred of my sons.<sup>210</sup> However, my rage then was not as great as my anger today, on hearing that the lord of men has been uprooted from his kingdom. The immensely fortunate and great-souled one worshipped gods and brahmanas. He was truthful and self-controlled, with no hatred even towards enemies. He was innocent and had dharma in his soul. He was attentive and sought refuge with me. With his wife, servants and son, the king has been reduced to this distraught state. Other than being deprived of his kingdom, he has been subjected to many kinds of hardships. That evil-souled one<sup>211</sup> hates brahmanas and harms those who perform sacrifices. Suffering from my curse, let that foolish person become a baka.” The greatly energetic Vishvamitra Kouskhika heard about this curse. He cursed him back that he would become an ati. Cursed by each other, those two supremely radiant ones, the greatly energetic Vasishtha and Vishvamitra Koushika, were born as inferior species.

‘Though born as inferior species, they retained their energy. Extremely angry and full of great strength and valour, they fought against each other. O brahmana! The ati was two thousand yojanas tall. The baka was three thousand and ninety-six yojanas tall. Terrible in their strength, they struck

each other with their wings. As they struck each other, terrible fear was generated among the subjects. With red eyes, the baka struck the ati with its wings. Raising its neck up, the ati also struck the baka with its feet. Because of the wind created by their wings, mountains fell down on the ground and the force of the mountains falling down made the earth tremble. When the earth trembled, the ocean released a flood of water. Leaning to one side, the earth sank towards Patala. <sup>212</sup> All life headed towards destruction—some from mountains falling down, some from the torrents of water and some from the quaking of the earth. Terrified, all living beings lost their senses and screamed “Alas!” The universe was greatly scared and the earth’s circle faced a calamity. “Alas, child!” “Alas, beloved!” “Alas, infant!” “Flee.” “Look at the state I am in.” “Alas, beloved!” “Alas, beloved!” <sup>213</sup> “The mountain is falling down. Run quickly.” Thus, the anxious and scared people spoke and were separated from each other. Surrounded by all the gods, the grandfather arrived there. The ordainer of the universe spoke to those two extremely angry ones. “Cease your fighting and let the worlds regain their composure.” Though they heard the words of Brahma, the one with a birth that is not manifest, they were filled with such rage and intolerance that they did not stop their fighting. At this, witnessing the destruction of the world and desiring welfare, the god Brahma took away their states of being inferior species. When they had regained their former bodies, the god Prajapati spoke to those two bulls, Vasishtha and Koushika. “This resulted from your tamasa sentiments. O child! O Vasishtha! O best of the Koushika lineage! Conquer it. This kind of desire to fight results from tamasa sentiments. This conflict between the two of you is obstructing King Harishchandra’s performance of a rajasuya sacrifice and is leading to the destruction of the earth. Nor has the best among the Koushika lineage caused any harm to the king. Indeed, in a condition of injuring him, he has contributed to his attaining heaven. Having come under the subjugation of desire and anger, your austerities have faced impediments. O fortunate ones! Give it up! It is the brahman who is supremely strong.” Addressed in this way, they were ashamed. They pardoned each other and affectionately embraced each other. Worshipped by the gods, Brahma left for this own

abode. Vasishtha went to his own spot and Koushika went to his own hermitage. If mortal people recount the story of the clash between the ati and the baka, or Harishchandra's account, or properly hear it being recited, the sins of the reciter and the hearer are destroyed. Nor do they face any impediments in their tasks.'

## Chapter 10

**J**aimini asked, ‘O tigers among brahmanas! I have a doubt about the creation and destruction of creatures who are here. Please clear it. How is a creature born? How does it grow up within the womb, suffering as it does from the pressure of the limbs? Once it is outside the womb, how does it grow up? Once the time for death arrives, how is it separated from consciousness? Subject to death, how does a creature experience all the fruits of both its good and bad deeds? When ingested, many extremely difficult to digest objects are digested. Yet, as a small lump of flesh inside a woman’s womb, how is a creature not digested like ingested food? How does one enjoy the fruits of all one’s good deeds? Tell me all this, so that I can cast aside my doubts. This is extremely secret and creatures are mystified by this.’

The birds replied, ‘You have asked us a question that is extremely heavy in its burden. The existence and non-existence of creatures is extremely difficult to comprehend. O immensely fortunate one! A son who was greatly devoted to dharma, whose name was Sumati, spoke to his father about this in earlier times. Listen to this. There was an immensely intelligent brahmana who was born in the Bhargava lineage. At the time of the investiture of the sacred thread, he spoke to his serene son, Sumati, who seemed to be dumb. “O Sumati! In the proper order, study the Vedas. Eagerly serve the preceptor and eat what has been obtained by begging for alms. After this, resort to the stage of being a householder and undertake excellent sacrifices. Having obtained the desired offspring, resort to the forest. O child! When you are in the vanaprastha stage, roam around, devoid of all possessions. In this way, you will attain the brahman and attaining that state, no one grieves.” Though he was thus addressed in many

ways, the one who was dumb did not reply. At this, affectionately, the father repeatedly spoke to him several times. Affectionate towards his son, the father tempted him with sweet words in this way.

‘After being urged many times, he smiled and replied in these words. “O father! On numerous occasions, I have studied what you have instructed me to. That apart, I have studied many other sacred texts, including those on artisanship. I possess the memory of ten thousand births that I have already been through. Since my *jnana* <sup>214</sup> has been generated and awakened, what will I do with the Vedas? I have suffered and I have been satisfied. I have faced both prosperity and adversity. I have been united with enemies, friends and wives and have been separated from them. I have witnessed different mothers and different fathers. I have experienced thousands of joys and miseries. I have had many relatives and separate fathers. I have resided in the wombs of women, slippery with urine and excrement. I have experienced thousands of terrible ailments and diseases. I have undergone hardships in wombs, in childhood, in youth and in old age. I remember all those. I have been born as brahmanas, kshatriyas, *vaishyas* and shudras. I have also been born as beasts, worms, deer and birds. I have been born in the houses of those who serve the king and also in royal houses. Just as I have been born in those houses, I have been born in your house too. I have had to serve many men and been their servants. I have been a master. I have been powerful. I have also been reduced to penury. Others have been killed by me. Others have killed me. I gave to others and many others gave to me. I have been satisfied by fathers, mothers, well-wishers, brothers, wives and others. They harmed me when I was in a state of distress and tears washed my face. O father! In this way, amidst hardships, I have been whirled around in this cycle of *samsara*. <sup>215</sup> I have obtained this kind of *jnana*, which is the cause behind the achievement of *moksha*. With that knowledge, all the rites and rituals of Rig, Yajur and Sama now appear to me to be devoid of qualities. Since my knowledge has been kindled, why do I need the Vedas? I am content with the *vijnana* obtained through the preceptor. I no longer care for anything in this world and am always immersed in the *atman*. I will obtain the supreme state of the *brahman*,

devoid of gunas, where the six kinds of action, <sup>216</sup> unhappiness, happiness and the *rasa* of *harsha* do not exist. <sup>217</sup> I know that the rasas of delight, fear, anxiety, anger, intolerance and old age are like hundreds of snares used to trap birds and animals. O father! Therefore, since they are full of misery, I will cast them aside. Isn't the dharma stated in the three <sup>218</sup> really like adharma, since it leads to a wicked fruit?" Hearing his words, his father's voice quavered because of surprise and delight. With a joyous mind, he spoke to his immensely fortunate son. The father replied, "O child! What is it that you have said? Where did this jnana come from? How is it that you were dumb earlier and are now exhibiting this learning? Is this because a curse imposed by a sage or a god has now waned? Is that the reason why your jnana vanished, but has surfaced again?"

'The son answered, "O father! Listen to the account of my joy and misery, what I was in an earlier birth and what happened to me thereafter. Earlier, I was a brahmana who immersed his atman in the paramatman. Reflecting on the knowledge of the atman, I was full of faith towards the supreme. I was always engaged in yoga. I always followed the practice of associating with the virtuous. I practised what was virtuous. Through the rituals, I purified my nature, speech and conduct. Therefore, at that time, I was always filled with great joy. I became a preceptor who could dispel the doubts of disciples. After a long period of time, I obtained the state of being absolutely perfect. However, my nature was attracted towards ignorance and I faced a calamity. When the time for my death arrived, I did not lose my memory. I remember all the years passed in that birth. O father! Using that earlier practice, I will control my senses again. I will make efforts so that the same thing doesn't happen to me again. This memory is the fruit of jnana and donations. O father! Men cannot obtain it by following the dharma of the three. <sup>219</sup> I will follow the devoted dharma that I had resorted to earlier. I will endeavour to become absolutely perfect and free my atman. O immensely fortunate one! Tell me about the doubts that are present in your heart. I will please you and free myself of the debt I owe you." Filled with devotion, the father spoke to the son in words that conveyed exactly what you asked, about the cycle of samsara. The son said, "O father! Listen

to the truth about what I have repeatedly experienced. The cycle of *samsara* is without decay, but it has no stability. O father! With your permission, I will tell you everything, from the beginning to the time of death. No one else can tell you. Even though there is no kindling, the heat is agitated and kindled within the body, and fanned by a fierce wind, strikes at the inner organs. <sup>220</sup> At this, the breath of life known as *udana* circles above it. <sup>221</sup> It obstructs the downward movement of any food or drink that has been consumed. At that time, only those who have given the taste of food and water as gifts to others are happy. With devotion in the mind, if a person gives away food, such a person is also content at that time, even if there is no food. A happy death is obtained by a person who has not uttered a falsehood, a person who does not differentiate in his love, a person who is a believer <sup>222</sup> and a person who is faithful. A happy death is obtained by a man who is devoted to worshipping gods and brahmanas, a man who is devoid of envy and a man who is pure, generous and modest. A happy death is obtained by a person who controls desire, rage and hatred and who does not give up dharma. A happy death is obtained by a person who is amiable and does what he says. When the time for death arrives, a man who has not given water, or a man who has not given food, suffers from heat and hunger. A person who gives wealth conquers cold. A person who gives sandalwood conquers heat. A person who causes anxiety to others and makes them suffer experiences a pain that destroys life. A person who gives confusion and ignorance experiences great fear. Such a worst among men is oppressed by pain. A false witness, a liar, a person who instructs wrongly and a person who criticizes the Vedas—all such people are confounded at the time of death. Yama's evil-souled and terrible servants arrive, with a foul smell and with heavy clubs in their hands. As soon as they come into the range of vision, the dying person trembles. He constantly weeps and screams out to his brother, his mother and his son. O father! However, at that time, the speech becomes indistinct, consisting of only a single syllable. The eyes roll around. As a result of the terror, the breathing and the face dry up. Breathing becomes difficult and the eyesight dims. Suffering from the pain, he frees himself from his body. Before the breath of life



leaves, his form assumes another body. <sup>223</sup> This body is for the purpose of undergoing the pain resulting from his deeds and is not the product of a father and a mother. It possesses a form, age and appearance exactly like that of the former body. Yama's messengers quickly tie this up in a terrible noose. As he is terrified because of being beaten with sticks, he is dragged towards a southern direction over ground that is rough with kusha, thorns, termite hills, stakes and rocks. Some places blaze with heat and are filled with hundreds of pits. He is scorched by the heat of the blazing sun's rays. Accompanied by the terrible howling of jackals, he is dragged along by Yama's messengers. As he is dragged along, he is devoured by hundreds of horrible jackals. A performer of wicked deeds heads to Yama's eternal abode along such a terrible path. However, men who have given away umbrellas and footwear, men who have given away garments and men who have given away food proceed happily along this path. Men who have given away land proceed on shining vimanas. Experiencing the suffering as a result of the sins, the helpless man reaches Dharmaraja's city on the twelfth day. His body is burnt and he experiences great scorching. There is terrible pain because he is struck and pierced. When the body becomes wet, the creature suffers from everlasting pain. This is because of his own past deeds, though he is in a different body now. In the form of *pinda*, <sup>224</sup> his relatives give him water mixed with sesamum. These are conveyed to him and he survives on these. When his relatives smear oil on their limbs, they are not supposed to massage it in, because that is what the creature subsists on. He eats whatever his own relatives do. Because his relatives suffer by sleeping on the ground, his suffering is relieved. The dead person is pleased when his relatives donate. He is taken to his own house on the twelfth day and sees what is going on. <sup>225</sup> He eats what has been offered to him on the ground, in the form of water and *pinda*. After this, on the twelfth day, he is taken to Yama's terrible abode. As he is dragged there, the creature beholds this dreadful city. As soon as he reaches there, he sees Yama in the midst of Mrityu, Kala, Antaka and others. <sup>226</sup> His eyes are extremely red and his complexion is like that of a mass of collyrium. His teeth are terrible to behold and his face is terrible because of its frown. The lord is surrounded

by hundreds of ailments, with malformed and horrible visages. With a staff and a noose in his hands, the mighty-armed one is extremely terrible. Following his commands, a creature is conveyed to its destination, good or bad. A man who is a liar, or who bears false witness, goes to the hell Rourava.<sup>227</sup> So do those who kill a Brahmana, those who kill a cow, those who kill their father, those who steal another's field or wife, those who transgress or destroy boundaries, those who have intercourse with a preceptor's wife and those who have intercourse with a daughter. Listen attentively to a description of Rourava's nature. Rourava measures two thousand yojanas. Since there are pits that extend up to the thigh, it is extremely difficult to cross. The earth there has been levelled with heaps of burning coal. There is a fierce blaze and one is scorched by the coal on the ground. Yama's servants release the sinner in the middle of this. Burnt by the fierce flames, he runs around there. At every step, the feet are maimed and torn. In the space of one night and one day, he is allowed to raise his feet and lower them only once. He proceeds in this fashion for one thousand yojanas and is released after that. After this, so that his sins are cleansed, he is conveyed to another hell named Niraya.<sup>228</sup> After the sinner has crossed all the hells, he is born as inferior species—worms, insects, flying insects, predatory creatures, gnats, elephants, trees, cattle, horses and so on. There are many other inferior births that cause grief. When he is born as a human, he is a dwarf, or hunchbacked. Or the man is born in inferior lineages of a chandala or a pulkasa. There will still be some store of good or bad deeds left. Ascending with this, he becomes superior species—shudra, vaishya, kings and others.<sup>229</sup> Sometimes, he ascends further up to become a brahmana or Indra of the gods. In this way, the performers of evil deeds descend downwards into hell. Hear attentively from me about where the performers of auspicious deeds go. Determined by Yama, such men go to auspicious destinations. Large numbers of gandharvas sing around them. Large numbers of apsaras dance around them. They are adorned with excellent and charming necklaces and anklets. Blazing in their divine garlands, they quickly proceed on vimanas. When they are dislodged from there, they are born as kings and other great-souled ones. Having been born

in such families, they protect those who perform virtuous acts. They enjoy objects of pleasure and head upwards. However, if they act in contrary ways, as stated before, such men fall down. I have thus told you everything about how beings suffer. O brahmana rishi! Now hear about how conception results.””

## Chapter 11

‘The son said, “When the woman is in her season and the man’s seed is sprinkled there, at that instant, a person is released from heaven or hell and reaches samsara. O father! The person is overcome by these two sources and attains stability. First, there is a billow, which becomes a bubble, which next becomes an egg. The seed that is inside the egg germinates. In due course, the five limbs are generated. The minor limbs follow—fingers, eyes, nose, face and ears. From these minor limbs, nails and other things sprout. Body hair develops and the hair on the head comes after that. As the foetus grows, the womb expands in proportion. Just as a coconut grows along with its casing, this too develops with its casing. The womb is such that the head of the foetus faces downwards. As the foetus grows, the palms are next to the thighs and the hands are placed on the thighs. The thumbs are placed on the thighs and the fingers are in front. The eyes are behind the thighs and the nose is placed between the thighs. The buttocks are placed on the two heels, with the arms and the legs outside. Situated inside the woman’s womb, the creature gradually grows in this way. In the case of other creatures, the form of the foetus is like that of the creature. The foetus is hardened by the digestive fire and subsists on what the mother eats and drinks. With the store of good and bad deeds, the creature is thus based inside the womb. It is tied at the navel by the umbilical cord known as *apyayani*. At the other end, this cord is fixed to the woman’s womb. That is how the creature is nourished, sustained inside the womb as food and drink make their way into the woman’s stomach. This is how the body is nourished and the creature grows. At that stage, there are still many kinds of memories about samsara. As it is pushed here and there, distaste develops. ‘As soon as I am released from this womb, I will not do that again.’ ‘I will

strive so that I never have to enter a womb again.’ Remembering the miseries experienced in the course of hundreds of births driven by destiny, the creature thinks in this way. In the course of time, with the head still downwards, the creature turns itself and is born in the ninth or the tenth month. As it emerges, it suffers from the wind known as Prajapatya. With the heart suffering from grief, it laments as it emerges. As soon as it emerges from the womb, it loses its senses. As a result of the touch of the wind, consciousness is regained. At this time, it is enveloped and confounded by Vaishnavi maya. Confused by this, jnana is destroyed. With jnana destroyed, the being passes through the stages of being an infant, a child, a youth and an old person. A man repeatedly goes through death and birth. Like a mechanical clock, the cycle of samsara whirls him around. Sometimes, a man reaches heaven. Sometimes, he reaches hell. Sometimes, a person who dies can go to both heaven and hell. Sometimes, he is born again and reaps the fruits of his own deeds. Sometimes, the fruits of deeds are enjoyed within a short period of time and he dies. O supreme among brahmanas! Sometimes, the fruits of good and bad deeds are enjoyed within a short period of time in heaven or hell and he is born again. O father! There is great misery in hell. On beholding the residents of heaven enjoying themselves, those who fall down into hell suffer even more. However, from the moment one ascends upwards to heaven, there is great misery there too. On beholding the great miseries in hell, the fear of falling down is in their minds. Night and day, they ponder, ‘This is my destination too.’<sup>230</sup> There is great misery in dwelling in the womb and in being born through the vulva. For a person who is born, there is misery in childhood and in old age. During youth, it is very difficult to withstand the association with desire, envy and rage. Miseries increase with old age and death is the greatest of miseries. One is dragged away by Yama’s messengers and flung into hell. A person is born again, dies again and goes to hell again. In this way, like a mechanical clock, a creature is whirled around in this cycle of samsara. O father! The slightest bit of happiness does not exist in this world. There are one hundred miseries. Since I will strive for emancipation, why will I serve the three?’’<sup>231</sup>

## Chapter 12

‘The father said, “O son! This is wonderful. While imparting jnana to me, you have given me the great fruit of telling me about samsara, known as a desolate forest. O immensely intelligent one! You have described Rourava and the other hells. Now tell me about them in detail.”

‘The son replied, “I have spoken about the first hell, known as Rourava. O father! Now hear about the hell known as Maha-Rourava.<sup>232</sup> Those who have intercourse with female partners one should not have intercourse with, those who are addicted to eating what should not be eaten, those who injure friends, those who violate the trust of their master, those who ignore their own wives and hanker after the wives of others and those who destroy roads, lakes and groves—these and other such evil-doers are burnt there by the servants. In each direction, it extends for twelve thousand yojanas. The ground is coppery in hue and there is fire below. Everything is heated by the fire and the directions blaze like lightning. It is extremely dreadful to the sight and to the touch. Yama’s followers tie a person down by the hands and by the feet and release him there. He rolls around and is dragged into it. Along the path, crows, cranes, wolves, owls, scorpions, gnats and vultures tug at him and devour him. As he is scorched, he is anxious and shrieks, ‘O father! O mother! O brother! O son!’ Though he shrieks anxiously in this way, he does not find any peace. Men who are evil in their intelligence, sinners, suffer there for tens of thousands of years and are freed thereafter.<sup>233</sup> There is another hell named Tamas<sup>234</sup> and it is extremely cold in nature. It is as large as Maha-Rourava and is enveloped in thick darkness. Those who kill cattle, those who kill their brothers, those who destroy water or food and those who kill children are conveyed to this calamity of coldness. In that terrible darkness, men are afflicted by cold and run around. They

seek refuge by clinging to each other. As they suffer in that cold, their teeth are shattered. Hunger and thirst are strong there and there are other kinds of hardships. The terrible wind carries fragments of ice and shatters their bones. Afflicted by hunger, they eat the fat and blood that oozes out. They wander around and lick each other. O best among brahmanas! Thus, men suffer from great hardships in that darkness, until the store of their bad deeds has been exhausted. There is another great hell known as Nikrintana.

<sup>235</sup> O father! It constantly whirls around, like a potter's wheel. Those who see what should not be seen, those who hear what should not be heard, those who do not think that the preceptor speaks about the brahman, those who do not pay heed to the words of the preceptor or the words of the sacred texts—such sinners and evildoers are flung there by Yama's servants and sliced. From the soles of their feet to their heads, these men are tied to a cord of destiny that dangles from Yama's fingers. O supreme among brahmanas! However, their lives do not end. Though they are sliced into hundreds of fragments, those fragments unite to become one again. These evildoers are sliced for thousands of years, until all that is left of their sins has been extinguished. Now listen attentively to what I say about the hell Apratishtha. <sup>236</sup> Hardships that are impossible to tolerate are experienced in that hell. Those who cause injury to brahmanas who are engaged in their own dharma are bound in terrible nooses and conveyed there, where there are many kinds of wheels. Some are wheels, others are mechanical contrivances shaped like jars. These have been designed to cause hardships to men who are evildoers. Some men are fixed on those wheels and whirled around for a thousand years, so that they do not find even an instant of stability. Others are fixed like jars, to those mechanical contrivances shaped like jars. As they are repeatedly whirled around, those men vomit blood. Their entrails emerge through their mouths and their eyes pop out of their sockets. They suffer many other intolerable hardships from various creatures. Now hear about another hell, known as Asipatravana. Blazing in fire, this covers the earth for one thousand yojanas. Those who cause impediments in the performance of austerities by *brahmacharis* go to Asipatravana, the source of perpetual anxiety. They are scorched by



extremely fierce and terrible rays of the sun there. The inhabitants of this hell are always scorched. In the middle, there is a radiant and beautiful forest with gentle leaves. O supreme brahmana! However, those are actually the blades of swords. The place is also populated by a million powerful dogs. Their mouths are huge and their teeth are gigantic. They are as dreadful as tigers. Seeing the forest in front, covered with cool shadows, creatures dash towards it and suffer from heat and thirst. Extremely miserable, they scream, ‘Alas, mother! Alas, father!’ The fire on the ground burns their feet. Once they reach, the wind that blows flings down the blades of swords on them. As it blows, it flings them down on the blades of swords. They fall down on the ground, which is a mass of blazing flames. The entire ground is covered with flames that lick at them. The dogs quickly tear out their limbs and they cry out at this dreadful pain. O father! I have described Asipatravana to you. Now hear about Taptakumbha, <sup>237</sup> which is even more terrible. There are heated pots in every direction and these are covered with flames. The pots are filled with blazing fires, boiling oil and pulverized iron. Yama’s servants hurl evildoers into these, with the heads facing downwards. Those who criticize the sacred texts of dharma, those who pollute tirthas and those who are so foolish in their minds as to cast aside beloved and auspicious women after having enjoyed them, without considering whether they have committed a crime or not—are brought and swiftly cooked in these iron pots. As they are cooked, their bodies burst and the flaming marrow oozes out and pollutes the liquid. It is so terrible that their skulls crack, their eyes pop out and their bones are shattered. As they emerge from there, vultures forcibly pick them up and fling them back in. Their heads, limbs, nerves, flesh, skin and bones are liquefied and become one with that boiling oil. Using ladles, Yama’s messengers stir and mix those evildoers in that huge eddy of oil. O father! I have described Taptakumbha to you, in detail.””

## Chapter 13

‘The son continued, “In the seventh birth before this, I was born in a vaishya family. On that earlier occasion, I obstructed the path of cattle towards a waterbody. <sup>238</sup> Because of this transgression, I found myself in an extremely terrible hell. It was filled with fiery flames and iron-beaked birds. The limbs were crushed with mechanical contrivances and as a result of the blood that flowed, an extraordinary mire was created. After I was thrown in there, more than one hundred years passed. I suffered because of that scorching and excessive heat. I also suffered because of the heat and lamented. Then, suddenly, a delightful, cool and pleasant breeze started to blow and this emerged from a pitcher filled with mud <sup>239</sup> and sand. O father! Suddenly, the radiant Nararatna <sup>240</sup> arrived. As a result of the touch of that breeze, all the men who were sinners, including me, obtained great satisfaction, like that felt in heaven by the residents of heaven. Delighted, I exclaimed, ‘What is this?’ My dilated eyes darted around and I saw that jewel among men near us. One of Yama’s terrible servants held a staff that shone like lightning in his hand. Brandishing this, he showed the path ahead and said, ‘Come here.’ <sup>241</sup> At this, all the creatures there decided that their happiness was because they had caught sight of him. <sup>242</sup> Joining their hands in salutation, they said, ‘O king! Remain here for a short while. The wind touches your limbs and brings pleasure to us.’ At this, that man took compassion on those who had been flung into hell. He saw that they were suffering from hundreds of miseries. He saw the hell and, filled with compassion, spoke to Yama’s servant. The man said, ‘O Yama’s servant! What wicked deed have I committed? Why have I come to hell, with these great miseries? I was born in the lineage of the Janakas and was known as Vipaschit. <sup>243</sup> I was born in the kingdom of Videha and protected people

properly. I protected the four varnas in observance of their own dharma. Like the Manus in ancient times, I followed dharma and observed the norms of dharma. I performed many sacrifices. Following dharma, I protected the earth. I did not engender battles, but nor was I reluctant to fight in battles. I have served ancestors, gods, rishis and servants. I have always provided protection to all living beings, those who were extremely miserable and tormented and those who suffered from hunger and thirst. I have never hankered after another person's wife or property. On auspicious occasions and at right times, I have worshipped the ancestors and the gods. When men come to a home, like cattle heading towards a waterbody, and go away discontented and without anything, that householder's dharma and the instructed civic works are both destroyed. When the ancestors sigh in dissatisfaction, the wealth accumulated in seven births is destroyed. When the gods sigh in dissatisfaction, there is no doubt that the wealth accumulated in three births is destroyed. Therefore, I have always considered the welfare of the gods and the ancestors. Therefore, how have I arrived in this extremely terrible hell?""

## Chapter 14

‘The son said, “While we heard, Yama’s servant was questioned by the great-souled one. Though he was terrible, he replied in these comforting words. Yama’s servant said, ‘O great king! There is no doubt that you have described yourself exactly as you were. However, there was a small sin that you did commit and I will remind you. You had a wife from the land of Vidarbha and her name was Pivari. In those earlier times, though she was in season, you rendered her menses barren. That is because you were extremely attached to Sushobhana, from the land of Kekaya. Since you rendered a lady who was in her season barren, you have come to this terrible hell. The lord of fire expects oblations when it is time. In that way, Prajapati expects seed when it is the season. If a person with dharma in his soul transgresses this because he is addicted to desire,<sup>244</sup> he falls into hell because he has committed the sin of not discharging the debt to the ancestors.<sup>245</sup> This was your sin. There is nothing else. O king! Therefore, let us go now. Enjoy the fruits of your good deeds.’ Hearing this, the royal sage Janaka<sup>246</sup> was filled with compassion. The king asked, ‘O follower of the god! I will go wherever you take me. However, there is something I will ask you. You should give me a correct answer. These crows have beaks like the vajra and they are plucking out the eyes of these men. Nevertheless, the eyes are repeatedly growing back again. What did they do? Why have they been condemned? In that way, their tongues are being torn out, but new ones are being generated again. Why are these extremely miserable ones being cut with saws? Why are these being boiled in oil mixed with mud and sand? Tell me. Why are these being struck by iron-beaked birds? Struck, the joints in their bodies are being loosened and they are uttering loud shrieks. All their limbs are being injured and mangled. As they are struck, these men

are screaming day and night. Other evildoers can be seen, undergoing many kinds of pain. Because of their sinful deeds, they have faced this catastrophe. Tell me. What did they do?’ Yama’s servant replied, ‘O protector of the earth! You have asked me about the fruits that result from sinful deeds. Briefly, I will tell you the truth about this. In due course, a man reaps the consequences of his good and evil deeds. It is through enjoying the consequences that good and bad deeds are exhausted. Without such enjoyment, a human cannot exhaust the fruits of good and bad deeds. It is only after enjoyment that good and bad deeds can be discarded. Listen to me. Evildoers face famine after famine, hardship after hardship, fear after fear, death after death and penury after penury. As a result of being bound to deeds, creatures have many kinds of ends. Those who are auspicious in their deeds, controlled and faithful, giving away riches—they face festivities after festivities, heaven after heaven, happiness after happiness. However, after death, because of their sins, sinners face difficult regions filled with fear from tigers, elephants, snakes and thieves. How else can it be? But those who perform auspicious deeds go to auspicious regions. They wear fragrant garlands and excellent garments. They have virtuous vehicles and food. They are always praised. Humans store up good and bad deeds across many hundreds and thousands of lives. O protector of the earth! This is how happiness and unhappiness result. Just as a seed waits for the rain, in that way, good and bad deeds wait, according to the appropriate time, place, action and agent. Depending on the time and the place, if a person commits a trifling sin, the hardship he faces is like the foot being pierced by a thorn. If the sin is greater, it is as if the thorn becomes thicker and is like a stake or a dart. The sinner advances towards a hardship where there are ailments of the head, impossible to tolerate. The food is what should not be eaten. There is cold, heat, exhaustion, scorching and other things. In this way, other sins wait for the fruits to come to fruition. Great sins lead to ailments that last for a long period of time. The difficult fruits are in the form of suffering from fire, weapons and bondage. Even a little bit of a good deed yields fruit in the form of a pleasant fragrance, touch, sound, taste and form. If the good deed is greater, the great fruits last for longer, vanquishing time.

In this way, joy and misery are the consequences of good and bad deeds. Having enjoyed many of these, one is born and established in samsara again. The fruits bind a person to the lineage, <sup>247</sup> the time, jnana and lack of jnana. These become attached to the *linga* form of the atman. There are no fruits unless a man has performed a good or a bad deed through deeds, thought or words. Whenever a person experiences happiness or unhappiness, a little or a lot, that agitates his consciousness. A good or a bad deed only lasts for as long as it has not been exhausted through being enjoyed. After that, it is like food that has been digested. In this way, a man who commits a great sin is flung into a terrible hell and is whirled around night and day. O king! Just like that, good deeds are enjoyed in heaven, along with the immortals, gandharvas, Siddhas and apsaras, accompanied by singing and the playing of musical instruments. Thereafter, depending on the good or the wicked deed, a being is born as a god, a human, or as inferior species. These result from good and bad deeds and are characterized by joy and misery. O king! You asked me about these evildoers who are undergoing hardships. What sins have they committed? I will tell you about this in detail. They are worst among men. Those wicked ones, with evil thoughts, glance at the wives of others and desire the possessions of others. The iron-beaked birds pluck out their eyes and their eyes grow again. This will happen for as many thousands of years as they blinked while committing those sins. There are those who have given instructions on the basis of wicked sacred texts; men who have used these to counsel and destroy correct insight, even if it is for enemies; there are those who have given explanations contrary to the sacred texts; and those who have criticized the Vedas, gods, brahmanas and preceptors—those extremely terrible iron-beaked birds will repeatedly tear out their tongues for as many years <sup>248</sup> and the tongues will grow again. O king! Behold. There are worst among men who created dissension between friends, between a father and a son, between relatives, between the performer of a sacrifice and the officiating priest, between a mother and a son, between companions and between a husband and a wife. They are being severed with saws. There are wicked evildoers who caused torment to others and

prevented them from enjoying themselves; those who stole their palm leaves, <sup>249</sup> access to places where there was air, sandalwood and *ushira*; <sup>250</sup> and those who caused great grief to innocent people. As a consequence of their sins, they are placed in those pitchers of mud and sand. If a man eats at a shraddha ceremony performed by someone else or at a ceremony meant for the gods or the ancestors without being invited, the birds tug him in opposite directions. Those who strike at the inner organs of the virtuous with their words suffer unobstructed piercing by those birds. If a person indulges in backbiting or has indiscriminately injured others with his words, those sharp-edged razors sever his tongue into two. Those who disrespect mothers, fathers and preceptors are immersed, head downwards, into pits filled with pus, urine and excrement. There are wicked ones who eat when gods, ancestors and guests have still not eaten and oblations have not been offered to the ancestors, the fire and birds. They become *suchimukha* birds <sup>251</sup> and feed on pus and excrement. Men who make brahmanas and varnas eat when seated in the same *pankti*, <sup>252</sup> or make them eat what they should not eat, are born with bodies as large as mountains and subsist on excrement. If a man eats without ensuring that another person who has selflessly travelled with him has eaten, he is made to subsist on phlegm. O lord of men! Having touched *ucchishta*, <sup>253</sup> if a person touches a cow, a brahmana or the fire, that hand is flung into a blazing pit of fire. Without becoming clean after touching *ucchishta*, if a person wilfully looks at the sun, the moon or the stars, Yama's messengers ensure that his eyes are used as kindling for the fire. When men touch cattle, the fire, the mother, brahmanas, the elder brother, the father, the sister, the daughter-in-law, the preceptor or an aged person with the feet, their feet are bound in iron shackles and scorched in the fire. Up to the knees, they are immersed in heaps of burning coal and scorched. Behold the miseries of these sinners who have been flung down on the ground. They have eaten *payasam*, *krisara*, goat meat and other food offered to gods without it having been cleansed first. <sup>254</sup> Yama's servants are extracting their teeth from their mouths and their eyes are rolling around. These sinners found delight in criticism of preceptors, gods, brahmanas and the Vedas. Yama's servants are



repeatedly driving iron stakes that shower flames into their ears and they are lamenting. Because of anger and avarice, there are those who have broken and destroyed watering places for travellers, the abodes of gods and brahmanas and auspicious assembly halls in the temples of the gods. As they lament, Yama's extremely terribly servants are repeatedly using sharp weapons to separate their skins from their bodies. There are men who have passed urine and excrement in paths used by cattle, brahmanas and the sun.<sup>255</sup> Crows are extracting their entrails through their anuses. Having promised his daughter to someone, if a man bestows her on someone else, his body is cut into many fragments and made to flow in a river of alkali. If a man abandons those who depend on him for subsistence, a son, a servant, a wife, or a relative, however insignificant, even if it is at a time of famine or battle, and does not give them what they need, Yama's servants force him to eat his own flesh through his mouth. That is how he satisfies his hunger. Because of greed, if a person abandons those who seek refuge with him or those who depend on him for a salary, Yama's servant use machines of torture to make him suffer. There are men who give away<sup>256</sup> the store of good deeds accumulated since birth. Those evildoers are ground with rocks. There are men who steal what has been left with them in trust. All their limbs are bound and, day and night, worms, scorpions, crows and owls feed on them. They suffer from pain, hunger and thirst and their palates dry up. There are sinners who indulge in sexual intercourse during the day or enjoy themselves with other people's wives. Behold them, impaled to *shalmali* trees,<sup>257</sup> with sharp iron thorns. Their limbs are mangled as they suffer, streams of blood flow. O tiger among men! Behold these men. Yama's followers have confined them to holes meant for rats. They enjoyed themselves with other people's wives. These are foolish ones. While studying artisanship or other things, they made the instructor sit below them. They suffer a great deal, because they are oppressed by being made to carry boulders along public paths. Because of that burden, their heads pain and, night and day, they endure hunger and thirst. There are those who release phlegm, urine and excrement in waterbodies. They go to this foul-smelling hell, filled with phlegm, urine and excrement. These are ones who

did not treat each other with hospitality earlier. Suffering from hunger, they devour each other's flesh. These are ones who showed dishonour to the Vedas, the fire and the fire kindled for oblations. <sup>258</sup> They are being repeatedly flung down from the summits of mountains. When they are reborn, even if they are masters, such men remain emaciated for as long as they live. <sup>259</sup> Those who always receive from those who are most inferior and who officiate as priests at their sacrifices become worms and are devoured by ants. In the form of a worm, such a man always finds subsistence while residing amidst stones. Those who eat sweetmeats alone, while their servants, friends and guests look on, are made to swallow lumps of burning coal. O king! Those who devour flesh from the backs of people, <sup>260</sup> become blind, deaf and dumb. As they wander around, suffering from hunger, terrible wolves always eat up the flesh from their backs. This man was an ungrateful wretch. He was so evil-minded and ungrateful that he harmed his friends. He has been flung to Taptakumbha and as he is dried up, he laments. After this, he will be flung into vessels filled with mud and sand and tortured with machines. That is the reason he will find himself in Asipatravana, where he will be struck by leaves that are like swords. He will be severed and undergo many kinds of hardships in Kalasutra. <sup>261</sup> I do not know how he will escape from there. When they came to a shraddha ceremony, these wicked brahmanas fought against each other. Therefore, they will now drink the froth that issues from all their limbs. Those who steal gold, kill brahmanas, are drunkards and have intercourse with their preceptor's wife—they are burnt in blazing flames, from above, from below and from every direction. They remain there for many thousands of years. When they are born again, such men are marked by signs of leprosy, consumption and other ailments. When they die, they go to hell again. O lord of men! When they are reborn, they suffer from ailments again, right till the end of the kalpa. A person who kills a cow goes to hell for three births. In this way, hells have also been determined for all the minor sins. Once they have been released from hell, according to the sin, the species into which they are born has been decided. I will tell you. Listen.””

## Chapter 15

““Yama’s servant said, ‘A brahmana who receives from a person who has fallen down, <sup>262</sup> becomes an ass. A person who officiates at a sacrifice undertaken by a fallen person, becomes a worm, once he has been released from hell. A brahmana who deceives his preceptor, and desires his wife or his possessions in thought or words, becomes a dog. A person who dishonours his parents is born as a donkey. A person who abuses his parents is born as a sharika bird. A person who disrespects his brother’s wife becomes a pigeon. A person who oppresses her becomes a tortoise. A person who eats his master’s food and does not seek his master’s welfare is filled with confusion. After death, when he is born again, he becomes a monkey. A person who appropriates what has been left with him in trust is born as a worm, after he has been freed from hell. Freed from hell, a person who indulges in calumny becomes a rakshasa. A man who violates trust is born as a fish. The senses of a person who steals paddy, barley, sesamum seed, *masha* beans, *kulatha* pulses, mustard, chickpeas, beans, *kalama* paddy, <sup>263</sup> *mudga* beans, wheat, flax and other crops is deluded. He is born as a rat with a large face, resembling an ichneumon. A person who has intercourse with another person’s wife is born as a terrible wolf and then progressively becomes a dog, a jackal, a crane, a vulture, a snake and a heron. An evildoer who, because of his wicked intelligence, rapes his brother’s wife, becomes a male cuckoo after he has been freed from hell. A man who is so overwhelmed with desire that he commits the sin of raping his friend’s wife, his preceptor’s wife or the king’s wife, is born as a pig. A person who obstructs a sacrifice, a gift or a wedding becomes a worm. A person who bestows his daughter again is born as a worm. If a person eats his food without having first offered it to gods, ancestors and brahmanas, is

born as a crow after he has been freed from hell. The elder brother is like a father and once he has been freed from hell, a person who disrespects him is born as a curlew. A shudra who has intercourse with a brahmana lady is born as a worm. If he has offspring through her, he is born as an insect that lives inside wood. Thereafter, he is born as a worm, a pig, a *madgu* <sup>264</sup> and a chandala. When he has been freed from hell, an ungrateful and degraded man who harms those who do him a good turn is progressively born as a worm, an insect, a flying insect, a scorpion, a fish, a crow, a tortoise and a pulkasa. A man who kills an unarmed man is born as an ass. A person who kills a woman or a child is born as a worm. A man who steals food is born as a fly. I will particularly speak about food. Listen. Freed from hell, a person who steals milk is born as a cat. A person who steals food mixed with sesamum and oilcakes is born as a rat. A person who steals ghee is born as a mongoose. A person who steals goat meat is born as a crow or a cormorant. A person who steals fish or meat is born as a crow. A person who steals the meat of a sheep is born as a hawk. A person who steals salt is born as a water-kite. A person who steals curds becomes a worm. A person who steals milk is born as a crane. A person who steals oil is born as a cockroach. A man who steals honey is born as a gnat. A person who steals cakes is born as an ant. A person who steals *havishya* <sup>265</sup> is born as a house lizard. A person who steals *asava* <sup>266</sup> is born as a partridge. An evil-souled person who steals iron is born as a crow. A person who steals a brass vessel is born as a green pigeon. A person who steals a silver vessel is born as a pigeon. A person who steals a gold vessel is born in the species of a worm. A person who steals silk becomes a chakravaka. A person who steals a silken garment becomes a silkworm. A person who steals a girdle becomes a peacock. <sup>267</sup> A person who steals fine cloth is born as a parrot. A person who steals a garment made out of wool or goat hair is born as a bear. A person who steals a garment made out of cotton is born as a curlew. A person who steals fire is born as a crane or an ass. A person who steals dyes or pot-herbs is born as a peacock. A person who steals a red garment becomes a jivajivaka. <sup>268</sup> A person who steals auspicious fragrances is born as mole. A person who steals garments is born as a rabbit. A person who

steals straw becomes crippled. A person who steals wood becomes a woodworm. A person who steals flowers becomes poor. A man who steals a vehicle becomes lame. A person who steals vegetables becomes a green pigeon. A person who steals water becomes a chataka bird. A person who steals land goes to extremely terrible hells like Rourava. Progressively, he becomes grass, shrubs, creepers, climbing plants, hollow reeds and trees. When his sins are exhausted, he becomes a man. A man who severs a bull's testicles is a eunuch. For twenty-one births, he becomes a worm, an insect, a flying insect, an aquatic creature, a deer and a cow. After this, he becomes a condemned chandala or pulkasa. He is lame and blind and suffers from leprosy and consumption. He is oppressed by diseases of the mouth, the eye and the genital organs. He suffers from epilepsy and then becomes a shudra. These are also seen to be the progressive states for those who steal cattle, gold and other objects and those who steal learning by not paying their preceptor. If a foolish man gives his wife away to another man, he suffers from many hardships and after being freed from these, becomes a eunuch. If a man offers oblations into a fire that has not been properly kindled, he suffers from indigestion and dyspepsia. A person indulging in calumny, an ingrate, a person who pains the inner organs of another, a cruel person, a shameless person, a person who has intercourse with another person's wife, a person who wishes to steal another person's possessions, a person who abuses the gods, a person who uses words to deceive others, a miser, a slayer of men and an inclination to praise prohibited conduct—these are signs to show that a person has just emerged from hell. Compassion towards creatures, virtuous speech, hankering for the afterworld, truthfulness, the welfare of beings, believing in the words and the insight of the Vedas, serving preceptors, *devarshis*, Siddhas and rishis, association with the virtuous, the practice of auspicious deeds, friendliness and other such rites of virtuous dharma—a learned person says that these are the signs of being dislodged from hell. O king! I have thus spoken to you about virtuous people and sinners. This is how the performers of good and bad deeds reap the fruits of their own deeds. You have seen everything now. Let us go elsewhere. Since you have seen hell, we should go somewhere else.’”

‘The son continued, “Placing him in front, the king prepared to leave. At this, the men suffering from pain screamed out loudly. ‘O lord of the earth! Show us your favours. Remain here for a while. The breeze that touches your limbs gladdens our hearts. O tiger among men! It takes away all the torments and hardships of our limbs. O lord of the earth! Show us your favours.’ Hearing these words, he asked Yama’s servant, ‘How is it that my presence delights them? What auspicious deed have I performed in the world of the mortals? How is it that my presence here delights them?’ Yama’s servant replied, ‘Your body has been nourished by food taken after the ancestors, the gods, the guests and the servants have eaten. Your mind was always devoted to them. Therefore, the breeze that touches your limbs caused delight. O king! That is the reason these evildoers no longer feel any pain. You followed the rituals and performed horse sacrifices and other sacrifices. Yama’s machines, weapons, fires and crows are the causes behind great hardships like oppression, severing, burning and so on. O king! However, on seeing you, their energy is taken away and they become mild.’ The king responded, ‘It is my view that the happiness obtained from heaven or Brahma’s world is nothing compared to the happiness obtained by providing relief to creatures. O one who is fair of face! Therefore, if my presence here removes their hardships, I will remain in this spot, as immobile as a pillar.’ Yama’s servant said, ‘O Indra among kings! Come. Enjoy the objects of pleasure you have earned through your own auspicious deeds. Let these evildoers enjoy their miseries.’ The king replied, ‘As long as they suffer from these great miseries, I will remain here. These residents of hell are becoming happy because of my presence. There is no doubt that the life of a man who does not show favours to afflicted people who seek refuge with him, even if they are on the side of the enemy, is a life to be ashamed of. If the mind is not made up to save those who are afflicted, sacrifices, donations and austerities bring no prosperity in this life or in the next. If a man’s heart is so hard that he is not touched by children, the aged and the afflicted, I do not think he is a man. He is a rakshasa. If I am near them, I will suffer from the torment of the heat, the fierce stench, and other miseries of hell that lead to hunger and thirst. Those hardships are so great

that I will lose my senses and will be destroyed. O fortunate one! But even then, I think this is superior to the bliss of heaven. If many are delighted because of my being miserable, tell me, what have I not been able to accomplish? Therefore, leave without any delay.’ Yama’s messenger said, ‘Dharma and Shakra have come to take you away. O king! Hence, you must go. Let us go.’ Dharma said, ‘I have been properly worshipped by you. Therefore, I will take you to heaven. Ascend this vimana. Let us leave immediately.’ The king replied, ‘O Dharma! Thousands of men are suffering in hell. They are shrieking, asking me to save them. I will not go.’ Indra said, ‘These are evildoers. They have come to hell because of what they have done. O king! Because of your auspicious deeds, you must go to heaven.’ The king replied, ‘If I know that you are Dharma and if I know that you are the god Shatakratu, you should tell me the extent of my auspicious deeds.’ Dharma said, ‘They are as many as drops of water in the ocean, stars in the firmament, drops of water in showers of rain, grains of sand in the Ganga and the numbers of different species. O great king! They are innumerable. There is no number that can be attached to your good deeds. O king! Now that you have shown compassion towards the ones who are in hell, they have multiplied a hundred thousand times. O best among kings! Therefore, go and enjoy the world of the immortals. Because of their own deeds, let their sins be exhausted in hell.’ The king replied, ‘If these men do not gain from being near me, why do they wish for my presence? O lord of the gods! Thus, if I have performed any good deeds, let these sinners in hell be relieved of their miseries.’ Indra said, ‘O lord of the earth! Because of this, you have obtained a region that is even greater. Behold. These sinners have been released from hell.’ At this, a shower of flowers rained down on the lord of the earth. Placing him on a vimana, Hari <sup>269</sup> took him to his own world. I, and the others there, were freed from our hardships. Depending on the fruits of our own deeds, we were born as different species. O supreme among brahmanas! I have thus told you everything about hell and about how different species originate from the respective sins. I have told you everything that I witnessed earlier. I have



told you about my earlier experience and about how I developed jnana. O immensely fortunate one! After this, what else shall I tell you?””

## Chapter 16

‘The father asked, “O son! You have told me about the way samsara is organized and its nature, about how it goes on and on, without decay, like a mechanical clock. <sup>270</sup> I have thus got to know that everything is like this. If that is the state of affairs, tell me, what should I do?”

‘The son replied, “O father! If you have no doubts and have faith in my words, then give up garhasthya. Make up your mind to resort to vanaprastha. <sup>271</sup> Follow the rituals and give up the fire. <sup>272</sup> Fix yourself on the atman that is inside you. Cast aside the opposite pairs of sentiments. <sup>273</sup> Be devoid of possessions. Follow the conduct of being solitary and bring your atman under control. Be a mendicant. Be devoted to yoga and avoid contact with anything external. You will then obtain the yoga that is the medication for all association with miseries. It is unmatched and is the means for attaining emancipation. Its characteristics cannot be described. When you are united with yoga, you will never become a being again.” <sup>274</sup>

‘The father said, “O son! Tell me about yoga, the supreme means for attaining emancipation, so that I do not become a being again and am never attached with miseries again. How can I free myself from attachment and the bondage of samsara? This yoga doesn’t exist in me. However, yoga exists in you. Therefore, now tell me about yoga. My body and mind are suffering from samsara, which is like the rays of the sun. Sprinkle the cool words of jnana about the brahman on me. I am suffering from the poison, having been bitten by the black serpent of ignorance. I am like one who is dead. Bestowing your words, which are like *amrita*, revive me again. I am suffering from the bonds of a son, a wife, a home and a field. Without any delay, throw open the gate of vijnana and use those good sentiments to free me.”

‘The son replied, “O father! In earlier times, the intelligent Dattatreya was questioned about yoga by Alarka and he explained it to him properly, in detail. Listen.”

‘The father asked, “Whose son was Dattatreya? Why did he speak about yoga? Who was the immensely fortunate Alarka who asked him about yoga?”

‘The son replied, “In the city of Pratishthana, there was a brahmana named Koushika. Because of the sins he had committed in a different life, he suffered from leprosy. Though he suffered from that disease, his wife worshipped her husband like a divinity. She massaged his feet and limbs, bathed him, clothed him and fed him. She washed away his phlegm, urine, excrement and blood. In private, she tended to him with sweet conversation and conduct. She constantly worshipped him, with humility. Nevertheless, extremely angry, he censured her with terrible words. However, taking him to be a divinity, the virtuous one prostrated herself before him. Though he was extremely horrible, she thought he was the best. The best among brahmanas was incapable of moving. He told his wife, ‘I saw a courtesan standing by her house on the royal road. <sup>275</sup> Take me to her house. O one who knows about dharma! Take me to her. She is still in my heart. I saw the maiden when the sun was rising and it is night now. Ever since I have seen her, she has not left my heart. She is beautiful in all her limbs. Her breasts are plump and her hips are heavy. If the slender-limbed one does not embrace me, you will see me dead. Perverse desire has taken hold of my senses and there are many men who desire her. But I am incapable of moving. It seems to me that is an impediment.’ Her husband was afflicted by desire and she heard his words. The immensely fortunate wife was devoted to her husband and became anxious. She firmly tied a lot of riches to her garment. Placing her husband on her shoulders, she proceeded slowly. The night sky was covered with clouds and the path along the royal road could only be discerned through flashes of lightning. The brahmana’s wife wished to ensure her husband’s pleasure. Along the path, there was Mandavya, who had been impaled on a stake meant for a thief, because he had been suspected of being a thief. <sup>276</sup> He was suffering a great deal. The

brahmana Koushika was astride his wife's shoulders and as he moved, struck Mandavya with his left foot. Mandavya became angry and said, 'I am suffering. Who has unnecessarily disturbed me? Because of this, that evil-souled worst among men will also suffer. There is no doubt that he will be so incapacitated that he will lose his life when the sun rises. He will be destroyed as soon as he sees the light of the sun.' His wife heard this extremely terrible curse and, distressed, said, 'The sun will not rise.' At this, the sun did not rise for many days and there was continuous night. The gods were terrified. 'In the absence of *svadhyaya*, *vashatkara*, *svadha* and *svaha*, how can the destruction of the entire universe be prevented? <sup>277</sup> There will be no system of night and day, months and seasons will no longer exist. When these are destroyed, one will no longer know *dakshinayana* and *uttarayana*. <sup>278</sup> Without knowing about these *ayanas*, how can time be measured in years? Because of the words of a lady devoted to her husband, the sun is not rising. Without the sun rising, ablutions, baths and other rituals cannot take place. There are no oblations into the fire and the absence of sacrifices can be seen. Without time, without oblations, sacrifices and other rites, all creatures are being destroyed. Mobile and immobile objects are enveloped in darkness. We are satisfied through oblations. The mortals give us our shares through oblations at sacrifices. We favour mortals through rain and other means and crops are grown. Herbs are generated because mortals worship us with sacrifices. Thus, worshipped through sacrifices and other means, we give them what they desire. We shower downwards on mortals and they shower upwards on us. Humans shower us with oblations and we shower them with water. Of course, there are evil-souled and avaricious ones who devour everything themselves and do not give us our sacrificial shares through *nitya* and *naimittika* rites. <sup>279</sup> For the destruction of the wicked ones who harm us, we pollute the water, the sun, the fire, the wind and the earth. Since the water and other things are polluted, many kinds of extremely terrible symptoms appear among those evildoers and they die. However, there are also those who please us and only eat what is left. <sup>280</sup> We delight those great-souled ones by conferring auspicious worlds on them. But since none of this exists now, how can the

system be maintained? How can day be brought back?’ The gods assembled and consulted with each other in this way. They were worried that sacrifices would be destroyed. Hearing the words of the gods, the god Prajapati spoke. ‘Energy is pacified through energy, austerities are pacified through austerities. O immortals! Listen to my words. Because of the greatness of the lady who is devoted to her husband, the sun will not rise. Since it does not rise, there is injury to you and the mortals. Therefore, since you desire that the sun should rise, seek the favours of the ascetic Anasuya, Atri’s wife. She is devoted to her husband.’ They went and pleased her and she asked, ‘What shall I do?’ The gods requested that there might be day, as there used to be earlier.

“Anasuya replied, ‘How can the greatness of a lady who is devoted to her husband be diminished? O gods! I have to maintain the honour of the virtuous one, so that her curse is pacified, her husband is not destroyed and your desire of there being day and night again is accomplished.’ Having told the gods this, she went to the auspicious lady’s house. Following dharma, she asked about her welfare and that of her husband. ‘O fortunate one! O one who brings delight to your husband! Are you happy? Do you think that your husband is superior to all the gods? I have obtained great fruits through serving my husband. Women obtain all the objects of desire by serving their husbands. O virtuous one! Humans must always pay their five debts.<sup>281</sup> Following the dharma of one’s own varna, one must accumulate wealth. Observing the rituals, the received wealth must be given away to worthy recipients. One must always be truthful, upright and compassionate and perform austerities and donations. Without any attachment or hate, one must perform the rituals indicated in the sacred texts. According to capacity, one must always faithfully give. That is the way humans obtain worlds ordained for their own species. O virtuous one! It is through a great deal of effort, that one then progressively goes up to higher worlds, those of Prajapati and others. However, though men earn them through a lot of hardship, women earn all these auspicious worlds by serving their husbands. There are no separate sacrifices for women. There are no separate shraddha ceremonies or fasting. They conquer all the

desired worlds by serving their husbands. That is the reason you hold the view that your supreme task and your supreme objective is your husband. There are virtuous tasks meant for gods, ancestors, masters and others. However, by only serving the husband, the woman obtains half of those fruits.’ <sup>282</sup> Having heard her words, she welcomed them affectionately and replied to Anasuya, Atri’s wife, in these words. ‘I am blessed by fortune that I have seen you. O one who is naturally fortunate! You have increased my faith again. I know that a woman has no refuge other than her husband. For this world and for the next world, he must be pleased. O famous one! When a husband is pleased, a woman obtains happiness in this world and in the next one. For women, husbands are divinities. O immensely fortunate one! You have come to my house. O auspicious one! Tell me what I and my husband can do for you.’ Anasuya replied, ‘These gods, along with Indra, have come to me. They are miserable. Because of your words, the difference between day and night has ceased and the virtuous rites have ended. They desire that the difference between day and night should continue, as it used to. That is the reason I have come to you. Listen to my words. Since there is no day, there is a lack of sacrifices and other rituals. O ascetic lady! In their absence, the gods cannot be nourished. Since the day has been destroyed, all the rituals have been destroyed. Since the rituals have been destroyed, there is no rain and the world will be destroyed. Now that you know the truth, if you so wish, you should be patient and save the world from this calamity. O virtuous one! Be pacified. Let the worlds and the sun be as they used to be earlier.’ The brahmana’s wife said, ‘The immensely fortunate Mandavya has cursed my lord and husband. In his rage, he has told him that he will be destroyed when the sun rises.’ Anasuya replied, ‘O fortunate one! If you say so and if it pleases you, I will follow your words and will make your husband get back the body he used to possess earlier. O one excellent in complexion! I take women who are devoted to their husbands to be great and that is the reason I honour you.’ When she agreed, the ascetic lady, Anasuya, offered oblations and arghya to the sun. It had been night for the equivalent of ten nights. The illustrious sun god’s form was like that of a blossoming red lotus. With the large disc,

he arose from behind Mount Udaya. Having lost his life, her husband immediately fell down on the ground. As he was falling down on the ground, she <sup>283</sup> clasped him. Anasuya said, ‘O fortunate one! You should not grieve. Immediately, behold my powers. By serving my husband, I have obtained the fruit of austerities. Since I have never regarded any other man as my husband’s equal in beauty, conduct, intelligence, sweetness of speech and other such qualities, through the strength of that truth, this brahmana will be freed from his ailments and will become young again. He will come back to life and with his wife as a companion, will live for a hundred years. Since I have never looked upon any divinity as my husband’s equal, through the strength of that truth, the brahmana will come back to life and will be hale. Through deeds, thoughts and words, my efforts have always been directed towards worshipping my husband. Therefore, let the brahmana come back to life again.’ At this, the brahmana arose, freed from disease. He became young again and illuminated the house with his radiance. He had no signs of old age and resembled a deity. Flowers were showered down from above and the musical instruments of the gods were sounded. Extremely delighted, the gods spoke to Anasuya. ‘O fortunate one! You have accomplished a great task for the gods. Ask for a boon. O one excellent in vows! Since the sun has risen again, please ask for a boon. O ascetic lady! That is the reason the gods wish to confer a boon on you.’ Anasuya replied, ‘O those who grant boons! With the grandfather at the forefront, if the gods are pleased with me and if you think I am worthy of receiving a boon, grant me the boon that Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshvara should become my sons. With my husband, let me obtain the yoga that frees from all hardships.’ Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva and the other gods agreed to this. Having taken their leave of the ascetic lady, they departed.

“After many days had passed, the illustrious Atri, Brahma’s second son, <sup>284</sup> saw his own wife. She was beautiful in her limbs and had bathed after her menstrual cycle. Her form was seductive. Seeing the unblemished one, the sage’s mind was filled with desire. Having seen her, he was agitated. His powerful semen was released and proceeded upwards. Its hue was white and its form was that of the brahman. As it descended and covered



the ten directions, it was white and had the form of rajas. <sup>285</sup> Soma was born through Prajapati Atri's mental powers. Vishnu, the reservoir and sustainer of all that is true, was pleased and was born as her son in the form of the great-souled Dattatreya. This excellent brahmana, the store of sattva, was born from Atri's physical body. He was famous as Dattatreya and suckled at Anasuya's breast. Vishnu descended, in the form of Atri's second son. He was angry <sup>286</sup> and emerged from his mother's womb within a week. He saw the gross crimes that the Indra among the Haihayas was engaged in, directed towards Atri. Therefore, he desired to instantly burn him down, <sup>287</sup> along with the Haihayas. Filled with misery and intolerance at having had to dwell inside a womb, Durvasa was born as Rudra's portion, filled with tamas. In this way, Brahma, Shiva and Vishnu were born as three sons—Soma from Brahma, Dattatreya from Vishnu and Durvasa from Shankara. This was in accordance with the boon the residents of heaven had conferred. With his beams, Soma cools and nourishes herbs, plants and humans. Delighting everyone, that Prajapati resides in heaven. <sup>288</sup> Dattatreya saves subjects from the wicked oppression of daityas and to perform tasks that show favours to the virtuous. He was born from Vishnu's portion. The illustrious Durvasa, who is actually without birth, descended for the sake of burning down those who were insolent in sight, thoughts and words. Therefore, he resorted to terrible inclinations. The illustrious Prajapati <sup>289</sup> was born as Atri's son and became Soma. In the form of Dattatreya, Hari engaged in yoga in the material world. Durvasa abandoned his mother and his father. He roamed around the earth, resorting to the practice known as *unmatta*. <sup>290</sup>

“The yogi Dattatreya was always surrounded by the sons of sages. However, since he did not want to become attached to them, the lord spent a long period of time immersed in the water. But since the great-souled one was extremely handsome to behold, those sons did not leave him and remained on the banks of the Sarasvati. Even after one hundred divine years had passed, all the sons of the sages did not leave him. Pleased with them, the sage arose from the water. He had an extremely beautiful and fortunate lady with him. She possessed splendid buttocks and was attired in divine

garments. He thought, ‘Since I am with a woman, the sons of the sages will abandon me. I will then be able to practise yoga.’ Even then, the sons of the sages did not abandon him. At this, he started to drink liquor with the woman. ‘If I drink liquor with my wife, they will abandon me. There are sins from associating with those who enjoy themselves with women and indulge in singing and musical instruments.’ But they took him to be a great-souled one, unaffected by such external tasks. Even though he was drinking *varuni*,<sup>291</sup> such a lord of yoga was not tainted by this. Like the wind residing in the house of an outcaste, he was not touched by this. Though he was drinking liquor with his wife, the one who knew about yoga was actually tormenting himself through austerities. Desiring to free themselves through yoga, they regarded him as a lord of yoga.

“After Kritavirya left for heaven, some time passed. The ministers, the priests and the citizens decided that the powerful Kartavirya Arjuna<sup>292</sup> should be instated and summoned him for the purpose. But he said, ‘O ministers! I will not rule over the kingdom. That finally leads to hell, since taxes collected for a specific purpose are not successfully spent. By giving one-twelfth the value of their merchandise to the king, traders hope to travel along protected routes that are protected from bandits. Cowherds give one-sixth of their ghee and buttermilk and farmers give a similar share of their produce. The king earns merits through agnihotra, austerities, truthfulness, studying the Vedas, hospitality, performing sacrifices to the Vishvadevas, constructing ponds, wells, waterbodies and temples to the gods, giving food to those who desire it and other kinds of public works. However, if the traders and others give him a greater share of the produce than is warranted and the king accepts and enjoys it, he acts like a thief and all these sacrifices and public works are destroyed. Having received one-sixth of the produce as a share, if people have to depend on others for protection, it is certain that the king goes to hell. In return for protection, the king’s share has been fixed earlier. Having accepted that share of the riches, if the king does not protect, he becomes a thief. Therefore, I desire to torment myself through austerities and become a yogi. Having accomplished this, I will become the single king on earth and rule the earth. I will alone wield

weapons and be filled with prosperity. Unless that happens, I will not unnecessarily become a sinner.’ He thus informed them about his decision. An extremely intelligent and aged sage named Garga was seated amidst the ministers. Filled with compassion, he spoke respectfully to the king and satisfied him. ‘O son a king! If you wish to do what you desire and rule the kingdom properly, then listen to my words and act accordingly. The great-souled Dattatreya resides in a valley in the Sahyadri mountains and protects the three worlds. O lord of the earth! Worship him. The great-souled one is immersed in yoga and perceives everything impartially. To protect the universe, he has descended on earth from Vishnu’s portion. After worshipping him, the one with the thousand eyes <sup>293</sup> obtained his position. The evil-souled sons of Diti had taken it away and he killed Diti’s sons.’ Arjuna asked, ‘How did the gods worship the powerful Dattatreya? How did the daityas take away the position of Indra and how did Vasava regain it?’ Garga replied, ‘There was an extremely terrible war between the gods and the daityas. Jambha was the lord of the daityas and Shachi’s consort was the lord of the gods. While they fought, an entire celestial year passed. After this, the gods were defeated and the daityas were triumphant. The gods were defeated by the danavas, headed by Viprachitti. They made efforts to run away and no longer made efforts to defeat the enemy. Desiring the death of the daitya soldiers, Brihaspati arrived and consulted with the *valakhilya* rishis. <sup>294</sup> Brihaspati said, “The immensely fortunate, Dattatreya, Atri’s son, is a store of austerities, though he follows perverse courses of action. You should faithfully satisfy him. He grants boons and he will grant you a boon for the destruction of the daityas. O gods! That is how you will be able to slay the daityas and the danavas.” They were thus told that there was no doubt that they would be able to kill them through Dattatreya’s favours. Therefore, the gods went to Dattatreya’s hermitage. They saw the patient and great-souled one and Lakshmi was with him. Praised by the gandharvas, the sage was engaged in drinking liquor. Having gone there, they prostrated themselves and reverentially worshipped him with a hymn that would accomplish all objectives. They offered him appropriate articles of worship. Since he drank, the residents of heaven

offered him liquor. If he remained in one spot, they remained in that spot. If he walked, they walked with him. They worshipped him and when he sat down, they sat down below him. As they prostrated themselves before him, Dattatreya asked, “What is this? What do you expect to get from me that you are serving me in this way?” The gods replied, “O tiger among sages! The danavas, Jambha and the others, have attacked us. They have taken away the three worlds of *bhuloka*, *bhuvarloka* and *svarloka*.<sup>295</sup> They have taken away all our shares in sacrifices. O unblemished one! Think of a means to kill them and save us. We desire your favours so that we can get heaven back.” Dattatreya said, “I am addicted to liquor. I am like *ucchishta*. I am not in control of my senses. O gods! How do you think your enemies will be defeated through me?” The gods replied, “O unblemished one! You are the protector of the universe and none of this touches you. You have been cleansed through pure learning. You are permeated with *jnana*.” Dattatreya said, “O gods! It is true that my learning is impartial in outlook. However, because of my association with this woman, I have become *ucchishta*. Enjoyment with women leads to great miseries and the virtuous should not indulge in this.” Having been addressed in this way, the gods again spoke these words. The gods replied, “O best among sages! She is the unblemished mother of the universe and cannot be polluted. O lord! She is the learning that exists in the hearts of omniscient people like you. Irrespective of whether it touches a brahmana or a chandala, the rays of the sun are not sullied. O protector of the universe! This beautiful one is just like that.” When Dattatreya was addressed by the gods in these words, he smiled. He said, “O residents of heaven! O best among the gods! If that is the view that all of you hold, then summon all the asuras to a battle. Without any delay, summon them and let it take place here, within my range of vision. My sight will be like a consuming fire and will diminish their strength and energy. Because of my sight, all of them will head towards destruction.” Hearing his words, the gods summoned and challenged the immensely strong daityas. All the gods were slaughtered by the daityas and afflicted by fear, the large number of gods fled to the hermitage. All of them went to Dattatreya’s hermitage, seeking protection. To destroy the residents

of heaven, the daityas also entered there. They saw the great-souled Dattatreya, intoxicated with liquor. His wife was seated on his left, the auspicious one who is desired by all the worlds. This was Lakshmi, beautiful in all her limbs and with a face that was like the moon. Her eyes were like blue lotuses and her breasts were large and her hips were full. Her teeth were excellent and her speech was sweet. She possessed all the qualities desired in a woman. Seeing her in front, the daityas were filled with desire for her. The daityas were so stricken by desire that they were no longer capable of controlling themselves. They abandoned the gods. Desiring to obtain the woman, they lost all their energy. Driven by sin and desire, they said, "This jewel among women is the essence of the three worlds. If we obtain her, we will accomplish all our objectives. That is what we think." All those afflictors of the gods placed her on a palanquin and made up their minds to take her to their own abode. She was attached to the sage and was unapproachable for others. Nevertheless, they were smitten by attachment and love and placed the virtuous lady on a palanquin. Placing the palanquin on their heads, the daityas and the danavas proceeded in the direction of their own abode. Dattatreya laughed and told the gods, "It is good fortune that the daityas desired Lakshmi and placed her on their heads. Since she has passed seven spots and is on their heads, they will indeed head towards destruction." The gods asked, "O protector of the universe! Tell us about the spots she occupies. When does it bring fruits to a man and when does it lead to destruction?" Dattatreya answered, "When placed on a man's foot, Lakshmi gives him a house. When placed on the bones of the thigh, she gives him garments, jewels and other kinds of riches. When placed in the genital organs, she gives him a wife. When placed on the lap, she gives him offspring. When placed in a man's heart, she satisfies all his wishes. The best place for Lakshmi is the throat. She becomes an ornament for the throat and this occurs for prosperous men. There is union with beloved relatives and wives who have resided in distant places. She arose from the ocean. If she happens to be located on the mouth, food and speech are sweet and graceful. The person's commands are carried out and he has the qualities of a poet. However, when she is placed on the head, she

abandons the person and goes to another one for refuge. Since the daityas have placed her on their heads, she will immediately abandon them.

Therefore, take up your weapons and slay the enemies of the gods. There is no need for you to be scared. I have taken away their terrible energy. Since they oppressed another person's wife, all their auspicious deeds have been scorched and they have been deprived of their energy. Hence, without any apprehension, you should kill them.” At this, using many kinds of weapons, they slaughtered the enemies of the gods. We have heard that when Lakshmi is placed on the head, it leads to such destruction. Lakshmi leapt down and again reached Dattatreya, the great sage. Delighted at the destruction of the daityas, she was praised by Indra and the other gods. The gods prostrated themselves before Dattatreya, the great sage. “Victory to Krishna, the protector of the universe. O destroyer of the daityas! O Hara! O lord! O Narayana! O Achyuta! O Ananta! O Vasudeva, who does not age or decay! O Janardana! We have obtained happiness, Lakshmi, the kingdom and prosperity through your favours. O one who wields the Sharnga bow! O one who wields the chakra in his hand! O one who is always devoted to his devotees!” Praising him in this way, the gods went to the vault of heaven, where they used to be earlier. O Indra among kings! In that way, if you wish to obtain what you desire and also obtain unmatched riches, you should swiftly worship him.””

## Chapter 17

‘The son said, “Kartavirya, lord of men, heard these words. He went to Dattatreya’s hermitage and worshipped him faithfully. He washed and massaged his feet. He brought him arghya, flowers, garlands, sandalwood, fragrances, water, fruit and other objects. He brought him food and cleaned the leftover food. Satisfied, the sage told the king exactly what he had told the gods earlier, about him being polluted because he indulged in liquor and other forms of pleasure. ‘This woman is always next to me and I am condemned because I enjoy myself with her. I am always engaged in this way and I am incapable of doing you a favour. You should not request me. Go and request a person who is capable.’ Addressed by the sage in this way, Kartavirya Arjuna remembered Garga’s words. He prostrated himself and replied, ‘You are the ancient divinity. You have resorted to your own maya. You are blemishless and so is she, the goddess who is the kindling of the whole world.’<sup>296</sup> Thus addressed, the divinity was pleased and replied to the immensely valiant Kartavirya, who had subjugated the entire earth. ‘Since you know about my secret nature, ask for a boon. O king! Today, you have greatly satisfied me. Along with me, men who respectfully worship Lakshmi with fragrances, garlands, meat, liquor and sweetmeats, accompanied by the chanting of brahmanas and the playing of melodious musical instruments like the veena, the flute and the conch shell, are supremely nurtured by me, with sons, wives, wealth and the like. However, I destroy those who disrespectfully call me an avadhuta. O fortunate one! Therefore, ask for the boon that you desire. Since your excellent mouth has chanted my secret name, I am pleased with you.’ Kartavirya said, ‘O divinity! If you are pleased with me, grant me supreme prosperity, so that I can protect my subjects and not fall prey to adharma. May I have the



knowledge to understand others and may I be unmatched in battle. I desire one thousand arms, with the quality of being dexterous. Without any obstruction, let me be able to go everywhere—mountains, the sky, the water, the earth and all the nether regions. Let my death come from the hands of a man who is superior to me. Let me be able to demonstrate the right path to those who deviate from the right path. Let my hospitality towards guests be praiseworthy. Let my riches be inexhaustible. In my kingdom, as soon as they think of me, let no one's property be destroyed. O divinity! Let my devotion towards you be constant, without deviating.' Dattatreya replied, 'O child! Everything will be as you have described it. Through my favours and powers, you will be a lord and *chakravarti*.' <sup>297</sup> Arjuna bowed down before Dattatreya.

“Every natural object was brought for his consecration. Large numbers of gandharvas and apsaras arrived. Vasishtha and the other rishis came, so did Meru and the other mountains. Ganga and the other rivers came, so did the oceans, the stores of riches. *Plaksha* <sup>298</sup> and other trees arrived, as did Vasava and the other gods. The nagas, with Vasuki at the forefront, arrived for the consecration ceremony. Tarkshya <sup>299</sup> and other birds came. Residents arrived from cities and the countryside. Because of Dattatreya's favours, all of them came with a great deal of objects. Brahma and the other gods kindled the fire. In the form of Dattatreya, Narayana consecrated him. The rishis sprinkled him with water from the rivers and the oceans. Haihaya would be established in the kingdom. Thanks to Dattatreya, he obtained great prosperity and supreme strength. He announced, 'From today, if anyone other than me picks up weapons, I shall kill him, irrespective of whether he is a bandit who causes harm.' After this announcement, there was no man in the kingdom who wielded weapons, with the exception of that tiger among men, endowed with exceptional valour. He was the one who protected villages. He was the one who protected animals. He was the one who protected fields. He was the protector and there was no need for a second. He protected ascetics and convoys of merchants. As soon as terrified men who suffered from bandits, predatory beasts, fire, weapons, submergence in the waters and other kinds of immersion in hardships

thought of him, the scorcher of enemies instantly arrived as a saviour. As long as that king ruled, no objects were destroyed. He performed many sacrifices where copious amounts of dakshina were given. He tormented himself through austerities and engaged in many great battles. On witnessing his great prosperity, the sage Angiras said, 'Indeed, no other king will be able to achieve the objective Kartavirya has accomplished. No one will be able to surpass him in sacrifices, donation, austerities and battles.' On the day on which the lord of men obtained the favours from Dattatreya, on that day, he started a sacrifice in Dattatreya's honour. Witnessing the king's great prosperity, on that day, all the subjects also respectfully participated in the sacrifice. Such was the intelligent Dattatreya's greatness. He is the great-souled Vishnu. He is the preceptor of everything, mobile and immobile. He is Ananta. He is the wielder of the Sharnga bow and his arrival has been described in the Puranas. He is infinite and immeasurable. He is the wielder of the conch shell, chakra and mace. If a man meditates on his supreme form in his heart, he becomes happy and quickly crosses over the ocean of samsara. 'O Vaishnavas! With devotion, I can always be obtained very easily. If I am worshipped with leaves, flowers and fruits, I grant emancipation.' These are his words. Why should people not seek refuge with him? He destroys adharma and is the reservoir of dharma. He is without beginning and without end. He is the divinity who preserves creation. I will now describe Alarka's birth to you. The great-souled royal sage, Alarka, was devoted to his father and Dattatreya described yoga to him.'"

## Chapter 18

‘The son said, “There was an extremely valiant king named Shatrujit. Purandara drank soma at his sacrifice and was satisfied. He had a son who was extremely brave, making the enemies flee. He became famous by the name of Ritadhvaja and he possessed all the auspicious signs. In intelligence, valour and beauty, he was respectively the equal of the preceptor, Shakra and the Ashvins. <sup>300</sup> The king’s son was always surrounded by other princes who were his equal in age, intelligence, spirit and valour. Sometimes, they made up their minds to study the sacred texts, so that their sense of discrimination might develop. Sometimes, they engaged in poetry, conversation, singing and dramaturgy. Sometimes, they amused themselves with dice. Sometimes, they practised the precepts of the sacred texts, weaponry and good conduct. Sometimes, they wrestled with worthy opponents. Sometimes, they rode elephants, horses or chariots. Surrounded by those princes, the king’s son amused himself. In this way, they amused themselves, night and day. The sons of brahmanas, kshatriyas and vaishyas also sported with them. Similar in age, many of them happily joined them.

““The world of the nagas is below the earth. There were two young nagas who were the sons of Ashvatara. They were young and handsome. After some time, they arrived there, disguising themselves in the form of brahmanas. Filled with joy, they amused themselves in diverse ways, along with the sons of kings and the other sons of brahmanas. All the princes, the sons of brahmanas, the sons of vaishyas and the two sons of the king of the nagas bathed and had their ablutions together, massaging their bodies, wearing garments, smearing fragrances, eating and doing other things. Since they were delighted and happy with the prince, those two naga

princes arrived there every day. The prince found great joy in them. With them, he engaged in diverse kinds of amusement, jesting and conversation. He did not eat without them. He did not bathe without them. Without them, he did not drink liquor. Nor did he find any pleasure in the sacred texts, required for uplifting himself. Separated from the great-souled one, those two spent the nights in Rasatala, sighing deeply about him. ‘O sons! <sup>301</sup> O naga princes! From one day to another day, I see that you have developed a great deal of affection for the world of the mortals. Whom do you converse with there? Many days have passed and I only see you in Patala during the night. O handsome ones! I only see you at night, not during the day.’ When they were thus asked by their father, they joined their hands in salutation and bowed down. The two sons replied to the immensely fortunate lord of the nagas. ‘O father! Shatrujit has a son and he is known by the name of Ritadhvaja. He is handsome and upright. He is brave, honourable and pleasant in speech. He is eloquent in speech, but does not speak what he should not. He is learned and friendly. He is a store of qualities. He honours those who should be honoured. He is intelligent and modest. Humility is his ornament. Our minds have been attracted to his conduct, affection and pleasure. O father! We no longer feel any attachment to the world of the nagas or to any other world. O father! Since we are separated from him, the cool nights in Patala scorch us. Like the sun, association with him delights us during the day.’ The father replied, ‘Since you have praised him, the son of such an auspicious father is blessed. Those who possess qualities are reciting his qualities when he is himself not present. There are those who have good conduct and who are accomplished in the sacred texts, but there are also those with good conduct who are fools. I think a person who possesses knowledge of the sacred texts and good conduct is blessed, a person whom friends praise for the quality of being a friend and enemies praise for valour. In such cases, a father always says that he truly has a son. O sons! Since he has done you a good deed, to satisfy his mind, have you thought of what he might want from you? Have you done something for him? From one birth to another birth, a person who does not disappoint someone who wants something, and a friend who is not weak, truly live.

Gold, jewels, mounts and seats exist in my house. Without any hesitation, give him whatever will delight him. The life of a man who harms his friends is one to be ashamed of. A person who returns a good deed truly understands the meaning of being alive. A man who showers down good deeds on his friends and bad deeds on his enemies is wise and his constant elevation occurs.’ The sons said, ‘He has done us a good deed. What can we do for him in return? His home is constantly worshipped with all the objects and all the articles of pleasure. The jewels, mounts, seats, vehicles, ornaments and garments that exist in his house do not exist in Patala. The wisdom that is in him is not available elsewhere. O father! Among wise people who dispel doubts, he is the foremost. There is only one task to be accomplished. However, in our view, we are incapable of accomplishing it, unless we get boons from Hiranyagarbha, Govinda, Sharva<sup>302</sup> and others.’ The father replied, ‘Nevertheless, I wish to hear about the supreme task that might be accomplished for him. The impossible can become possible. What is impossible for a person who is learned? There are revered men who have obtained the status of being gods, immortals and lords.<sup>303</sup> A person who has firmly made up his mind embarks on the journey. Without determining and without proceeding, nothing is obtained, whether it is in heaven or in this world. Men must make themselves enterprising in their minds and in their senses. If it moves, an ant can traverse one thousand yojanas. If he doesn’t move, Vainateya<sup>304</sup> does not move a single step. Where is the earth and where is that permanent place in the firmament? Yet Dhruva, King Uttanapada’s son, who always dwelt on earth, obtained it for himself.<sup>305</sup> O immensely fortunate sons! Therefore, tell me about that other task, by accomplishing which you will be freed of your debt to that virtuous prince.’

“The sons said, ‘O father! The prince, the possessor of good conduct, told us about what had happened earlier. Earlier, an excellent brahmana came before his father, Shatrujit. His name was Galava and the intelligent one was leading an excellent horse. He told the king, “Come to my hermitage. O king! An evildoing worst among daityas is devastating it. He assumes the form of lions, elephants and other such gigantic creatures and, day and night, is the cause of my peace being destroyed, when I am

engaged in meditation or in a vow of observing silence. O king! I wish to take you to the place where he is causing these impediments. O king! I am capable of instantly scorching him with the fire of my rage. However, I do not wish to expend what my austerities have stored up through hardships. Once, distressed by him, I sighed and glanced up at the sky. Immediately, this horse fell down from the sky. An invisible voice spoke from the sky. O lord of men! Listen to what it said. ‘This excellent horse is capable of travelling the entire circle of the globe without being exhausted. It has been given to you. There is nothing in Patala, the firmament or the water that can obstruct its movement. Without impediments, it can go to all the directions and the mountains. Since it can roam around the entire globe of the earth without being exhausted, it will be famous in the worlds by the name of Kuvalaya. <sup>306</sup> O best among brahmanas! There is an evil worst among danavas who harasses you night and day. King Shatrujit has a son named Ritadhvaja. Astride this horse, he will destroy the danava. Once he obtains this jewel among horses, he will also become famous. I have therefore come before you. O protector of the earth! O king who restricts those who destroy the shares of sacrifices. O lord of the earth! I have rendered that jewel among horses to you. Command your son so that dharma is not destroyed.’ Hearing his words, the king placed his son, Ritadhvaja, astride that horse, after having performed all the auspicious rites. At that time, the one with dharma in his soul sent him with Galava. Taking him, the sage left for his own hermitage.””””

## Chapter 19

““The father said, ‘O sons! The prince, wonderful in fighting with weapons, went with Galava. Tell me what he did.’

““The sons replied, ‘The king’s son remained in Galava’s beautiful hermitage. The brave Kuvalayashva <sup>307</sup> resided in Galava’s hermitage and pacified all the impediments in the path of those who knew about the brahman. Intoxicated by his strength, that worst among danavas did not realize this. On one occasion, the brahmana Galava was engaged in his evening worship. Assuming the form of a boar, he arrived, so as to oppress him. The sage’s disciples cried out. With a bow and arrows in his hand, the prince quickly ascended the horse and pursued the boar. He powerfully stretched his bow, ornamented with beautiful signs, and struck him with a radiant arrow that was in the shape of a half-moon. Struck by the iron arrow, the animal swiftly tried to save himself. He travelled through gigantic forests and dense trees that were on the mountain. Wishing to follow his father’s command, the prince swiftly followed him and urged the horse that possessed the speed of thought. Dexterous in his valour, he <sup>308</sup> powerfully travelled a thousand yojanas and entered a hole in the ground. Following him, along with the horse, the prince also descended into this gigantic pit and was covered in a mass of darkness. The animal could no longer be seen by the king’s son. Though he could not see him, he saw some radiant rays in Patala. He saw hundreds of golden palaces there. There was a city adorned with ramparts and it was like Purandara’s city. He entered, but did not see any man in the city. Wandering around here and there, he saw a beautiful woman. He asked that slender-limbed one, “Who has sent you? Whom do you belong to?” The beautiful woman did not say anything in reply. She ascended a mansion. The prince’s eyes dilated in



wonder. Tethering the horse there, he followed her without any hesitation. There, he saw an extremely large couch that was completely made out of gold. A desirable maiden was lying down there. She resembled Rati, when she is with Kama. <sup>309</sup> Her excellent face was like the moon. Her eyebrows were excellent. Her hips were wide and her breasts were plump. Her lips were like bimba fruit and her limbs were slender. Her eyes were like blue lotuses. She was dark <sup>310</sup> and the tips of her nails were red. Her hands and feet were coppery red. Her thighs were like the trunks of an elephant. Her teeth were excellent. Her locks of dark-blue hair were soft and firm. All her limbs were beautiful, like the creeper around Ananga. <sup>311</sup> The king's son saw her and took her to be a divinity from Rasatala. The auspicious maiden also saw him. His curly locks were dark blue. His breasts and shoulders were broad and his arms were thick. She took him to be Madana. Her mind was agitated. Observing good conduct, she arose. However, the slender one was also overcome by shame, wonder and distress. "Who is he? Is he a god, a yaksha, a naga or a *vidyadhara*? Is he a lord among men who has come here because of his auspicious deeds?" Seated on the ground, she thought these and many other things and sighed. As she sat there, the one with the intoxicating eyes lost her senses. The king's son was also struck by Kama's arrows. He comforted her and said, "Do not be scared." There was a woman whom the great-souled one had seen earlier. She picked up a fan made of palm leaves and started to fan the lady. Having been comforted and questioned, the maiden, the cause of this confusion, used her friend <sup>312</sup> to recount everything. A bit bashful, she described this to the prince's son in detail. She also told him everything about how the sight of him had caused her confusion.

""The friend repeated exactly what the beautiful lady said. The friend said, "In heaven, there is a lord and god of the gandharvas, known by the name of Vishvvasu. This one, with the excellent eyebrows, is his daughter. She is known by the name of Madalasa. The danava Vajraketu's son is fierce and a destroyer of enemies. He is known as Patalaketu and he resides in Patala. When she went to a garden, unattended, the one with evil intelligence used the maya of creating darkness and abducted her. The asura

will marry her on the thirteenth lunar day. He does not deserve this one with the beautiful limbs, any more than a shudra deserves the learning of the Vedas. On another day, this maiden wanted to kill herself. However, Surabhi <sup>313</sup> said, ‘The worst among danavas will not be able to get you. When he goes to the world of the mortals, he will be pierced with arrows and the immensely fortunate one who does that will soon become your husband.’ I am the spirited Kundala and I am her friend. I am the daughter of Vindhyaavan and the wife of the brave Pushkaramali. Ever since my husband was killed by Shumbha, I have been observing the vow of travelling from one tirtha to another tirtha, desiring benefit in the world hereafter. I have divine powers of travelling. The evil-souled Patalaketu assumed the form of a boar. At that time, desiring to save the sages, someone pierced him with an arrow. Wishing to ascertain the truth about this, I quickly came here. It is true that someone has struck the evil-souled one. Now hear about the reason why she lost her senses. O one who grants honours! As soon as she saw you, she was delighted. You are like the son of a god and your speech is charming. She has been struck by you. However, it has been determined that she will be the wife of the one who pierces the danava. That is the reason she succumbed to this great confusion. Will this slender-limbed one not be freed from miseries for as long as she lives? Her heart is attached to you, but she will be someone else’s wife. She will be miserable for as long as she lives. It cannot be contrary to Surabhi’s words. O lord! I love her and I have come here because she is miserable. There is no particular difference between that of one’s own body and that of a friend’s. O brave one! If this beautiful one obtains the husband she wishes for, only then will I be able to perform austerities without any worries in my mind. O immensely intelligent one! Who are you? What is the reason for your arrival here? Are you a god, a daitya, a gandharva, a *pannaga* or a *kinnara*? <sup>314</sup> Humans cannot come here. It is not possible to travel here in human form. I have told you the truth. Will you tell me the truth about who you are?”

““Kupalayashva replied, “O one who knows about dharma! You have asked me about who I am and why I have come here. O one who is

unblemished in wisdom! Therefore, listen. I will tell you. O auspicious one! I am the son of King Shatrujit and my father has sent me here. Instructed to protect the sages, I went to Galava's hermitage. I protected the sages who followed dharma. At that time, to cause impediments, someone arrived there, assuming the form of a boar. I pierced him with a radiant arrow that was in the shape of a half-moon. He fled with great speed and I angrily followed him on my horse. Suddenly, I and my horse fell into a pit. I started to wander around, astride the horse. Then, when there was some light, I saw you. When I asked you, you did not say anything in reply. Following you, I entered this excellent palace. I have thus told you the truth. O one with the beautiful smiles! I am not a god, not a danava, not a pannaga, not a gandharva, not a kinnara. O Kundala! All those, the gods and the others, deserve to be worshipped by me. I am human. You should not have any doubt on this account.””

““The sons continued, ‘The beautiful maiden was delighted at this. She glanced towards her friend's face and did not say anything. At this, her friend was delighted at what had been said. This was exactly in accordance with Surabhi's words. Kundala said, “O brave one! There is no doubt that you have spoken the truth. Had that not been the case, on seeing you, why would her heart have become fixed on you? Supreme beauty exist in the moon, supreme radiance in the sun, supreme prosperity with those who are blessed, supreme patience with those who possess fortitude and supreme tranquility with the excellent. You are the one who has pierced the evil worst among danavas. How can Surabhi, the mother of cattle, utter a falsehood? Therefore, this maiden is extremely fortunate that she will be united with you. O brave one! Be attentive. Follow the rites and do what must be done now.” The prince wondered how he could marry her, since he always followed his father's commands. However, as he thought about this, her family's priest, Tumburu, instantly arrived, with some kindling and kusha grass in his hand, because of his love for Madalasa and to honour Kundala. Tumburu kindled a fire, poured oblations and recited the auspicious mantras. Having completed the rites for bestowing the maiden, the intelligent ascetic returned to his own hermitage, where he had come

from. She <sup>315</sup> told her friend, “O one with a beautiful face! O maiden! I have accomplished your objective. I have seen you united with someone who is your equal in beauty and good conduct. With no worries in my mind, I will now engage in tormenting myself with matchless austerities. Having cleansed my sins in tirthas, I will no longer be as I am now.” She then spoke words of assurance to the prince. She desired to leave and her voice stuttered because of her love for her friend. Kundala said, “You are a man who is infinite in wisdom. I should not instruct someone like you. What can a woman like me instruct you about? However, my mind is attached to this slender-waisted one through love. That apart, you trust me. O afflicter of enemies! I am only reminding you. A husband must always protect and nurture his bride. A wife is a husband’s aide in achieving dharma, artha and kama. When a husband and a wife are aides in each other’s vows, then they are truly husband and wife. Then a combination of dharma, artha and kama occurs. O lord! Without a wife, how can a man obtain dharma or artha? Nor is he capable of achieving kama. All three are in her. In that way, without a husband, a wife cannot accomplish dharma and the other objectives. Without becoming a couple, the three objectives are not possible. O son of a king! Without a wife, a man is incapable of worshipping the gods, the ancestors, the servants and guests. Even if a man accumulates artha and gathers it in his house, without a wife or with a wicked wife, that store is wasted away. It is directly evident that kama is not possible without her. The couple follows dharma together and obtains the three objectives, dharma and the others. Sons are not born without a wife. Ancestors are satisfied with sons. Guests are satisfied with food. The immortals are satisfied with worship. That is what a man accomplishes through a virtuous wife. Without a husband, a woman cannot obtain dharma, artha, kama and offspring. The three objectives can only be attained by becoming a couple. Having told the two of you this, let me now go and pursue my desired yoga. May you prosper, with riches, sons, happiness and long lives.” Having said this, she embraced her own friend and bowed down to him. Using her power of divine movement, she went wherever she desired.

““Wishing to leave Patala, Shatrujit’s son placed her on the horse. However, Danu’s offspring got to know and suddenly screamed out, “She is being taken away. Patalaketu brought a jewel of a maiden from heaven and she is being taken away.” Along with Patalaketu, an army of danavas assembled, with clubs, swords, maces, spears, arrows and other weapons. Those excellent danavas shouted, “Wait. Wait.” They showered down arrows on the king’s son. They showered down spears. However, Shatrujit’s valiant son fought back. Smiling, as if he was toying, he severed those nets of arrows. In a short while, the floor of Patala was strewn with swords, javelins, spears and arrows, cut to pieces by Ritadhvaja’s arrows. He picked up the Tvashta weapon and hurled it at the danavas. At this, all the danavas, along with Patalaketu, were scorched by fierce nets of flames. Their bones were reduced to ashes, just as Sagara’s sons met Kapila and were consumed by his energy.<sup>316</sup> Thus, the prince slew those excellent asuras. Placing the jewel among women astride the horse, he returned to his father’s city.

““He bowed down and told his father everything—the descent to Patala, seeing Kundala, obtaining Madalasa, the battle with the danavas, their death by the weapon and his return. Hearing about the conduct of the person whose intelligence was splendid, his father was delighted and embraced him. He addressed his son in these words. “O son! I have been saved by a virtuous and great-souled son. You have saved the terrified sages who were pursuing virtuous dharma. My ancestors were famous and I extended that fame. O brave one! But your valour has extended it several times more. A man who does not diminish his father’s fame, wealth and valour is said to be a middling son. However, if a person uses his superior valour and capacity to enhance it, the wise speak of him as an excellent man. If a man diminishes his father’s wealth, valour and fame, the wise speak of him as a worst among men. I repaid the debt of brahmanas. But you went to Patala and destroyed the asuras. Since this is superior, you are an excellent man. You are blessed and you possess more qualities than I do. Therefore, having obtained a son like you, I will be praised by the virtuous. A man whose son does not exceed him in wisdom, donations and valour is not delighted. Nor does he think he has a virtuous son. Shame on the birth of a man who is

known by who his father was. A person who is known by his son's name is a person who has had a good birth. A person known for his own sake is blessed. A person who is known because of his father and grandfathers is middling. A person who is known because of his mother, or his mother's side, is worst among men. O son! Therefore, extend your wealth, valour and happiness. You should never be separated from this daughter of a gandharva." Delighted, the father said this several times. Embracing him, he sent him and his wife to his own house. In his father's city, he enjoyed himself with his wife and also in places like groves, forests and the slopes of mountains. Every morning, the auspicious and slender-waisted one bowed down at the feet of her father-in-law and mother-in-law.'""

## Chapter 20

““The sons said, ‘After a long period of time had passed, the king spoke to his son again. “To save brahmanas, quickly go and travel around the earth. Every day, in the morning, ascend this horse and do that. You must always make efforts so that the foremost among brahmanas do not face any impediments. There are hundreds of danavas, evil in intelligence and wicked in conduct. Act so that they cannot create any impediments for the sages.” The king’s son acted in accordance with what his father had said. Every day, in the morning, he bowed down and worshipped his father’s feet. He travelled throughout the earth in the forenoon. In the remaining part of the day, he found pleasure with the slender-waisted one.

“““Once, while roaming around along the banks of the Yamuna, he saw Patalaketu’s younger brother, Talaketu, who had constructed a hermitage there. Using his maya, the danava lived there, in the form of a sage. Remembering the earlier enmity, he spoke to the prince. “O prince! Listen to what I have to say. Then do what you wish to. You have never refused someone who asks for something. You are true to your pledges. I wish to perform a sacrifice to Dharma and it is also necessary to arrange for the oblations. However, I am worried because I do not possess the dakshina. O brave one! Hence, for the sake of the dakshina, give me your own golden ornament, the one that is hanging around your neck. To ensure the welfare of subjects, I will immerse myself in the water and invoke the god Varuna, the lord of the waters, using mantras to Varuna mentioned in the Vedas. Until I am back, protect the hermitage. I will return quickly.” He agreed to this. Bowing down, he gave him the necklace and said, “Free your mind of worries and go. O immensely fortunate one! Following your command, I will station myself near your hermitage. As long as I am here, no one will



cause any impediments. O best among sages! Trust me and do what is in your mind.” Having been thus addressed, he immersed himself in the water of the river and he <sup>317</sup> protected the hermitage that had been created through the use of maya.

“““Abandoning the water, Talaketu went to the city. In the presence of others, he told Madalasa, “The brave Kuvalayashva was near my hermitage. To protect the ascetics, he was fighting against some wicked daityas. He fought with all his might, but the enemies of the brahmanas killed him in the battle. Using maya, a wicked one shattered his breast with a spear. As he was dying, he gave me this necklace. Ascetics who make their homes in trees cremated him there. With tears in its eyes, the terrified horse started to neigh. But the wicked danava has taken it away. I saw the wicked evildoer do this. Now do whatever needs to be done after that. To comfort your heart, accept this necklace. What will an ascetic like me do with gold?” Having said this, he flung it on the ground and went away to wherever he had come from. Afflicted by grief, all the people fell down, senseless with misery. In a short while, all of them regained consciousness, including the king’s wife. The king’s wife and the king lamented in their great misery. Madalasa saw the necklace. Hearing that her beloved had been killed, she gave up the life that everyone loves a lot. There were great lamentations in the city and in the houses of the citizens. It was exactly the same in the king’s own house. The king saw that, separated from her husband, Madalasa had died.

“““Having regained his composure, he spoke to all those who had forgotten theirs. “I do not think we should grieve about those who are our own. If you think about it, all relationships are temporary. Will I grieve over my son? Will I grieve over my daughter-in-law? They have done what they needed to and one should not grieve over them. Serving me and listening to my command, my intelligent son was engaged in protecting brahmanas and has now come by his death? Why should one grieve over him? A body must always go and he has given it up for brahmanas. My son has given it up for a good cause and this will certainly be beneficial. This one was born in a good lineage and followed her husband. Why should one grieve? For a

woman, there is no divinity other than a husband. Had she remained alive after her husband's death, she would have been an object of pity for our relatives and others. One should grieve then. As soon as she heard about her husband's death, the beautiful one followed her husband. A learned person does not grieve over such a person. When a lady of the household is not separated from her husband but follows him, she should not be the subject of grief. Because of the hardships involved, if she does not follow him, she causes difficulties to herself and to the family. She was grateful and did not suffer separation from her husband. A husband confers happiness in this world and in the next world. Which woman regards him as a mere man? He, I, she and his mother should not be grieved about. Having given up his life for the sake of brahmanas, he has saved all of us. My son has given up his body, which was only half-consumed. <sup>318</sup> Before going, he repaid his debt to me, to dharma and to brahmanas. To protect brahmanas, he has given up his life in a battle and has proved his mother's chastity, <sup>319</sup> the purity of my lineage and his valour." Kuvalayashva's mother also followed her husband. She glanced towards her husband and said, "My mother or my daughter have not obtained the kind of joy I obtained from hearing about my son's death. I heard my son has died to protect sages. Even the brahmanas grieve over those who died when suffering from disease, sighing in their great misery. Such mothers have had sons in vain. When a person faces fearlessly in a battle, facing hardships from weapons for the sake of protecting cows and brahmanas, he is a true man. When a son does not refuse those who seek favours, friends and enemies, the father becomes a true father and the mother gives birth to a hero. At that time, I think a woman's pangs of delivery become successful—when the son is victorious over enemies, or when he is killed in battle." The king performed the funeral rites for his daughter-in-law. Emerging outside, he bathed and performed the water rites for his son.

““Talaketu emerged from the waters of the Yamuna. He addressed the prince in these sweet and affectionate words. “O son of a king! Go. Because of what you have done, I have been successful. You did not move from here and I could do what I desired to do, a sacrifice to the great-souled Varuna in

the water. I have been able to accomplish everything I wished for.” The prince bowed down before him and ascending the horse that possessed the valour of Suparna <sup>320</sup> and the wind, he left for his father’s city.””

## Chapter 21

““The sons said, ‘Wishing to honour his father’s feet and see Madalasa, the prince reached the city swiftly. He saw that the faces of the people in the city were anxious and miserable. However, on seeing him, they wondered and their faces turned joyous. With happy eyes, they told each other, “This is good fortune. This is good fortune.” Extremely curious, they embraced each other. With delight in his auspicious eyes, the prince embraced his friends, filled with great affection. He then saw that the citizens were exclaiming, “This is good fortune. This is good fortune. May you live for a long time. May you be fortunate. May those who cause impediments in your path be killed. May you delight your parents. May thorns be removed from our minds and from yours.” Speaking in this way, the citizens gathered around him, in front and at the rear. Experiencing joy at the time, he entered his father’s house. He embraced his father, his mother and his other relatives. “May you live for a long time. May you be fortunate.” They offered their benedictions. He bowed down and, surprised, asked his father, “What is this?” He told him everything.<sup>321</sup> He heard about the death of his beloved wife, Madalasa. He saw his parents standing before him, filled with shame and sorrow. He thought, “Hearing that I had died, the virtuous maiden has given up her life. Shame on my cruel heart. She has died because of me. Shame that I am still alive.” However, he thought and comforted his heart. Grieving, he sighed deeply, driving away his confusion. “She died for my sake. If I give up my life, what good will I do to her? Such conduct is only praised for women. If I weep, am miserable, or repeatedly exclaim, ‘My love’, that is not regarded as praiseworthy for us men. I am strong. Nevertheless, if I become pale and miserable, numb with grief, that will be a victory for the adversary. My task is to subjugate the

enemy and serve the king, my father. My life belongs to him. How can I possibly give it up? What are my other duties? Should I renounce enjoying myself with women? That will also not bring any benefit to the slender-waisted one. That might be regarded as cruel. However, she has given up her life for my sake. Therefore, whether it does her good, or doesn't do her good, I must do this." Having made up his mind in this way, he performed the water rites and other rites. After performing the rites, Ritadhvaja said, "Since the slender-limbed Madalasa is no longer my wife, in this life, I shall no longer have a companion. Without the gandharva's daughter who possessed the eyes of a fawn, I will not enjoy myself with any other woman. My wife followed dharma. She had the stride of an elephant. Without her, I will not enjoy myself with anyone else. I speak the truth. Therefore, I will give up all manner of enjoyment with women. I will only amuse myself with those who are my equals in age and good conduct." O father! There is only one task to be done. But who is capable of accomplishing that? This is impossible for even lords <sup>322</sup> to accomplish, not to speak of others?"

'The dumb one <sup>323</sup> said, "Hearing their words, their father was immersed in thought. Thinking about it, the king of the nagas smiled and told his sons, 'Hearing that something cannot be achieved, men do not attempt it. Having not engaged in enterprise on that account, they cause great harm to themselves. Therefore, without giving up on his manliness, a man must undertake a task. The success of a task depends on destiny and on manliness. O sons! Hence, I will make efforts. Without any delay, to the best of my ability, I will embark on austerities.' Having said this, the Indra among the nagas went to the tirtha in the Himalaya mountains known as Plakshavatarana. <sup>324</sup> Going there, he performed extremely difficult austerities. Using excellent words, he worshipped the goddess Sarasvati, immersing his mind in her. He was restrained in diet and bathed thrice a day. <sup>325</sup> Ashvatara said, 'I worship the auspicious goddess Jagaddhatri. <sup>326</sup> I praise and bow my head down before Sarasvati, born from Brahma. O goddess! There is the real and the unreal, the states of artha that are bonds in the path of moksha. O goddess! You are not attached to all those, but

appear to be attached to them. O goddess! You are the supreme Akshara<sup>327</sup> in which everything is established. You are Akshara, the supreme brahman. You are the Akshara in which the entire universe resides. Just as fire exists in kindling and atoms<sup>328</sup> exist in the earth, in that way, the brahman and the entire universe are established in you. O goddess! The imperishable sound Oum, and everything mobile and immobile, exist in you. O goddess! The three syllables<sup>329</sup> and everything that exists and everything that does not exist are in you. O goddess! O Sarasvati! The three worlds, the three gods, the three Vedas, the three fires, the three stellar bodies, the three categories, dharma and the other three, the three gunas, the three sounds, the three taints, the three ashramas, the three times, the ancestors and day and night exist in you.<sup>330</sup> O Sarasvati! All these measurements, in units of three, are your manifestations. Those who know about the brahman perform various rituals instructed in the ancient and original Brahmana texts, offerings of soma, oblations and food and the seven sacrifices.<sup>331</sup> O goddess! All these have invocations to you. However, you have another supreme form of *ardhamatra*<sup>332</sup> that cannot be ascertained. That is without transformation and without decay. It is divine and transcends measurement. I am not capable of pronouncing that supreme form. It is incapable of being pronounced through the tongue, the palate or the lips, not even by Indra, the Vasus, Brahma, the sun, the moon or the stellar bodies. You are the abode of the universe. The universe is your form. You are the goddess of the universe. You are the supreme goddess. You have been spoken about in Samkhya and Vedanta and the many branches of these texts have sought to determine this form. This is without a beginning, without a middle and without an end. It is all that exists and all that does not exist. It is one, but is manifested in creation in many different forms. It cannot be described, but is sought to be described in the six qualities.<sup>333</sup> What is described through the six qualities resides in the three gunas. This alone is the source of the many kinds of powers. These supreme powers are manifested in you. Happiness, unhappiness and supreme bliss are manifested in you. O goddess! In this way, you pervade the entire universe, everything that has components and everything that does not have components. The dual form

of the brahman exists in you and so does the non-dual form. The eternal exists in you and so does that which is not eternal, the gross and the subtle and the most subtle of the subtle, all that is on earth, the sky and everywhere else. You are the truth experienced in all these forms. Everything that is manifest, everything that is not manifest, everything that exists alone or through the elements, everything on earth, in heaven or elsewhere, all these can be known through your vowels and consonants.’ Sarasvati, Vishnu’s tongue, was praised in this way and replied to the great-souled naga, Ashvatara. Sarasvati said, ‘O lord of the nagas! O Kambala’s brother! I will confer a boon on you. Tell me what is in your mind and I will bestow that boon on you.’ Ashvatara replied, ‘O goddess! Kambala was my former aide. Please give us the different kinds of sounds and all their combinations.’ Sarasvati said, ‘O unblemished one! O Indra of the serpents! O excellent naga! Through my favours, I grant you and Kambala, the seven *svaras*, the combination into seven *ragas*, the seven kinds of songs, the seven *murchhanas*, the forty-nine *talas* and the three *gramas*. All these will be known to you. <sup>334</sup> O Indra of the nagas! That apart, through my favours, you will know the four *padas*, the three *talas* and the three kinds of *laya*. <sup>335</sup> I have given you four things—pada, tala, laya and the break in the music. You have also been given everything that these depend on, vowels and consonants. I have given you and Kambala all this. O naga! On earth and in the nether regions, the two of you, and no one else, will be the ones who propound this. In Patala, the world of the gods and earth, there will be no one other than the two nagas.’ Having said this, the lotus-eyed goddess, Sarasvati, vanished instantly from the naga’s sight. As she had said, the two brothers got to know everything about pada, tala, svara and everything else.

“‘The lord Hara, the god who destroyed Ananga, is stationed at the summit of Kailasa, Indra among mountains. <sup>336</sup> They went there. To the tune of stringed musical instruments, they worshipped him with the seven kinds of songs, characterized with laya and the other things. They controlled their minds and their bodies and made supreme efforts in the morning, in the evening, at noon and during the sandhyas. They praised the one with the bull as his banner <sup>337</sup> for a long period of time. Pleased with their songs, he



said, ‘Ask for a boon.’ Ashvatara and Kambala bowed down together and said, ‘O Mahadeva! O Shitikantha! O Umapati! O illustrious one! O god of the gods! O Trilochana! <sup>338</sup> If you are pleased with us, then grant us the boon we wish for. O god! Kuvalayashva’s wife, Madalasa, has died. Let her immediately be born as my daughter, with an age identical to what it was when she died. May she be able to remember her past life and let her be born with the kind of beauty she used to possess. According to your words, let the yogi, the mother of yoga, be born again.’ The lord replied, ‘O best among the nagas! It shall be exactly as you have described. O supreme serpent! Without any doubt, listen to my words. When the funeral ceremony is over, think of me and worship the ancestors. Out of the pindas that are offered, eat the middle one yourself. <sup>339</sup> It shall be as you wish and at that instant, the one with the excellent eyebrows will be born from your middle hood. <sup>340</sup> The fortunate one will be born in the exact form she died in. Eat the pinda yourself and all this will occur. At that instant, she will emerge from your middle hood. This is the truth.’ Hearing this, they bowed down to Maheshvara. Filled with satisfaction, they reached Rasatala. The naga, Kambala’s younger brother, performed the funeral ceremony. In that way, he ate the pinda in the middle. As soon as he ate the pinda, the slender-waisted one was born from the breath of his middle hood, in exactly the same form she had possessed when she had died. The excellent serpent did not tell anyone about this. He kept the one with the excellent teeth in the inner quarters of his house, protected by female guards.

“As soon as it was day, every day, the two sons of the lord of the nagas happily sported with Ritadhvaja, like immortals. One day, the naga Ashvatara cheerfully told them, ‘Why don’t you do what I have spoken to you about earlier? The prince has done you a good turn. O sons! Why don’t you bring the granter of honours to my presence so that I can do him a good turn?’ He thus affectionately spoke to his two sons yet again. They went to their friend’s city and played with the intelligent one. In the course of the conversation, they lovingly asked Kuvalayashva to visit them in their own house. The prince told them, ‘All the riches, mounts and garments in my house belong to you. I will give you whatever you want, wealth, jewels and

other things. O sons of a dvija! <sup>341</sup> Since you love me, all this should be given to you. Indeed, I am so evil-souled that I have been deceived by destiny. Therefore, though you sport in my house, you have this sense of “your” and “our”. If you wish to do something that will please me and show me a favour, then have a sense of ownership in all the riches that are there in my house. What is yours in mine. What is mine is yours. O friends! Know this. You are like the breath of my life, roaming around outside. O excellent dvijas! Do not speak of a difference again. Show me great favours by being affectionate towards me and do not curse me in your hearts.’ Thus addressed by him in those affectionate words, the two sons of the naga spoke lovingly to the prince. ‘O Ritadhvaja! There is no doubt about what you have said. It is not that we think in a different way. However, our great-souled father, who is like your father too, has told us this. “I wish to see Kuvalayashva.” He has told us this repeatedly.’ Immediately, Kuvalayashva rose up from his excellent seat. He stood on the ground and bowed down. Kuvalayashva said, ‘My father has said this. I am blessed. I have performed an extremely auspicious deed. Who else is like me? My father is himself anxious to see me. Let us arise and proceed. Even for an instant, let us not ignore his command. I will swear on his feet that I will not cross what he wants.’ Having said this, the prince emerged from the city with them and reached the auspicious Goutami. <sup>342</sup> The prince proceeded between the two sons of the Indra of the nagas and thought that their house was on the other side of the river. But they dragged the prince down and conveyed him to Patala.

“In Patala, he saw those two naga princes in different form. They had auspicious svastika marks on hoods adorned with jewels. He saw their beautiful forms and his eyes dilated in wonder. He smiled and lovingly told them, ‘O excellent dvijas! Excellent.’ The news was conveyed to their father, Ashvatara, the serene lord of the nagas, who was revered even by the residents of heaven. The prince saw that Patala was beautiful and was filled with children and youthful and aged nagas. Here and there, the naga maidens played, adorned with beautiful earrings and necklaces. As they proceeded, the sounds of singing and the playing of musical instruments

like veenas, flutes, drums and cymbals followed them. Shatrujit's son saw Patala, decorated with hundreds of mansions. With the two nagas he loved, the scorcher of enemies entered the residence of the king of the nagas. He saw the great-souled lord of the nagas seated there. He was attired in divine garlands and garments, adorned with jewels and earrings. The immensely fortunate one wore armlets and necklaces made of sparkling pearls. He was seated on a seat that was completely made out of gold and was studded with jewels, coral and lapis lazuli. They presented him and said, 'This is our father.' They told their father, 'This is the valiant Kuvalayashva.'

Ritadhvaja bowed down at the feet of the Indra among the nagas. The naga raised him and firmly embraced him. He inhaled the fragrance of his head and said, 'May you live for a long time. May the array of your enemies be destroyed. May you serve your parents. O child! You are fortunate, since my sons speak about your qualities when you are not present. May you prosper in thoughts, words and deeds. The life of a person with qualities is praised. A person who has no qualities is dead, even though he may be alive. With his qualities, a person satisfies his parents and causes anxiety in the hearts of his enemies. Performing beneficial deeds for gods, ancestors, brahmanas, friends, those who seek something and others, he creates trust in great people. <sup>343</sup> Relatives thus desire that a person with qualities should live for a long time. Such a person does not criticize others and is compassionate towards those who face hardships. Since a person with qualities is a refuge for those who are distressed, his birth is successful.' Having told the brave Kuvalayashva this, the serpent desired to honour Kuvalayashva and told his sons, 'In due course, let us finish our bathing and other things. We will drink liquor and enjoy ourselves with the food we want. After this, for a short period of time, we will delight our hearts in conversation with Kuvalayashva. Let him happily remain here for a while.' Shatrujit's son did not say anything in reply, but signified assent. The generous lord of the nagas acted accordingly. With his sons and the prince, the truthful lord of the giant nagas happily enjoyed himself, eating, drinking and enjoying other objects of pleasure.'"

## Chapter 22

‘The son said, “After they had eaten, the lord of the hooded ones was worshipped by his two sons and the son of the lord of the earth. With his charming words, the serpent cheerfully generated affection in the friend of his two sons. He said, ‘O fortunate one! Tell me. Is everything well in the house you have come from? You should tell me without any doubt, like a son does to his father. Listen to my words. Everything that belongs to me, gold, silver, garments, mounts and seats, anything that is difficult to get, belongs to you.’ Kuvalayashva replied, ‘O illustrious one! Through your favours, there is gold in my father’s house. There is nothing of this nature that I lack. My father has ruled the earth for one thousand years, just as you rule Patala. Nevertheless, my mind does not hanker after any of this. If a father is alive, that is great fortune and such people have performed extremely auspicious deeds. For such people, a crore of coins is like a blade of grass. A crore of coins is equivalent to youth. I have virtuous friends who are just like me. We have no ailments of the body or the mind. The wealth is with my father and I have youth. What don’t I possess? When men are attracted towards what is false, their minds turn towards asking. I desire nothing. Why should my tongue utter anything other than the truth? Those who are covered with the shade offered by their fathers’ arms are happy and need not worry about whether wealth exists at home or not. But there are those who, since childhood, have been deprived of a father, even though they may have a family. I think that the creator has made them deviate from the path of happiness. Therefore, devoted to our fathers, we always distribute from the store of riches, jewels and other things to those who desire them. Since the jewel on the crest of my diadem has touched your feet, I have got everything.’ Addressed in these words, the excellent serpent

spoke lovingly to the prince who had been a benefactor to his sons. ‘If you do not desire jewels or gold, if there is anything else that would please your heart, tell me about it. I will give it to you.’ Kuvalayashva replied, ‘O illustrious one! Through your favours, everything that I wish for exists in my house. In particular, I have now been able to see you. Therefore, I have achieved my purpose and my life has been successful. Despite being human, I have been able to touch the limbs of a divinity like you. The dust from your feet has touched my head. O lord of the nagas! What have I not been able to obtain? However, if you still wish to bestow the boon that my heart wants, let it be such that my mind does not withdraw from the performance of auspicious deeds. Gold, jewels, gems, mounts, homes, seats, women, food, drink, sons, beautiful garlands and unguents and all the objects of pleasure like singing and musical instruments—in my view, all of these are the fruits of the tree of auspicious deeds. Therefore, a man must be attached to auspicious deeds and, controlling himself, make efforts to sprinkle those roots. Nothing will then be impossible to get.’ Ashvatara said, ‘O wise one! Your intelligence is devoted to dharma. It shall be that way. You have spoken the truth. All of these are the fruits of dharma. However, you have now come to my house and you must accept something that is impossible for those in the world of humans to obtain.’ Hearing these words, the prince glanced towards the faces of the sons of the lord of the nagas.

““Those two brave ones bowed down before their father and clearly communicated everything in the prince’s mind. ‘O father! Deceived by an evil-souled one and hearing about her beloved’s death, his beloved wife gave up her life. The evil-minded danava did this because of his enmity. She was the daughter of the king of the gandharvas and her name was Madalasa. O father! This grateful one made a pledge that having been separated from Madalasa, he would not have another wife. The valiant Ritadhvaja wishes to see the one who was beautiful in her limbs. O father! If you can do what he desires, that will be a service.’ Ashvatara replied, ‘When the elements of a body have been decomposed, how can they be brought back and shown? That can only happen in a dream, or in

Shambara's maya.' <sup>344</sup> Shatrujit's son, full of love and embarrassment, bowed down before the great-souled lord of the nagas and said, 'O father! Even if you can show me a Madalasa fashioned out of maya, I will regard that as a great favour.' Ashvatara replied, 'O child! In that case, behold the maya you wish to see. Though you are a child, since you have come to my house, you are like my senior.' <sup>345</sup> Madalasa had been hidden in his house and the Indra of the nagas had her brought there and showed the prince the auspicious lady, having chanted some words to confuse them. 'O prince! Is this your wife, Madalasa, or is she not?' On seeing the slender-limbed one, he instantly lost all sense of shame. Exclaiming 'My love,' he rushed towards her. But the naga Ashvatara immediately restrained him. Ashvatara said, 'O son! I have already told you. She is fashioned out of maya. Do not touch her. Since she is fashioned out of maya, she will vanish the moment she is touched.' At this, he exclaimed, 'Alas, my love!' and fell down on the ground, unconscious. He thought of the beautiful lady. 'Is this a delusion or is this something else? She must be mine. Using weapons, the enemies could not bring me down in battle, but such is the pull that I have been brought down. Have I really been shown something fashioned out of maya, or is this a combination of air, water, fire, earth and space?' <sup>346</sup> Comforting Kuvalayashva, the serpent told him everything about how she had been brought back from the world of the dead. Delighted at having got his beloved back, he bowed down before the naga. As soon as he thought of his horse, it arrived. Honoured by them, he ascended it and taking her with him, returned to his own city.

“Filled with devotion, if a man continuously listens to this account, he obtains the fruits of chanting the Vedas, something that is very difficult to obtain on earth. He always obtains happiness and everything that he desires. There is nothing that is impossible for him to obtain in the world.”

## Chapter 23

‘The son said, “Having returned to his own city, he told his father everything about how he had got the slender-limbed one back from the world of the dead. The auspicious one prostrated herself at the feet of her father-in-law and mother-in-law. As used to be the case earlier, depending on the norms and the age, she worshipped, honoured and embraced her relatives. In the city, the citizens engaged in great festivities. For a very long time, Ritadhvaja enjoyed himself with the slender-waisted one, in waterfalls, mountains, the banks of rivers, gardens, beautiful forests and groves. Desiring to exhaust her store of good deeds, she too enjoyed herself with him in those beautiful spots.

“After a long period of time, King Shatrujit, having ruled the earth properly, followed the dharma of time. <sup>347</sup> The citizens instated his son Ritadhvaja, who was generous in his conduct and deeds, as the king. He ruled over the subjects properly, as if they were his own sons. Madalasa gave birth to her first son and his intelligent father named him Vikranta. The servants were delighted at this, but Madalasa laughed.

“Once, the infant son was lying down on Madalasa’s lap, weeping in indistinct tones. To soothe him, she said, ‘O child! You are pure and you have no name. That has only been thought of now. You are not this body, consisting of the five elements. It does not belong to you. Why are you weeping? Or perhaps you are weeping because of your birth. Despite being pure, you have been born on earth, created out of many elements with qualities and devoid of qualities, with all the senses. In this world, a man is born weak. Created from the elements and nourished by the elements, he grows, with food, water and other things. But what belongs to you? What grows and what declines? This body is only a covering. When it is



shattered, you will still remain. Do not be so foolish as to get attached to it. Because of good and bad deeds and because of delusion caused by insolence, you have been tied down to the bonds of this body. The father, the son, the mother and the beloved amount to nothing. “This is mine. This is not mine.” Do not get entangled in this aggregation of elements. Those who are confused in their intelligence think that greater unhappiness is the antidote to unhappiness and that objects of pleasure can give rise to happiness. Learned ones, not confused in their intelligence, know that this pursuit of happiness gives rise to greater misery. When a woman laughs, her bones <sup>348</sup> can be seen. Her shining eyes reveal the impurities of the marrow. Her breasts are only a mass of flesh and so are her genital organs. She is hell personified. The earth is like a vehicle and the body is on that vehicle. But there is a different being <sup>349</sup> in the form of the body. One has an excessive sense of ownership towards the body. However, one is so deluded that one does not have a sense of ownership towards the earth. <sup>350</sup> Give up both dharma and adharma, notions of truth and falsehood. <sup>351</sup> Having cast aside both truth and falsehood, cast aside what really needs to be cast aside.’ Thus instructed by the king’s wife, as the days passed, the son grew up. Since he had been soothed in that way, he developed a sparkling understanding about the atman. He obtained his strength and his intelligence from his father. In a similar way, because of his mother’s words, he developed an understanding about the atman. Having developed this understanding since birth, the son became wise. He had no sense of ‘mine’ and his mind turned away from garhasthya. A second son was born and his father addressed him by the name of Subahu. Madalasa laughed again. As was the case earlier, she soothed the child again. As she spoke to the child, the immensely intelligent one also developed understanding. When the third son was born, the king addressed him as Shatrumardana. The one with the excellent eyebrows again laughed for a very long time. As before, the slender-limbed one developed the child’s understanding. Therefore, he was without desire and did not pursue anything that would yield fruits. When the fourth son was born, the king wished to give him a

name. He saw that Madalasa, who was auspicious in her deeds, was laughing.

““Since she was laughing, the king was filled with great curiosity. He said, ‘Whenever I wished to give a name, you laughed. Tell me the reason for this. I think that the names I gave, Vikranta, Subahu and Shatrumardana, were good ones. Since they indicate valour and pride, they are appropriate names for kshatriyas. <sup>352</sup> O fortunate one! If you think those weren’t appropriate names, then you give a name to the fourth son.’ Madalasa replied, ‘O great king! I must certainly do what you have commanded me to. I will therefore name your fourth son. This one will know about dharma and he will be famous in the world by the name of Alarka. Your youngest son will be intelligent.’ The lord of the earth heard the name the mother had thought for their son. He laughed and said, ‘O auspicious one! The name you have thought for my son is meaningless. <sup>353</sup> O Madalasa! What is the point of giving such a meaningless name?’ Madalasa replied, ‘O great king! Conferring a name is no more than customary practice. O lord of the earth! Listen. The names you have given also have no meaning. Wise people say that the atman pervades everything. The word “kranti” signifies that a person is going from one place to another place. But the atman that is in the body is everywhere and does not go. Therefore, in my view, a name like Vikranta is meaningless. <sup>354</sup> O lord of the earth! You gave your son the name of Subahu. <sup>355</sup> However, since the atman is without a form, this is meaningless. You gave your third son the name of Arimardana. <sup>356</sup> But I think this is also meaningless. Listen to the reason. It is the same atman that exists in all bodies. O king! That being the case, who is an enemy and who is a friend? Elements are crushed by elements. How can something that has no form be crushed? It is the concept of differentiation that leads to anger and such sentiments. It is only because of customary practice that such names are thought of. In that case, why are you of the view that the name Alarka alone is meaningless?’ Thus addressed, the lord of the earth agreed that what his immensely intelligent and beloved queen had spoken was the truth. To generate understanding in him, the one with the excellent eyebrows started to speak to her son exactly as she had done earlier. The

king told her, ‘O foolish one! What are you doing? Why are you influencing my child’s beliefs? You are conferring a wicked understanding on him, just as you had done with my earlier sons. If you wish to bring me pleasure, please favour me by acting in accordance with my words. Engage this son in the path of *pravritti*.<sup>357</sup> O queen! Do not make him deviate from the path of action. O virtuous one! There should not be *nivritti* from offering *pindas* to the ancestors. Depending on what is done, auspicious and inauspicious deeds, the ancestors go to the world of the gods, descend downwards, become humans, or are born as other kinds of species. They may suffer from hunger and thirst and can be weakened. That is the reason men engage in action and offer them *pindas* and water. O one with the excellent eyebrows! That is the reason they always tend to gods and guests too. Men provide sustenance to gods, humans, ancestors, *pretas*, *bhutas*, *guhyakas*, birds, worms and insects.<sup>358</sup> O slender-limbed one! Therefore, instruct my son, who has been born as a *kshatriya*, about action that will bring him benefit in this world and in the next.’

“At this, the virtuous and beautiful lady, Madalasa, soothed the son named Alarka and taught him accordingly. ‘O son! Grow and delight my husband’s mind with your action. Protect properly, so that you can enjoy fruits in this world and in the next. Do good deeds to friends and destroy those who are evil-hearted. O son! You are blessed. Bereft of enemies, you will rule over the earth for a long period of time. Protect and enjoy. As the fruit of *dharma*, you will obtain immortality. On festive occasions, satisfy those who are immortals on earth.<sup>359</sup> Satisfy the wishes of your relatives. Turn your heart towards doing good to others. Withdraw your mind from the wives of other men. Always meditate on Murari in your heart.<sup>360</sup> Conquer the six enemies.<sup>361</sup> Do not think about what is transient and use your understanding to counter delusion. Conquer kings and accumulate wealth, spending this wealth on earning fame. Be scared of hearing others being criticized. Rescue people who are immersed in an ocean of calamities. Please the gods with many sacrifices, and *brahmanas* who seek refuge with you with food. Satisfy women with unmatched objects of desire. O brave one! For a long period of time, satisfy enemies with battles.

O child! When you are a child, delight the minds of your relatives and follow the commands of your seniors. When you are young, delight women who are ornaments of good lineages. O child! When you are old, delight the forest dwellers who live in the forest. Rule over the kingdom and delight your well-wishers. O son! Protect the virtuous and perform sacrifices and rites. O child! For the sake of cattle and brahmanas, slay wicked enemies in battles, facing death in this way.”””

## Chapter 24

‘The son said, “From one day to another day, the child Alarka was soothed by his mother in this way and he grew in age and intelligence. When he became a *kumara*,<sup>362</sup> and the sacred thread ceremony had been performed, Ritadhvaja’s wise son prostrated himself before his mother and said, ‘O mother! I am humbly bowing down before you. Tell me everything that I should do for happiness in this world and in the next one. What should I do for myself? What should I do for dharma? What is beneficial for the subjects? What is best for keeping all the subjects happy?’

“Madalasa replied, ‘O child! Having been instated in the kingdom, one must rule over the earth and perform all the tasks that delight subjects, as long as they do not conflict with one’s own dharma. Since they strike at the roots of truth, one must avoid the vices. By ensuring that counsel is not divulged outside, one must protect oneself from enemies. One must distinguish the wicked from the virtuous and identify advisers who have been corrupted by the enemy. If a chariot deviates from its own path, eight kinds of destruction can happen.<sup>363</sup> This is what happens to a king whose counsel is divulged outside. Using spies, the king must ascertain the enemy’s efforts. A king should not trust his friends, his acquaintances or his relatives. If the task so requires, the king should trust even those who are not friends. Skilled about the place, increase and decrease, he must determine his six modes.<sup>364</sup> The Indra among men must not succumb to desire. The lord of the earth must first control himself, then the ministers, servants and citizens. It is only after he knows this has been done that he acts against the enemy. If a king tries to conquer the enemy without conquering these, he is conquered by advisers who have not conquered themselves. He is then bound down by arrays of the enemy. O son!

Therefore, a lord of the earth must first conquer desire and the other vices. When he has conquered them, the king conquers. If he has not conquered them, he is destroyed. A wicked king is destroyed by enemies like desire, anger, avarice, insolence, pride and delight. It is remembered that Pandu was brought down because he was addicted to desire.<sup>365</sup> Since he could not control his anger, Anuhlada killed his own son.<sup>366</sup> Aila was killed because he was greedy.<sup>367</sup> Because of his insolence, Vena was killed by brahmanas.<sup>368</sup> The son of Anayusha was killed because of his pride.<sup>369</sup> Puranjaya was destroyed because of delight.<sup>370</sup> Having conquered these enemies, the great-souled Marutta conquered everything. Remembering this, a lord of the earth must cast aside the six vices. A king must learn from the conduct of a crow, a cuckoo, a bee, a crane, a snake, a peacock, a swan, a cock and iron.<sup>371</sup> Towards the enemy, a lord of men must behave like an owl.<sup>372</sup> At the right time, the lord of the earth must act like an ant.<sup>373</sup> His acts will be known as much as fire in kindling or seeds in silk-cotton.<sup>374</sup> Like the sun and the moon, he must protect the earth through his policy. He must learn from a courtesan, a lotus, a sharabha, a *shulika* and a woman with heavy breasts.<sup>375</sup> The lord of the earth must formulate policy on the basis of *sama*, *dana*, *danda* and *bheda* and protect the earth.<sup>376</sup> Like a chandala woman, he must use his wisdom and serve. If he wishes to protect the earth, the lord of the earth must follow the conduct of the five—Shakra, Surya, Yama, Soma and Vayu. For four months, Indra sustains the earth through his showers. Like that, the lord of the earth must nurture the world through his generosity. For eight months, Surya draws up the water through his rays. In that way, the king must collect taxes through subtle means. When it is the right time, Yama acts against both friend and foe. Like that, the king must be impartial in his treatment of the virtuous and the wicked, regardless of whether he likes them or dislikes them. The sight of the full moon fills a man with delight. Like that, when all the subjects are satisfied, the king has followed auspicious conduct. Secretly, the wind circulates among all beings. Like that, the king must use his spies amidst citizens, advisers, enemies and relatives. A king who goes to heaven does not deviate from dharma and his mind is not attracted to objects associated with avarice, wealth, desire or

anything else. There are foolish men who deviate from their own dharma and follow perverse paths. A king who brings them back to their own dharma goes to heaven. O son! If the dharma of the varnas and the ashramas does not suffer in a kingdom, then that king obtains eternal happiness in this world and in the next one. This is the supreme task that leads to a king's prosperity, to establish men in their own dharma and not allow them to be distracted by evil-minded ones. If he rules beings in this way, the lord of the earth does what he is supposed to do. When he rules properly, he obtains a share in that dharma. <sup>377</sup> If a king acts in this way and protects the four varnas, he finds happiness and pleasure with Shakra in Shakra's world.''''



## Chapter 25

‘The son said, “Hearing his mother’s words, Alarka again asked his mother about the dharma of the varnas and the dharma of the ashramas. Alarka said, ‘O immensely fortunate one! You have spoken to me about what the kingdom should be based on. I wish to hear about the dharma of the varnas and the ashramas.’

“Madalasa replied, ‘There are three kinds of dharma for a brahmana—donations, studying and performing sacrifices. Except at the time of calamities, there isn’t a fourth dharma. O son! There are said to be three appropriate means for him to earn a living—officiating at sacrifices, teaching and accepting pure gifts. For a kshatriya, three kinds of dharma are spoken about—donations, studying and sacrifices. He must protect the earth and use weapons to earn a living. Donations, studying and sacrifices are the three also for a vaishya. He must earn his living through trade, animal husbandry and agriculture. I will describe the dharma of a shudra as three—donations, sacrifices and serving dvijas. He can earn a living through artisanship, serving and nurturing dvijas and buying and selling. Having spoken about the dharma of varnas, listen to that of ashramas. A man who pursues the dharma of his own varna and does not deviate, obtains success. If he acts in a prohibited way, after death, he goes to hell. O son! As long as a dvija’s sacred thread ceremony has not been held, he can act, speak or eat as he wishes. Once the sacred thread ceremony has been properly held, he must be a brahmachari in his guru’s household. I will speak about the dharma while he resides there. Listen. He must study himself, tend to the fire, bathe and always eat what has been obtained by begging, after offering it to him and taking his permission. He must always be ready to tend to his guru’s tasks and bring him pleasure. He must study when he has been

summoned. His mind must be devoted to him and to no one else. From his guru's mouth, he must completely obtain one or two Vedas. After obtaining his guru's permission, he must offer him a good dakshina. If he so wishes, he can enter the ashrama of garhasthya. Alternatively, he may wish to proceed to vanaprastha ashrama or the fourth. <sup>378</sup> When one should reside in one's guru's house, if there is no guru, a dvija can reside in the house of the guru's son. If there is no son, he can reside in the house of the guru's disciple.

““Without any pride, after having served as a brahmachari in that ashrama, he may wish to enter the ashrama of garhasthya. For garhasthya ashrama, he must follow the rites and marry a woman who is his equal, but is not descended from the same rishi's lineage. <sup>379</sup> She must be free from disease and must not be disabled of limb. Through riches earned through his own efforts, he must properly and faithfully satisfy ancestors, gods and guests and sustain those who are dependent on him. To the best of his capacity, he must give food to servants, sons, daughters, the distressed, outcastes, animals and birds. It is the dharma of a householder to have intercourse with his wife when she is in season. To the best of his capacity, he must perform the five sacrifices. <sup>380</sup> According to capacity, a man must himself eat what is left after gods, ancestors, guests and relatives have eaten. He must share his food equally with the servants. I have thus described garhasthya ashrama to you.

““I will now tell you about vanaprastha ashrama. Listen attentively. A wise person sees his children and grandchildren and the decay in his own body. To purify himself, he then leaves for vanaprastha ashrama. He brings benefit to himself by surviving on forest fare and performing austerities. He sleeps on the ground, observes brahmacharya and performs the rituals for gods, ancestors and guests. He offers oblations and bathes thrice a day. He has matted hair and wears garments made out of bark. He observes a vow of silence and uses oils available in the forest. In this way, he cleanses his sins and elevates himself. After vanaprastha ashrama, there is the ultimate one, where one becomes a mendicant. O son! Hear what great-souled ones, those who know about dharma, have said about the nature and dharma of this

fourth ashrama. He must give up all kinds of association, practise brahmacharya and be devoid of anger. He must conquer his senses and not live in the same place for a long period of time. He must not engage in action and, once a day, eat what has been obtained through begging. By reflecting on the atman, he must obtain knowledge and understanding about the atman. I have spoken to you about the dharma of the fourth ashrama. Hear what all the varnas and ashramas must generally do. Truthfulness, purity, non-violence, lack of envy, forgiveness, desisting from cruelty, lack of miserliness and satisfaction—in brief, these are said to be the eight qualities that characterize the dharma of all the varnas and ashramas. This is the dharma that must always be followed. If a man faithfully observes the dharma of his own varna and ashrama, he goes to Brahma's world and resides there for as long as fourteen Indras rule. <sup>381</sup> A lord of the earth must punish men who act in a contrary way. There are men who commit the sin of abandoning their own dharma. If a lord of men ignores them, he doesn't do what is good for him and heads downwards. Therefore, a king must make efforts to ensure that all varnas follow their own dharma. By punishing those who act in a contrary way, he must establish them in their own tasks.'''

## Chapter 26

““Alarka asked, ‘What tasks must a man in garhasthya perform? Which acts cause him bondage and which lead to his liberation? What tasks must a virtuous householder avoid and which are the ones he should perform? Please tell me what I have asked you.’

““Madalasa replied, ‘O child! By resorting to garhasthya, a man nourishes the entire world and thereby earns the auspicious worlds for himself. Ancestors, sages, gods, creatures, man, worms, insects, flying insects, birds, animals and asuras sustain themselves on the householder and go to him for their satisfaction. They look towards his face. “Will he give, or will he not give?” O child! Everything depends on a cow that consists of the three Vedas. The entire universe is established in her and she is held to be the cause of the universe. The Rig Veda is her back, the Yajur Veda is her middle, the Sama Veda is her mouth, *ishta* and *purta* are her two horns, the sacred *suktas* are her body hair, *shanti* and *pushti* are her excrement and urine and the varnas are established in her feet.<sup>382</sup> The universe earns subsistence from her and she does not suffer from decay. O son! Her four udders are the sounds of svaha, svadha, vashatkara and *hantakara*.<sup>383</sup> The gods suck on the udder that has the sound of svaha, the ancestors the udder that has the sound of svadha. The sages suck the udder of vashatkara. Inferior gods, asuras and men always suck the udder of hantakara. Thus, in the form of the three Vedas, the cow nourishes gods and others. O child! These four types are nourished by these four udders. If a man does not engage them at the right time, he dishonours the cow. A man should use her to satisfy gods and all the others. A person who does not do this causes their destruction and commits a grave sin. He is submerged in the darkness of *tamisra* and *andha-tamisra*.<sup>384</sup> The immortals and others

are this cow's calves. Therefore, if a man makes them suck at the right time, he attains heaven. O son! Hence, just as he nourishes his own body, every day, a man must tend to gods, rishis, ancestors, other men and other creatures. He must bathe and purify himself. At the right time, he must control himself and offer oblations to gods, rishis, ancestors and Prajapati. A man must worship the gods with sandalwood, fragrances and incense. He must tender oblations into the fire. Offerings to Brahma and the Vishvadevas will be rendered in the middle of the house. Those for Dhanvantari will be rendered towards the north-east. Offerings for Shakra will be rendered towards the east and those for Yama towards the south. Offerings for Varuna will be rendered towards the west and those for Soma towards the north. Offerings for Dhatri and Vidhatri will be placed at the door of the house.<sup>385</sup> In every direction, offerings for Aryama<sup>386</sup> will be spread outside the house. Offerings for ghosts<sup>387</sup> and those who roam in the night will be scattered in the air. Those for the ancestors will be rendered while facing the south. After this, the householder will control his mind and gather up water for their achamaniya. For different gods, a wise person will cast this in different directions. Having thus rendered the offerings in the house, the householder must purify himself and affectionately welcome all the other creatures. That for dogs, shvapachas and birds must be placed on the ground. In the name of the Vishvadevas, this must be done in the morning and in the evening. After having done this, a wise person must rinse his mouth and glance towards the door. He must wait for the eighth part of a *muhurta*, in case there is a guest.<sup>388</sup> When a guest arrives, to the best of one's capacity, he must be honoured with food, water, fragrances, flowers and other things. A friend must not be accepted as a guest, nor someone who resides in the same village. If a brahmana arrives at that time, hungry and exhausted, and seeks, even if his lineage and name are unknown, he is spoken of as an atithi. The learned worship him, to the best of their capacity. A learned person does not ask about his gotra or conduct, or about how much he has studied. He is not concerned with whether his form is agreeable or disagreeable, but thinks of him as Prajapati. Since he remains there temporarily, he is spoken of as atithi. When he is satisfied, the

householder is freed from the debt of *nriyajna*.<sup>389</sup> If a man eats himself, without having offered food to the guest, he commits a sin and because of the sin, in the next birth, survives only on excrement. If a guest leaves a house without being satisfied, he takes away all the householder's good merits when he departs and leaves the householder with his bad merits. To the best of his capacity, a man must honour a guest with water, vegetables and whatever else he himself eats. A shraddha ceremony must always be performed with food and water rendered in the name of the ancestors. One or more brahmanas must be fed. The first portion of the food must be offered to the brahmana. Alms must be offered to mendicants and brahmacharis. The best among brahmanas say that one mouthful is known as *bhiksha*, four mouthfuls are known as *agra* and four agras are known as hanta. Depending on one's capacity, one must offer bhiksha, agra or hanta before eating oneself. After the guests have been honoured, beloved kin, relatives, those who ask for help, the disabled, children, the aged and the afflicted must be fed. There are also others who possess nothing and hungry, desire help. Depending on one's capacity, relatives must be fed. Having approached a prosperous relative, if a person continues to suffer, that suffering is a sin inflicted on the prosperous relative. In the evening, a guest must be treated in exactly the same way. According to one's capacity, he must be honoured with a bed, a seat and food. O son! This is said to be how a householder bears on his shoulders the burden. Vidhatri, the gods, maharshis, guests and relatives shower their benedictions on him. Larger animals, smaller animals, birds, small insects and others are gratified. O immensely fortunate one! In this connection, Atri himself sang a chant about garhasthya ashrama. O immensely fortunate one! Listen. "According to capacity, a householder must honour gods, ancestors, guests, relatives, female relatives and preceptors. Food must be placed on the ground for dogs, shvapachas and birds. In the name of the Vishvadevas, this must be done in the morning and in the evening. Without offering these in the recommended way, a householder must not himself eat flesh, grains, vegetables, or whatever else exists in the house."''''

## Chapter 27

““Madalasa continued, ‘O son! A householder has three kinds of tasks —nitya, naimittika and *nitya-naimittika*.<sup>390</sup> I have already spoken to you about the five nitya sacrifices. The rites connected with a son’s birth and other similar things are naimittika.<sup>391</sup> The learned know rites performed on *parva* days<sup>392</sup> and shraddhas as nitya-naimittika. Let me speak to you about naimittika and shraddhas. Just as men perform jatakarma at the time of a son’s birth, vivaha and all the others must also be observed in the due order. The ancestors known as Nandimukha must be worshipped.<sup>393</sup> The person performing the sacrifice must seat himself, facing the north or the east and offer a pinda made out of barley mixed with curds. Some men wish to perform this without the Vishvadevas.<sup>394</sup> In this ceremony, brahmanas must be circumambulated and worshipped in pairs. When one has aged, there is another naimittika rite and this is *ourdhvadehika*.<sup>395</sup> I will tell you about what must be done on the day of death. Listen to it. This funeral rite must be performed without invoking the gods and without purifying anything. There will be no invoking of the fire or offering oblations to it. Near the dead body, a single pinda will be offered to the deceased person. To the right of this, some sesamum mixed with water must be offered, saying, “This is in so and so’s memory. May he never decay. May he find delight in this.” This is done when the brahmana leaves.<sup>396</sup> Men must do this every month, for an entire year. When the entire year is over, it is decreed that the *sapindikarana* rite must be performed. This ourdhvadehika ceremony is also done without invoking the gods and without purifying anything. There is no kindling or extinguishing of the fire. To the right, a single brahmana must be fed. In addition, if one wishes to do something special, one performs this rite every month. I will tell you about it. Listen to me with



single-minded attention. There must be four vessels, filled with sesamum mixed with water. O son! Three of these are for the ancestors and one is for the deceased person. The offering must be sprinkled on the three vessels and the vessel meant for the deceased person. The ceremony is concluded by chanting “*ye samana*”.<sup>397</sup> Funeral rites have also been laid down for women. However, if they do not have sons, *sapindikarana* cannot be undertaken for them. For women, men must perform the ceremony every year and as in the case of men, the rite must also be performed on the day of her death. In the absence of a son, a *sapinda* can perform the rite.<sup>398</sup> If there is no *sapinda*, a *sahodaka* can undertake the rite.<sup>399</sup> If there is no son, the rites can be properly undertaken by a daughter’s son. A daughter’s son can also perform the ceremony for a maternal grandfather. When it is performed for a maternal grandfather or a paternal grandfather, it is known as *dvyamushyayana*. Following the rites, they<sup>400</sup> must be worshipped through a *naimittika* funeral ceremony. If there is no one else, women can perform the rite for their husbands, but without the use of mantras. If they are also not there, the king must ensure that all the rites are properly undertaken by men of the same class. The king is a relative of all the *varnas*. O child! I have thus spoken to you about *nitya* and *naimittika* rites. Now hear about the funeral rites that are *nitya-naimittika*. When the moon wanes, that time is known as *darsha*.<sup>401</sup> But since this also indicates its permanence, this is the time for such a rite.””

## Chapter 28

““Madalasa said, ‘O son! A father’s great-grandfather is not entitled to the funeral rite of sapindikarana and to pindas offered to ancestors. He can only feed on the *lepa*.<sup>402</sup> O son! Anyone else, who is fourth step onwards, has to feed on the food of *lepa*. There is no longer any link and this is the only kind of enjoyment possible. It is known that there are three kinds of men who are linked through the pinda—the father, the grandfather and the great-grandfather. The others, the grandfather’s grandfather downwards, are linked through *lepa*. Including these three generations, the person performing the ceremony is the seventh in the line. The sages have thus laid down the connection for these seven generations. Those who are further up from the person performing the ceremony enjoy *anulepa*.<sup>403</sup> There are other ancestors who are in heaven or residents in hell. Some have been born as creatures, as inferior species. The person performing the ceremony must follow the recommended rites and satisfy all of them through the shraddha. O son! Hear about this. When men place food down on the ground, those who have become pishachas are satisfied through this. O son! When a garment is wrung after taking a bath, the drops that fall on the ground satisfy those who have become trees. When drops of water from the body fall down on the ground, this satisfies those who have become gods. When a pinda is raised, the particles that fall down on the ground satisfy those who have been born as inferior species. There may be children in the lineage. Though they deserved to have rites performed for them, they were cremated without being thus purified. They are suffering and are satisfied from the food and water scattered during sweeping. After eating, brahmanas rinse their mouths with water. Others obtain satisfaction from this, or from the water used for washing their feet. Those who have become pishachas

and those who have become worms and insects are thus satisfied, in the respective lineages they have been born in, through what the person performing the sacrifice does, or through what brahmanas do, through the sprinkling of food or water, pure or impure.<sup>404</sup> They are satisfied when the shraddha is properly performed. There are men who undertake shraddha ceremonies with wealth earned by other people. This satisfies those who have been born as chandalas or pulkasas. O son! In this way, many relatives are satisfied, even from the food, water and vegetables of shraddha ceremonies. Therefore, a man must faithfully undertake a shraddha ceremony to the best of his capacity, even with vegetables. If the required shraddha ceremony is undertaken, no one in the lineage suffers.

““I will now tell you about the time when men must undertake nitya-naimittika rites. Listen. Every month, a shraddha ceremony must be undertaken when the moon decays at the time of *amavasya*.<sup>405</sup> It must also be performed during *ashtaka*.<sup>406</sup> O son! Now hear about the other desirable occasions—when an excellent brahmana is available, at the time of a solar or lunar eclipse, when the sun moves from one ayana to another, at the time the sun enters the vernal equinox, when objects are available for a shraddha ceremony, when a nightmare is seen, when the natal *nakshatra* or planet is debilitated, or when one desires to perform a shraddha ceremony. A distinguished and learned brahmana, a yogi, a person learned in the Vedas, a person accomplished in *Jyeshtha Sama*,<sup>407</sup> a person learned in ‘Trinachiketa’,<sup>408</sup> a person who observes beneficial vows, a person who observes Trinachiketa,<sup>409</sup> one who knows the three *Madhus*,<sup>410</sup> one who knows the three *Suparnas*,<sup>411</sup> one who knows the six Vedangas, a daughter’s son, an officiating priest, a son-in-law, a sister’s son, a father-in-law, a person who follows the vows of the five fires,<sup>412</sup> a person who is devoted to austerities, a mother’s brother, a person who is devoted to one’s parents, a disciple, a relation by marriage, a kin and an excellent brahmana—all of these are capable of performing the shraddha. O son! A person who has not practised brahmacharya, a diseased person, a person who lacks a limb, a person who has an extra limb, the son of a remarried widow, a man without one eye, an illegitimate son, a son born to a widow after her

husband has died, a person who harms his friends, one with diseased nails, a leper, a person with black teeth, a malformed person, a person who has been cursed, a thief, a person who indulges in calumny, a person who sells soma, a person who has defiled his daughter, a physician, a person who has abandoned his preceptor or father, a person who teaches for payment, an enemy,<sup>413</sup> the husband of a woman who has married before, a person who has abandoned the Vedas or the fire, the husband of a *vrishala*,<sup>414</sup> a person who is defiled, a brahmana who has deviated from his tasks—such people must be shunned at a funeral rite. The best of brahmanas, mentioned earlier, must be invited on the preceding day. They are the ones who must be engaged for rites connected with the gods and the ancestors. They must control themselves and so must the person performing the shraddha. If a person offers food at a shraddha and after eating it, indulges in sexual intercourse, for an entire month, his ancestors lie down on that semen. If a person offers food at a shraddha and after eating it, has intercourse with a woman, for an entire month, his ancestors drink semen and urine. Therefore, the first task for a wise person is to issue the invitations. Until the day when the invitees reach, all association with women must be avoided.

“““In the course of time, mendicants will arrive for alms. Controlling his mind, he must prostrate himself before them. He must please and feed them. The ancestors prefer krishna paksha to *shukla paksha*. In that way, the ancestors also prefer the afternoon to the forenoon. The brahmanas who have arrived at the house must be welcomed and honoured. With hands cleaned and with kusha mats, he must make them sit down on their seats. Those excellent brahmanas must be engaged for rites connected with the ancestors. Depending on capacity, an odd number of brahmanas must be engaged for rites connected with ancestors and an even number for rites connected with gods. Whether it is for the Vishvadevas or whether it is for the maternal grandfather, the rules are similar. There are other men who wish to draw a distinction between the two. For the gods, the face must face the east when performing the rites. For the ancestors, the face must face the north. The learned have laid down similar rules for the maternal

grandfather. Kusha mats are given for their seats. After this, a person who desires his benefit must worship them with arghya and other things. Having given them *pavitraka*,<sup>415</sup> a wise person will take their permission. The brahmana will invoke the gods with mantras. Barley mixed with water will be tendered as an offering to the Vishvadevas. Fragrances, garlands, incenses and lamps will be offered in the proper way. All the rites for the ancestors will be performed towards the right. With their permission,<sup>416</sup> double the quantity of *darbha* grass will be offered. At that time, a learned person must invoke the ancestors with mantras. To the right, he will render the offering of barley mixed with sesamum. O immensely fortunate one! He must do all this to please the ancestors. The brahmanas will grant him permission to go ahead with the fire rites and say, "Proceed." Following the rites, he will offer rice without condiments or salt. The first oblation will be, "To Agni, the bearer of oblations. Svaha." The second oblation will be, "To Soma, revered by the ancestors. Svaha." The third oblation will be, "To Yama, the lord of the ancestors. Svaha." What is left of the oblations must then be given to the brahmanas, in vessels, offering the food according to the rites and with these sweet words. "May you happily enjoy this." Maintaining silence, they will attentively and happily enjoy the food. A man must patiently give them whatever food they desire, tempting them and without displaying any anger. After this, he must chant mantras that slay rakshasas and scatter white mustard and sesamum seeds on the ground. This is for protection, since a shraddha ceremony has many lacunae. He will then ask the brahmanas whether they have been satisfied and they will reply in words signifying that they have indeed been satisfied. With their permission, he will then scatter the food all around, on the ground. Honouring them, he will offer them clean water for rinsing their mouths. O son! With their permission, he will then control his words and thoughts and prepare a pinda for the ancestors with the rice and the sesamum seed. Near the leftover food, this will be placed on *darbha* grass. O son of a king! The person undertaking the ceremony will faithfully think of the ancestors and controlling himself, use his *pitritirtha*<sup>417</sup> to offer them water. Following the rites, a pinda to the maternal grandfather is also offered in the same way,

with fragrances, garlands and achamaniya. With his right hand, he must offer dakshina to the brahmanas and say, “May the utterance of this svadha be propitious.” When they are satisfied, he must make them pronounce mantras for the Vishvadevas. “O Vishvadevas! May you fortunate ones be pleased.” When the brahmanas have said this, he must ask for their benedictions. He must devotedly prostrate himself before them and affectionately grant them permission to leave. He must follow them up to the door and return only when they have granted permission. After this, the nitya rites must be performed and guests fed. Some excellent people wish to perform nitya rites for their ancestors. Others say these should not be undertaken for ancestors, but that the other rites must be performed, as mentioned earlier. Some say the cooking for the ancestors should be done separately. Others say there is no need for this, but the rites must be performed, as mentioned earlier. A man must eat the food along with the servants. A person who knows about dharma controls himself and undertakes a shraddha ceremony for the ancestors in this way, so that the foremost among the brahmanas are satisfied. There are three things that are sacred in a Shraddha—the daughter’s son, the leather bottle for oil and sesamum seeds. O son! The brahmanas have said that three things must be avoided in shraddhas—anger, walking around and hurrying. A silver vessel is the best. Silver must be seen and must also be given away. On earth, it has been heard that the ancestors use a silver vessel to milk svadha. Therefore, they desire silver vessels, which enhance their joy.’”

## Chapter 29

““Madalasa said, ‘O son! After this, listen faithfully to what must be used to enhance the joy of the ancestors and what must be avoided. With havishya food, the ancestors are satisfied for a month. With fish and meat, the paternal ancestors are satisfied for two months. Know that the meat of deer satisfies the ancestors for three months. With the flesh of hares, the ancestors are nourished for four months. The flesh of birds satisfies them for five months and that of boar for six months. Goat meat satisfies them for seven months and *ena*<sup>418</sup> flesh for eight months. There is no doubt that the meat of the ruru antelope satisfies them for nine months. The meat of *gavaya*<sup>419</sup> satisfies them for ten months. The flesh of sheep satisfies the ancestors for eleven months. The milk of cows and payasam satisfies them for a year. O son! There is no doubt that the flesh of a rhinoceros, the flesh of the red goat, jute,<sup>420</sup> honey, meat offered by a daughter’s son, by someone from the daughter’s line or by a *gourisuta*<sup>421</sup> or a shraddha performed in Gaya satisfies the ancestors for an infinitely long period of time. That apart, dark millet, millet, small-grained rice, wild rice and *poushkala* grain satisfy the ancestors. Barley, rice from the monsoon crop, wheat, sesamum, *moong* lentil, mustard, saffron, *kodrava* grain and winnowed corn are extremely agreeable. General corn, beans and small-grained millet are avoidable in shraddhas. Drops of water that fall from the mouth and *mosur* lentil must not be used in shraddha ceremonies. Garlic, turnips, onions, carrots, flour mixed with curds, objects that are inferior in taste and colour, white turmeric, bottle gourds, salt, anything that is saline, red gum and anything with salt added to it should not be used in shraddhas. Anything not praised, objects obtained through bribes, wealth earned by an outcast and objects bought by selling one’s daughter for a price are



condemned. O son! Water that is foul or full of froth, water that is small in quantity, water through which cattle are not satisfied, water that has been collected in the night, water that has been discarded by everyone, water that is not fit to be drunk and water that is from a ditch must always be avoided in rites meant for the ancestors. The milk of deer, sheep, camels, animals with un-cloven hooves, buffaloes, milk from a cow that has given birth in the last ten days and milk obtained by saying, “Give it to me for my ancestral rites” are always avoided by the virtuous for shraddha rites. Ground that is full of worms, barren, burnt by the fire, undesirable, foul in smell and tainted with fierce words <sup>422</sup> must be avoided for shraddha rites. Those who have brought dishonour to the lineage, those who have harmed the lineage, the worst of the lineage, those who have killed brahmanas, the diseased, the naked and sinners should be shunned. Their glances cause harm to a rite meant for the ancestors. A eunuch, a person cast aside by his family, a cock, a village pig, a dog and a *yatudhana* <sup>423</sup> cause harm through their glances. O son! That is the reason those who are well-prepared scatter sesamum seeds on the ground. This grants protection against such fear. A person who has just touched a corpse or a woman who has just delivered, a person who is suffering from a chronic ailment, an outcast and an unclean person does not nourish the ancestors. They must never be seen at a shraddha ceremony. Nor should one see a woman in her menstrual cycle. The person undertaking the rite must carefully avoid conversation and association with those with shaven heads and those who are drunk. Food that has hair or worms in it, food a dog has looked at, food that is foul in stench, food that is stale and food that has been fanned by a garment must be avoided at a shraddha. Anything offered to the ancestors with great devotion, uttering their names and gotras, becomes their food. That is the reason it must be offered to the ancestors in an appropriate vessel. If one desires the satisfaction of the ancestors, it must be offered in that way. At shraddhas, learned men always feed yogis. They are always fed because the ancestors are the reservoirs of yoga. Just as a boat ferries across the water, if a yogi is fed instead of one thousand brahmanas, he saves the person undertaking the rite, as well as those who are fed. In this connection, those

who know about the brahman have chanted a song that they heard about the ancestors. Earlier, the ancestors sung this about King Aila. “We are always eager. When will a son be born, who will offer us a pinda on the ground from what is left after a yogi has eaten? When will a pinda be offered in Gaya? When will we get the great offering of the flesh of a rhinoceros? When will we be satisfied for a month with jute, <sup>424</sup> sesamum or krisara? As an oblation to the Vishvadevas and Soma, the flesh of a rhinoceros is supreme. If the flesh of a rhinoceros without horns is offered, we are satisfied for as long as the sun is in the sky.” In the month of Magha, following the rites, the ceremony must be performed for thirteen years. During dakshinayana, payasam mixed with honey and clarified butter must be offered. Therefore, with a controlled mind, one must faithfully worship one’s own ancestors. One then obtains everything that one desires and is cleansed of all sins. When the ancestors are satisfied through a shraddha, the Vasus, the Rudras, the Adityas, the nakshatras, the planets and the stars are pleased with men. When the ancestors are satisfied through shraddhas, they thus bestow long lives, subjects, wealth, learning, heaven, liberation, happiness and kingdoms. O son! I have thus described what has been described about shraddha rites. O child! I will now tell you about the tithis for *kamya shraddhas*. <sup>425</sup> Listen.””

## Chapter 30

““Madalasa said, ‘If a man devotedly performs the rites on the first lunar tithi, he obtains riches; on the second, he obtains prosperity; on the third, he obtains boons; on the fourth, his enemies are destroyed; on the fifth, he obtains good fortune; on the sixth, he is worshipped; on the seventh, he obtains kingship; on the eighth, he obtains great advancement; on the ninth, he obtains women; on the tenth, all his wishes are fulfilled; on the eleventh, he obtains all the Vedas; on the twelfth, a person who worships the ancestors obtains victory, offspring, intelligence, animals, prosperity, independence and supreme nourishment; and on the thirteenth, he obtains a long lifespan and wealth. There is no doubt that a man who faithfully performs a shraddha obtains these things. If the father died in youth or was slain through weapons, if a person faithfully performs a shraddha on the fourteenth day, the father is satisfied. If a man purifies himself and carefully performs a shraddha on the day of the new moon, all his desires are satisfied and he enjoys heaven for an infinitely long period.

“““If a man worships the ancestors when Kritika is in the ascendant, he obtains heaven. <sup>426</sup> If he desires offspring, he should undertake it when Rohini is in the ascendant. If he performs it when Mrigashira is in the ascendant, he obtains energy. If he performs it when Ardra is in the ascendant, he obtains valour. If he performs it when Punarvasu is in the ascendant, he obtains land. If he performs it when Pushya is in the ascendant, he always obtains nourishment. If he performs it when Ashlesha is in the ascendant, he obtains excellent sons. If he performs it when Magha is in the ascendant, he obtains superiority over his relatives. If he performs it when Purva Phalguni is in the ascendant, he obtains good fortune. If he performs it when Uttara Phalguni is in the ascendant, he becomes generous

and obtains supreme offspring. If a man performs the shraddha when Hasta is in the ascendant, he obtains superiority. If he performs it when Chitra is in the ascendant, he obtains beauty and offspring. If he performs it when Svati is in the ascendant, he obtains gains through trade. If he desires sons, he should perform it when Vishakha is in the ascendant. If he performs it when Anuradha is in the ascendant, he becomes an emperor. If he performs it when Jyeshtha is in the ascendant, he obtains lordship. If he performs it when Mula is in the ascendant, he obtains extreme good health. If he performs it when Purva Ashadha is in the ascendant, he obtains fame. If he performs it when Uttara Ashadha is in the ascendant, he does not suffer from grief. If he performs it when Shravana is in the ascendant, he obtains auspicious worlds. If he performs it when Dhanishtha is in the ascendant, he obtains great wealth. If he performs it when Abhijit is in the ascendant, he obtains learning of the Vedas. If he performs it when Varuna is in the ascendant, he obtains success as a physician. If he performs it when Purva Proshthapada is in the ascendant, he obtains goats and sheep. If he performs it when Uttara Proshthapada is in the ascendant, he obtains learning and cattle. If he performs it when Revati is in the ascendant, he obtains metals. If he performs it when Ashvini is in the ascendant, he obtains metals. If he performs a shraddha ceremony when Bharani is in the ascendant, he obtains an excellent lifespan. A person who knows the truth about the nakshatras should perform kamya shraddhas in this way.”””

## Chapter 31

““Madalasa said, ‘O son! Thus, a householder must worship gods and ancestors with *havya* and *kavya*,<sup>427</sup> and guests, relatives, creatures, servants, the disabled, animals, birds, ants, supplicants who seek and others who dwell at home with food. O son! This is good behaviour for a virtuous householder. If he deviates from the nitya and naimittika rites, he commits a sin.’

““Alarka said, ‘O mother! You have described to me three kinds of tasks for a man—nitya, naimittika and nitya-naimittika. O one who brings a delight to the lineage! I now wish to hear about the good behaviour<sup>428</sup> through which a man can obtain happiness in this world and in the next world.’

““Madalasa replied, ‘A householder must always observe good conduct. In the absence of good behaviour, he cannot obtain happiness in this world or in the next one. If a man violates the rules of good conduct, sacrifices, donations and austerities, he does not obtain prosperity in this world. A man who is evil in conduct does not obtain a long lifespan. Therefore, one must always endeavour to observe good behaviour. O son! I will describe to you the nature of *sadachara*. Listen with an attentive mind and follow this. A householder must seek to accomplish the three objectives.<sup>429</sup> If a householder is successful in accomplishing this, he obtains success in this world and in the next one. A self-controlled person must use one-fourth of his accumulated artha for the next world. He must use half to sustain himself and to perform the nitya and naimittika rites. The last one-fourth of the artha must be used as capital to extend the artha further.<sup>430</sup> O son! A person who desires success must use his artha in this way. In a similar way, a learned person must use the fruits of dharma to cleanse sin. This is with

the objective of obtaining fruits in this world. That without any objective is for the next world. In that way, kama is of two types <sup>431</sup> and there is conflict between it and the other objectives. Indeed, one must reflect on how these three objectives reinforce each other and also on how they conflict with each other. Listen. I will speak about how dharma and the others can give rise to a conflict. Listen. Dharma enhances dharma and dharma is not necessarily in conflict with artha. But the two can also clash. In a similar way, the two can conflict, or not conflict, with kama.

““Thinking about dharma and artha, one must get up at the time of *brahma muhurta*. <sup>432</sup> He must reflect on true knowledge and on the roots behind physical hardship. Having got up, he must control himself and perform the necessary ablutions. When he has got up, he must purify himself and rinse his mouth. He must sit with his face towards the east and perform the morning sandhya while the nakshatras are still in the sky. In a similar way, the evening sandhya must be performed while the sun is still in the sky. Unless there is a calamity, performing worship through such rites must not be abandoned. O son! One must avoid conversing with the wicked, falsehood and harsh words. One must always shun wicked texts, wicked words and service of the wicked. Every morning and evening, a self-controlled person must offer oblations into the fire. At the time of sunrise or sunset, he must not look at the solar disc. When dressing his hair, he should look at the mirror. The cleaning of the teeth and the worship of the gods must be undertaken in the forenoon. Urine and excrement must not be passed within the village, inside the house, in a tirtha, in a *kshetra*, on a road, in a cultivated field or in a pasture for cattle. <sup>433</sup> One must never look at another person's wife when she is naked, or at one's own excrement. One should not see, touch or converse with a woman when she is going through her monthly period. Urine or excrement should not be released in water, nor should one indulge in sexual intercourse inside water. A wise person must never sit on urine, excrement, hair, ashes, potsherds, chaff, embers, bones, ropes, torn garments, the road or the bare ground. According to his capacity, a householder must first worship gods, ancestors, humans and creatures, eating thereafter. Before sitting down to eat his food, a man must cleanse

himself. He must be seated with his face facing the east or the north. He must restrain his speech, control his mind and always eat with his knees folded. A learned person will not point out the evident taints in the food. He should not directly add salt. Nor should he eat food that is excessively hot. He should not pass urine while he is walking or seated. While he is rinsing his mouth, he should not eat anything. After eating, he should not converse or study before rinsing his mouth. Nor should he touch cattle, brahmanas, the fire or his own head.<sup>434</sup> Nor should he voluntarily look at the sun, the moon or nakshatras. A broken seat, a broken bed, or a broken vessel must always be avoided. Getting up, a senior<sup>435</sup> must be honoured by offering him a seat. Having first worshipped a senior, he must address him in agreeable words. A senior must always be followed and must never be crossed in speech. One should not eat while donning a single garment.<sup>436</sup> Nor must the gods be worshipped in this state. An intelligent person will not censure brahmanas, nor will he pass urine on fire. A man must never bathe, or lie down, naked. He must never scratch his head with both of his hands. Without any reason, men should not wash their hair. After having washed the hair, oil must not be smeared on the limbs. Studying must be avoided on days when studying is prohibited. Urine must never be passed before brahmanas, the fire, cattle or the sun. As one wishes, urine and excrement must be passed in a spot that is free of disturbances, facing the north during the day and the south at night. One must not speak about the wicked deeds of seniors and one must pacify them when they are angry. When others speak ill of them, one must not listen. Right of way must be granted to a brahmana, a king, a grieving person, a distressed person, a person who is superior in learning, a preceptor's wife, a junior who is bearing a burden, a dumb person, a blind person, a deaf person, a mad person, an intoxicated person, a pumshchali, an enemy, a child and an outcaste. A learned person must circumambulate<sup>437</sup> the temple of a god, a *chaitya* tree,<sup>438</sup> a spot where four roads meet, a person who is superior in learning and a guru. One should not wear footwear, garments or garlands worn by another. Such a sacred thread, ornament or waterpot must also be avoided. If one performs these praiseworthy tasks, one obtains a long life.



“““On the eighth, fourteenth or fifteenth lunar day, or on auspicious days, one should not smear the limbs with oil. On these days, one must also avoid intercourse with a woman. A wise person will never sit with his legs or feet extended. One should not fling one’s legs around. Nor should one rub one leg against another leg. A discriminating person will avoid hurting another’s inner organs with his words, rage, calumny, insolence, pride or sharpness. He should not laugh at or revile those who are stupid, mad, distressed, malformed, suffering from delusion, lacking a limb, or possessing an extra limb. He should not impose punishment on anyone else. Nor, for the sake of instruction, should he punish a son or a disciple. When he is about to sit, a wise person will not drag the seat towards him with a foot. He should not prepare *samyava*, <sup>439</sup> krisara or flesh for himself. In the morning and in the evening, he should eat only after the guests have been honoured. Without speaking, he must clean his teeth with his face towards the east or the north. O son! Forbidden wood must never be used for cleaning the teeth. A man must not sleep with his head facing the north or the west. One should sleep with the head facing the south or the east. <sup>440</sup> One should not bathe in water that smells. Nor should one bathe in the night. Bathing at night is permissible only on days when there is an eclipse. After bathing, one should not use one’s hands or a piece of cloth to wipe the water from the body. After bathing, one should not get rid of the water by shaking one’s head or shaking one’s garment. Unless he has bathed, a learned person will never apply unguents on his body. He should not wear a red garment, a black garment, or a garment that is multicoloured. Garments or ornaments must not be contrary to the rules. A damaged or torn garment must never be used. One should not eat food that has hair or lice in it, food that has been trodden upon, or food that a dog has looked at. O son! Food that has been licked, or food where the essence has been tainted, must not be used. The flesh from the back and flesh cooked in vain <sup>441</sup> must be avoided. The direct use of salt must always be shunned. O son! Food that is stale, or food that is leftover, must not be eaten. O son of a king! Cakes, vegetables, sugar cane and milk that is stale must be avoided. Meat that is stale or tainted must be avoided. One should not sleep between sunrise and

sunset. A man must not sleep after a bath. He should not sleep when his mind is distracted. He should not sleep when seated. When he sits down, or when he lies down, he must not make a sound. A man must not eat without wearing an upper garment, while speaking, or without giving a share to those who are looking. According to the injunctions, he must eat after he has bathed in the morning and in the evening. A learned man will not have intercourse with another person's wife. If a man has intercourse with another man's wife, his good merits from sacrifices and civic works are destroyed. In this world, there is nothing that destroys a man's good deeds as much as intercourse with the wife of another. After eating, the mouth must be properly and reverentially rinsed with pure water that is without foam, with a smell and without dirt. The rinsing must be done with the head facing the north or the east. For cleaning oneself, <sup>442</sup> five kinds of earth must be avoided—earth from inside a waterbody, from the habitation, from a termite hill, from a rat hole and leftover earth from an earlier act of cleaning. After cleaning oneself, the hands and the feet must be cleaned attentively. Seated, with his knees next to each other, he must sip water three or four times. With an attentive mind, a man must always do this. He must clean the corners of the mouth, the inside of the mouth, his head and the genital organs or the anus twice. Following these rites, he purifies himself properly with water. With an attentive mind, a man must always perform the rites for the gods, the rishis and the ancestors. After sneezing, spitting, wearing a garment or vomiting, a man must rinse his mouth, touch a cow's ear, look at the sun and touch his right ear. To the extent he can, he must follow this in the due order. If one act in the order is missing, he should proceed with the next one. It is said that if a preceding act is missing, one should proceed with the subsequent one. One should not gnash one's teeth. Nor should one strike one's own body. At the time of the two sandhyas, one should not sleep, study or eat. One should not indulge in sexual intercourse or depart at the time of sandhya. O son! One should faithfully worship the gods in the forenoon, humans at mid day and the ancestors in the afternoon. Shaving must be done while facing the north or the east. Even when she has been born in a good lineage, a woman who is

diseased, without a limb, malformed, tawny in complexion, loquacious and full of taints must be avoided. A man who desires his benefit must always marry a maiden who possesses all her limbs, is known as amiable and has all the auspicious marks. The girl one marries should not be related on the father's side for seven generations and on the mother's side for five generations. It is necessary to avoid all jealousy and protect the wife. Sleep during the day and sexual intercourse during the day must be avoided. Acts that cause torment to others and affliction to creatures must be shunned. During the four days when a woman goes through her period, all the varnas must avoid association with her. O son! If the birth of a daughter is to be avoided, one must avoid intercourse on the fifth night and indulge in it on the sixth night. Even nights are the best for intercourse. O son! Therefore, a man should have intercourse with a woman on even nights, avoiding the time when she is going through her period. Special auspicious days <sup>443</sup> must always be shunned. Sons are born through intercourse on even nights and daughters through intercourse on odd nights. That is the reason a man who desires sons must always have intercourse on even nights. Intercourse in the forenoon gives birth to a son who is against dharma. Intercourse in the evening gives birth to a eunuch. O son! A wise person has a bath after shaving, after intercourse with a woman, after vomiting and after visiting a cremation ground. O son! The gods, the Vedas, brahmanas, virtuous and great-souled ones, preceptors, women who are faithful to their husbands, those who perform sacrifices and ascetics must not be criticized. Nor should one laugh at them. If an insolent person does this, one must never listen to it. A learned person must perform the rites for gods, ancestors and guests. One must attentively study, according to one's capacity. One should not lie down on the bed, or sit down on the seat, of a person who is superior or inferior. One should not wear inauspicious clothes. One should not indulge in inauspicious speech. One should wear white garments and adorn oneself with white flowers. A learned person must never associate with, or contract a friendship with, a person who is insolent, mad, foolish, proud, wicked in conduct, tainted as a thief, a spendthrift, an avaricious person, an enemy, a fraud, a cruel person, a prostitute and the husband of a prostitute. He should

not associate with, or contract a friendship with, a powerful person, one who is inferior, a person who is condemned, one who is always suspicious and a man who only believes in destiny. Instead, a learned person will always associate with, and contract a friendship with, a virtuous person, a man who is good in conduct, a wise person, one who does not indulge in calumny, a person who is capable, one who displays enterprise in every act, one who possesses the learning of the Vedas and one who observes the vows. A well-wisher, an accomplished person, a king, an assistant priest, a father-in-law and an officiating priest—when they come to the house, these six must always be worshipped with arghya. O son! When brahmanas visit the house after more than a year, according to one's wealth, at the right time, one must attentively worship them with *madhuparka*.<sup>444</sup> A supreme brahmana who desires his welfare must obey their instructions. Even if they censure him, an intelligent person will never have a dispute with them. After having honoured them in the due order, he must worship the house and worshipping the fire, progressively render oblations into it. With their permission, the first offering must be given to Brahma, the second to Prajapati, the third to the guhyakas, the fourth to Kashyapa and the last to Anumati.<sup>445</sup> This is the way offerings must be made in the house. I have already described to you the recommended nitya rituals. Hear about how offerings must be made to the Vishvadevas. In separate regions, there must be separate offerings for the divinities. Three offerings must be made to Parjanya, the earth and the waterpot.<sup>446</sup> Offerings to Dhatri and Vidhatri must be given at the door of the house. After this, an offering will be given to Vayu and, beginning with the east, each cardinal direction must progressively be given offerings. Progressive offerings are rendered to Brahma, the sky, the sun, the Vishvadevas and all the creatures in the universe. Offerings are given to Usha and the lord of creatures<sup>447</sup> in the northern direction. Uttering “svadha”, offerings to the ancestors are given in the southern direction. If he so wishes, he will then take the remaining bit of food and water from the vessel and offer it in the north-western direction to Vayu, uttering, “To Yakshma.” Taking the tip of a grain of rice and imagining it to be the utterance of “*hanta*”, he will follow the recommended

rites and offer it to a brahmana. After this, he will follow the rituals and perform the rites for the respective tirthas. <sup>448</sup> *Brahma-tirtha* is used for oblations and for rites meant for the gods. The line at the base of the right thumb is known as *Brahma-tirtha* and is used for such oblations. The region between the right thumb and the right forefinger is known as *pitri-tirtha*. With the exception of the *nandimukha* ritual, this is used to offer water to the ancestors. The tips of the fingers are known as *deva-tirtha* and are used for rites connected with the gods. The base of the little finger is known as *kaya-tirtha* and is used for rites connected with Prajapati. The rites for the gods and the ancestors must always be performed with these tirthas and an inappropriate tirtha must never be used. *Brahma-tirtha* is best for rinsing the mouth and *pitri-tirtha* must always be used for the ancestors. *Deva-tirtha* must be used for the gods and *kaya-tirtha* must be used for rites connected with Prajapati. During the *nandimukha* ritual, a wise person will use *kaya-tirtha* to perform the pinda and water rites. Everything connected with Prajapati must be through *kaya-tirtha*. A learned person must not hold water and fire at the same time. In front of preceptors and gods, he will not stretch out his legs. He should not call a cow that is suckling her calf. He should not drink water from the cup of his palms. The rites of purification, whether the transgression is major or minor, must be undertaken at the right time. There must not be a delay in a rite of purification. One should not use one's mouth to blow into a fire. O son! One should not reside in a region that does not have four things—a person who lends money, a physician, a learned brahmana and a river full of water. A wise person will always reside in a place where there is a powerful king who is devoted to dharma. How can there be happiness when the king is wicked? There is happiness from residing in a place where the king is powerful, the land is fertile, the self-controlled citizens always follow law and the people are devoid of jealousy. A learned person should live in a kingdom where the farmers are strong and not excessively devoted to pleasure and where there is no dearth of crops. O son! One should never live in a place where three kinds of people exist—those who are always eager to conquer, those who are always addicted to festivities and where former enemies dwell. A learned person will always

reside with those who are good in conduct. O son! For the sake of your welfare, I have described all this to you.”””

## Chapter 32

““Madalasa said, ‘After this, I will tell you about what is permitted and the remedies for things that are not permitted. Stale rice, oily substances stored for a long time must not be eaten. O son! Wheat or barley without oil, curds and the meat of hares, tortoises, lizards, porcupines and rhinoceroses can be eaten. However, the meat of domesticated pigs and domesticated hens should not be eaten. There is no taint from eating meat that is leftover after offerings have been given to brahmanas at sacrifices to the gods and ancestors or at shraddha ceremonies, once it has been purified,<sup>449</sup> or meat that is for medication. Conch shells, stones, gold, silver, ropes, garments, vegetables, roots, fruits, wickerwork baskets, leather objects, jewels, diamonds, coral, pearls and the bodies of men are best cleaned with water. Vessels and spoons are also best cleaned with water. Copper, brass, tin and lead must be properly cleaned in acid or alkaline solutions of water. Iron is cleaned with water, stone through rubbing and oily vessels with warm water. Winnowing baskets, grain, deer skin, pestles and worn garments are cleaned with water. All kinds of bark are properly cleaned with water and earth. Grass, wood and herbs are purified by sprinkling with water. Objects made of wool or hair are cleaned with the oil of sesamum seeds. O son! A cotton garment is always purified with water and ashes. Objects made of ivory, bones or horn are in any case pure. An earthen vessel is purified when it is baked again. Something obtained as alms, an object fashioned through the hand of an artisan, an article traded, a woman’s face, a child’s face, one’s own face and an aged person’s face are naturally pure. Something brought in a carriage, an object that is unknown, something that has been collected by servants, something that is ancient, an object that has passed through many hands and a light object is purified as



soon as one pronounces it to be pure. Something that is plentiful, anything obtained through the efforts of a child, an aged or afflicted person, a store of coal when the required task is over, a woman whose child does not let go of her breast and odourless and foamless water that has a flow are said to be pure. The ground is purified over time and when cattle roam over it. A dwelling house is purified by smearing, <sup>450</sup> scraping, sweeping and worshipping. O son! Something tainted with hair, worms or flies, or smelt by cattle, is purified with earth, water and ashes. Objects made of *udumbara* <sup>451</sup> wood are cleaned with acid, those made of tin through a caustic solution, those of copper with water and ashes and through repeated washing. Something with a bad smell is purified by using earth and water to remove the bad smell. Other objects are thus purified when their bad complexion and bad odour has been removed. Something touched by a chandala, *mlechchha* or outcaste must be shunned. Paddy that has already been washed must not be used in any tasks. Paddy that amounts to less than a *drona* is also regarded in the same way. <sup>452</sup> Paddy that amounts to more than a *drona* is cleaned by washing. If one sees paddy lying on a road, one must carefully worship it. It must be picked up and placed on one's head. Otherwise, Lakshmi will be angry. Water that is in the ground and can satisfy cattle is naturally pure. This is also true of meat that has been killed by a chandala or predatory creature. O son! It has been said that garments lying on the road are purified by the wind. An elephant, a fire, a horse, a cow, a shadow, rays, <sup>453</sup> the wind, the earth and a drop of water do not get polluted even if they come into contact with something vile like a fly. The mouth of a goat or the mouth of a horse is pure, but this is not true of the mouth of a calf, when its mother is still suckling it. A fruit brought down by a bird is pure. Like an object that is traded, a seat, a bed, a vehicle, a boat, a road and grass are pure because the rays of the sun and the moon fall on them and the air passes over them. After travelling on the road, bathing, eating, drinking and other tasks, one must change one's garment and rinse one's mouth in the proper way. If one comes into contact with a bad road, mud or clay, nothing needs to be done. They, and objects made of brick or clay, are purified by the wind. If a large quantity of rice has been tainted, a

bit from the top should be thrown away. The remainder is purified by sprinkling some earth and water on it. If one eats something that should not be eaten, whether voluntarily or involuntarily, to atone for this sin, one should fast for three nights. If a person touches a woman who is going through her period, a horse, a jackal, a woman who has just delivered, an outcaste or one who has borne a dead body, he must purify himself by having a bath. If a man touches a human bone that has fat in it, he is purified by bathing. However, if he touches a human bone without fat, he should rinse his mouth with water, touch a cow and look at the sun. A wise person will never walk over blood or spit, or leap over an obstacle. Nor will he remain in a garden during the evening. It is not proper to converse with a woman who is a widow, or one who is censured. Leftovers, urine, excrement and water used to wash the feet must be cast away, outside the house. One should not bathe in another person's water without taking up five pindas of clay from there. One should bathe in natural ponds, the Ganga and rivers and lakes. One should not touch or have a conversation with those who criticize the gods, the ancestors, the sacred texts, sacrifices and mantras. If one happens to do this, one should purify oneself by looking at the sun. A wise person who looks at a woman going through her period, an outcaste, a fallen person, a dead body, a person who is against dharma, a woman who has just delivered, a eunuch, a naked person, an outcaste, a person who carries dead bodies or an adulterer, should purify himself in the same way. When a person who knows about dharma touches something that should not be eaten, a woman who has just delivered, a eunuch, a cat, a rat, a horse, a cock, a fallen person, a chandala, a person who carries dead bodies, a woman who is going through her period or a domesticated pig, he is polluted and purifies himself by having a bath.

“““After this, listen in detail to what is dharma for women. Bhavani and all the gods always reside in the threshold of the house. Therefore, every day, it must be worshipped with fragrances, flowers and rice that has not been winnowed. In particular, the doorway must never be left empty in the morning. If the doorway is empty, then the entire lineage will be empty. Without worshipping, the threshold must never be crossed or touched with

the feet. If this is done, the person goes to hell. Therefore, this must be avoided. In the morning, it is the task of the women to smear it with cowdung. If this is done every day, the house will never witness any unhappiness. If the sun's rays touch a house that has not been swept, the mothers and fathers of the gods are displeased. Because of delusion, if a woman cleans the paddy in the last yama of the night, she remains barren from one birth to another birth. When it is evening, if a woman does not sweep the house, she does not have a husband and is without riches from one birth to another birth. Because of being addicted to desire, if a woman does not draw the auspicious svastika mark on the ground, her riches, lifespan and fame are destroyed. If a man kicks the broom, the stove or the grinding stone with his foot, his son, wife and riches are destroyed. If a wicked man kicks the mortar and pestle with his foot, he does not obtain an excellent end. O son! A householder who wishes to have sons should not use a broken seat, a torn *yogapatta*,<sup>454</sup> a torn deer skin or the torn hide of a sheep. If the face is towards the south or towards a perverse direction when one is dressing the hair, that mortal person's wealth is destroyed. Without cleaning the teeth, one should not have intercourse with an unmarried woman. As long as the father is alive, one should not wear wooden footwear, cover the head with half of the upper garment, or offer oblations of sesamum. As long as the father is alive, one should not perform a funeral ceremony at the time of darsha, take a bath at the time of darsha, wear wooden footwear, sit on a *yogapatta*, or perform a shraddha in Gaya. O son! If you wish to remain alive, you must always avoid the shadow of a lamp, the vibhitaka myrobalan and the red amaranth.<sup>455</sup> A brahmana should not fan his head with his lower garment. If he uses his plate or leather winnowing baskets to fan himself, all his good deeds are destroyed.'

“Alarka said, ‘You have mentioned food eaten by a *sutika*.<sup>456</sup> I wish to hear the truth about who is a *sutika*.’

“Madalasa continued, ‘When a brahmana has impregnated a brahmana woman, both of them are regarded as *sutika* and their food must never be touched. If a man does not offer oblations, eat, donate, or worship the gods and the ancestors at the right time, he is regarded as a eunuch. If a person

performs sacrifices and torments himself through austerities only because of his pride and not because of the next world, the learned speak of him as a cat. If a person possesses riches, but does not offer oblations or donate, he is known as a rat. After having partaken of his food, one must purify himself through hardships. If a mortal person displays partiality in an assembly, the gods have referred to him as a cock and his food must not be touched. If a person abandons his own dharma and resorts to the dharma of another, even when there is no calamity, the learned have spoken of him as a person who has fallen. If a person has abandoned the gods, the guru and the guru's wife, if he has killed a cow, a brahmana or a woman, he is spoken of as an outcast. If the Vedas, the sacred texts and vows do not exist in a person's family, the virtuous describe him as naked and his food is to be shunned. Having offered hope, if a person doesn't follow through with what he has promised as an antidote, if he abandons someone who has sought refuge with him, he is the worst among men and is a chandala. He is shunned by his relatives and by virtuous brahmanas. Having had a share from his food, one must perform the *chandrayana vrata* as atonement. If a man happens to eat food from a person who has not observed nitya or naimittika rites, he must purify himself by fasting for three nights. If the nitya rites are never observed in a person's house, he is a sinner, worst among men, and the brahmanas abandon him. The nitya rites must never suffer. If he stops them, except at the time of birth and death, he creates bondage for himself. In the case of birth and death, a brahmana can refrain from these nitya rites for ten days, a kshatriya for twelve days, a vaishya for fifteen days and a shudra for a month. There can also be deviation from the nitya rites when there is disease and when the planets cause impediments. In such cases, one should purify oneself by donating a cow and observing the vow of *padakrichchha*.

<sup>457</sup> Thereafter, as instructed, one should engage in one's own tasks. The dead body must be cremated outside the house by people who belong to the same gotra. After this, water is offered to the departed spirit on the first, third, seventh or ninth day. On the fourth day, the ashes and bones are collected by people who belong to the same gotra. After they have undertaken the task of collection, it is recommended that their upper bodies be touched.

After the collection, all the rites should be performed by those who are entitled to the water rites. On the day of death, only those who are entitled to offer pinda and perform the water rites should be touched. When death is caused by a tree, a snake, a cow, a predatory animal, a weapon, water, hanging, a fire, poison, falling down, an act of *praya*,<sup>458</sup> when the person dies when he is in some other country or when the dead person is a child, the period of impurity lasts for one day, though some say it lasts for three days. Their funeral rites and water rites are not performed. This is also true of a miscarriage. Purification takes in the course of time, with one day and night for a brahmana, three days for a kshatriya, six nights for a vaishya and twelve days for a shudra. If a sapinda dies after another sapinda's death, the period of impurity is reckoned from the day on which the first sapinda has died. After birth, the following rites are given for the *sutakas*, sapindas and *sahodakas*. When a son is born, it is recommended that the father should have a bath with his clothes on. The illustrious Bhrigu has said that after death, all the relatives should bathe in this way. If after the birth of the first son another son is born, the period of impurity is reckoned from the day of the first birth. After ten, twelve, fifteen days and a month,<sup>459</sup> all the varnas should perform their respective rites. Thereafter, for the departed spirit, an *ekoddishtha*<sup>460</sup> ceremony must be performed. At the end of a year, men must perform the ceremony at which pindas are offered. After this, the departed spirit moves to the category of ancestor and the three sacrifices, *darshapurna* and the others, must be performed.<sup>461</sup> As has been instructed in the sacred texts, these must be observed lovingly. As gifts to brahmanas, learned people give whatever is cherished in the world and whatever is loved in the house. Desiring one's undecaying prosperity, in the name of the departed spirits, one should give all that possesses qualities, the land and the cattle that one possesses. O son! If one donates in this way, the ancestors are satisfied. When those days are over, one touches water, a mount, a weapon or a goad. Each varna undertakes the proper completion of the rites. Using the right materials, if one observes all the rites recommended for one's own varna and one's own dharma and purifies oneself, one obtains prosperity in this world and in the next world. If one

studies the three Vedas every day, one becomes learned. Having accumulated riches according to dharma, one must make efforts to undertake sacrifices. O son! One must act so that one is not condemned. One must unhesitatingly do whatever need not be kept a secret from great people. O son! If a householder acts in this way, he obtains dharma, artha and kama in this world and all that is auspicious in the world hereafter.’’’

## Chapter 33

‘The dumb one said, “Thus instructed by his mother, Ritadhvaja’s son became a youth. In the proper way, he married a wife. The lord obtained sons through her and performed sacrifices. He always followed the commands of his father, the king. After a long period of time had passed, King Ritadhvaja became really old and instated his son in the kingdom. With his wife, the one with dharma in his soul left for the forest, so that he could perform austerities. The immensely fortunate king <sup>462</sup> was born to protect the earth. To ensure that her son did not get attached to desire and enjoyment, Madalasa spoke her final words to her son. Madalasa said, ‘When you are ruling the kingdom as a house, you may suffer from intolerable grief because of separation from one you love or separation from a relative. Since a householder suffers from notions of “I” and “mine”, such misery may occur. O son! I am giving you this ring. At that time, take it out and read what is written on it in fine letters.’ Having said this, she gave him the golden ring. She also pronounced the benedictions that were appropriate for a man who was a householder. Having bestowed the kingdom on their son, Kuvalayashva and Queen Madalasa left for the forest, so as to practice austerities.’”



## Chapter 34

‘The dumb one said, “Alarka ruled over the subjects properly, as if they were his sons. When the one with dharma in his soul ruled over them, they were delighted and were engaged in their own respective tasks. He punished the wicked and justly protected the virtuous. He delighted them through the performance of many great sacrifices. He had extremely strong and valiant sons. They were great-souled, with dharma in their souls, and they were against wicked paths. He acquired artha through dharma and dharma through artha. He enjoyed the kingdom without there being any conflict between the two. In this way, he ruled the earth for many years, without becoming attached to dharma, artha or kama. It was as if a single day had passed. As he enjoyed material objects, there was no sense of non-attachment. Nor was he disinterested in accumulating dharma or artha. He was still attached to enjoyment. He had not yet conquered his senses. He was still distracted. He had a brother named Subahu who had left for the forest and this intelligent one thought for a long time about how he would generate understanding in him. <sup>463</sup> He thought that if he were to seek refuge with the king’s enemies, this would be best. The king of Kashi possessed a large number of soldiers and mounts. To get his own kingdom <sup>464</sup> back, there were many occasions when he sought refuge with him. That king raised an enemy against Alarka and sent a messenger with the message, ‘Hand over the kingdom to him.’ <sup>465</sup> However, since he was engaged in his own dharma, <sup>466</sup> he was unwilling to hand over the kingdom and ignored this instruction. Alarka replied to the messenger sent by the king of Kashi. ‘Let my elder brother humbly ask me for the kingdom. Because I have been attacked and because I am scared, I will not give the slightest bit of territory.’ Subahu had no intention of asking. A kshatriya’s dharma is not to

ask. His wealth is in the form of his valour. The lord of Kashi surrounded himself with all his soldiers and advanced to attack King Alarka's kingdom. He brought the vassals who were in the extremities of the kingdom under his subjugation and used them to mount an attack. He did not make these vassal kings suffer, but allowed them to retain their kingdoms and riches. In that way, he also brought the keepers of the forts and the forest dwellers under his subjugation. Some kings were won over with gifts, others through engendering dissension. There were others who were neutralized and brought under subjugation through conciliation. Suffering from this encirclement brought about by the enemy, the king's forces were weakened in strength. His treasury was exhausted and there was a siege against the city. Suffering in this way, the treasury diminished every day. He suffered from great sorrow and his mind was anxious.

“When he was extremely depressed, he remembered the ring. This was the one about which his mother Madalasa had instructed him earlier. He bathed and purified himself, making the best of brahmanas pronounce benedictions. He took out the instructions and saw that they were written in clear letters. The king saw the words that his mother had written down. As they became clear, his limbs were delighted and his eyes dilated in joy. ‘Attachment of every sort must be given up. If you are incapable of doing this, associate with the virtuous. Association with the virtuous is medication. Desire of every sort must be given up. If one is incapable of doing this, one should engage in acts that lead to liberation. That is the medication.’ Having read the words several times, he made up his mind that this was the best for men. He made up his mind to strive for liberation and non-attachment. But how should one go about it? The king pondered about association with the virtuous. Suffering from great misery, he decided to go to the immensely fortunate Dattatreya. He met the great-souled and unblemished one, who was without any attachment. He bowed down and worshipped him, addressing him in the appropriate way. ‘O brahmana! O refuge! Show me your favours. I am seeking refuge with you. I am suffering greatly from being excessively attached to desire. Please dispel my misery.’ Dattatreya replied, ‘O king! I will dispel your misery today. O

lord of the earth! But tell me truthfully. What has caused this grief? Whom do you belong to? Whose misery is this? One should reflect on the truth about this. Body, another body, without a body, all bodies—one should reflect on this.’ The intelligent king thought about this, the atman, its habitation and the three kinds of grief. <sup>467</sup> For a long time, the king repeatedly used his intelligence to reflect on this. The patient one used his own atman to reflect on the atman. Eventually, he smiled and said, ‘I am not earth. I am not water. I am not fire. I am not wind. I am not space. With all these having gathered in the body, I desire happiness. The five elements have an excess or deficit in the body and give rise to sensations of happiness and unhappiness. However, if this belongs to me, there can be nothing beneficial for me. There can always be a lot of happiness or unhappiness. There is an excess or deficit, an increase or decrease. Hence, I should discard any sense of ownership and realize what is distinctive. That can be discerned in the subtle *tanmatras*, which represent the third. <sup>468</sup> My body is the union of the elements. What do happiness and unhappiness of the body have anything to do with me? Happiness and unhappiness are states of the mind. That is the nature of the mind. Since I am not the mind, I do not experience happiness or unhappiness. I am not *ahamkara*. I am not the mind. I am not intelligence. <sup>469</sup> The sense of unhappiness results from my inner faculties. Since I am beyond these, what does it have to do with me? I am not the body. I am not the mind. I am distinct from the body and the mind. Thus, if there is happiness or unhappiness experienced by the body, what does that have to do with me? The one who desires this kingdom is my father’s son, born from an accumulation of the five elements. <sup>470</sup> Since I am not the body, but am something else, the qualities of the body have nothing to do with me. I do not possess hands and other limbs. I do not possess flesh. I do not possess bones and the divisions into nerves and arteries. Whom do these elephants, horses, chariots and other things belong to? A man has nothing to do with things in this world. Therefore, I have no enemies. I have no pleasure. I have no pain. I have no city. I have no treasury. I have no horses. I have no elephants. I have no soldiers. I do not possess these. Who has them? Just as they do not belong

to me, they do not belong to anyone else. Inside a jug, a pitcher or a water pot, space can be seen in many different forms. Like that, because of differences in bodies, Subahu and the king of Kashi appear in different forms.”””

## Chapter 35

‘The dumb one said, “The king bowed down before the brahmana Dattatreya and addressed the great-souled one in these humble words. ‘O brahmana! Having perceived correctly, I no longer have any misery. Those who do not perceive correctly are always immersed in an ocean of grief. When a man’s intelligence has a sense of ownership in something, it is that very thing that brings him misery. When a cat eats a domesticated cow, there is sorrow because of ownership. But there is none when it eats a sparrow or a rat. Since I am beyond Prakriti, I am neither happy, nor unhappy. Anything created is subject to the principles of creation and therefore feels joy or misery.’ Dattatreya replied, ‘O tiger among men! It is exactly as you have described. The sense of “mine” is the root cause of misery. When there is no sense of “mine”, there is withdrawal from misery. Because of my question, this excellent knowledge has been generated in you. Like wisps of cotton from the shalmali tree, it has blown away your sense of “mine”. “I” and “mine” are the seeds from which has germinated this tree with the giant trunk.<sup>471</sup> The house and land are its branches, the wife and son are its twigs. Wealth and grain are its large leaves. The tree grows over time. Its main flowers are good and bad deeds, happiness and unhappiness are the main fruits. Relationships are the outcome of confusion, and sprinkle it, acting as impediments along the path of liberation. The desire to act is like bees that surround this gigantic tree of ignorance. Exhausted by samsara, people seek refuge under the shade of this tree, and thus subject themselves to the misery of confusion and ignorance. How can they find happiness? People who sever this tree of “I” and “mine” with the axe of learning and the sharp flint of association with the virtuous are those who proceed along the right path. They reach the cool

grove of the brahman, bereft of dust and thorns. They attain the supreme wisdom of nivritti and refrain from action. O king! The aggregation of the elements and the senses is gross. I am not that and nor are you. Neither of us is the tanmatras. Neither of us is the mind. O Indra among kings! Nor do I see either of us as being Pradhana. <sup>472</sup> The atman that is in the body is beyond this combination of the gunas. The gnat is distinct from the udumbura tree it sits on. A blade of grass is distinct from a clump of *munja* grass. A fish is distinct from the water it inhabits. O king! Despite appearing as one, the atman is distinct from the body it occupies.’ Alarka said, ‘O illustrious one! Through your favours, I have obtained this supreme knowledge and I am thus able to distinguish between Pradhana and the power of consciousness. However, since I am still attracted to material objects, there is no stability in my mind. Nor do I know how to free myself from this bondage of Prakriti. How does one avoid being born repeatedly? How does one free oneself from the gunas? O brahmana! How does one proceed so that one can attain union with the eternal? O brahmana! O immensely wise one! I am prostrating myself before you and asking you about that yoga. Please tell me about that completely. Association with the virtuous always brings benefit to men.’”

## Chapter 36

“Dattatreya said, ‘A yogi uses knowledge to separate himself from ignorance. That union with the brahman and separation from Prakriti’s gunas is liberation. Knowledge furnishes the strength through which one uses yoga to attain that supreme objective. O lord of the earth. Liberation results from yoga and yoga comes from proper knowledge. Misery results from the taint of attachment and because the mind is attached to notions of “I” and “mine”. Therefore, a man who desires liberation must endeavour to cast aside attachment. The absence of attachments lead to the destruction of “I” and “mine”. When there is no “I” and “mine”, there is happiness. When one has non-attachment, one has insight about the taints. Knowledge leads to non-attachment and non-attachment leads to knowledge. The place where a person resides is the house. Anything used for subsistence is food. Anything that leads to liberation is said to be knowledge. Anything contrary is ignorance. O king! If one reaps the fruits of good and bad deeds, performs the nitya rites without being motivated by desire, destroys the store of past karma and does not accumulate any new karma, then the body is freed from this repeated cycle of birth. This liberation from karma is moksha and anything else is the reverse. This is said to be jnana. Now hear about yoga from me. By attaining this, a yogi goes to the eternal brahman and nowhere else. The yogi must first use his atman to conquer the atman and this is extremely difficult to accomplish. One must endeavour to ensure this conquest. Hear from me about the means.<sup>473</sup> The taints are burnt down through *pranayama*, the sins through *dharana*, material objects through *pratyahara* and all the temporary gunas through *dhyana*. The impurities of ores from the mountains are burnt down through scorching them. In that way, by controlling prana, the taints created by the senses are burnt down.



A person engaged in yoga must first practise pranayama. The control of prana and apana is said to be pranayama. There are three types of pranayama—light, average and heavy. O Alarka! I will tell you how these are measured. Listen. Light pranayama is for twelve matras and average pranayama is for twenty-four. Heavy pranayama is said to be for thirty-six matras. The time between the opening and the closing of the eyelid is said to be one matra. In this way, the duration of light pranayama is said to be for twelve matras. The first type of pranayama is used to conquer perspiration, the second to conquer trembling and the third is progressively used to conquer defects like sorrow. A trainer uses gentleness to control a lion, a tiger or an elephant. The yogi controls prana in that way. Once brought under control, an elephant trainer drives the elephant as he wills. In that way, the yogi easily uses prana to achieve his purpose. A lion that has been trained kills deer, but does not kill humans. Thus, when controlled, prana destroys impurities, but not the human body. Therefore, a yogi always endeavours to engage in pranayama. O lord of the earth! Hear about the four kinds of fruits that result and they lead to liberation. They are *dhvasti*, *prapti*, *samvit* and *prasada*. I will progressively describe their nature to you. Listen. When the stores of good and bad deeds and the impurities of the mind are destroyed, that is dhvasti. When the yogi is himself in a position to control, for all time, all desire resulting from avarice and delusion, whether they relate to this world or the next world, that is prapti. By virtue of his learning, when the yogi obtains knowledge about the sun, the moon, the nakshatras and the planets and knows about the past and the future, whether imminent or distant, that is known as samvit. When the yogi has the serenity to free himself from the mind, the five kinds of prana, the senses and the objects of the senses, this is said to be prasada. O lord of the earth! Hear about the characteristics of pranayama. If he desires his welfare, this is what the yogi must practise. He must be seated in asanas known as *padmasana*, *ardhasana* and *svastikasana*.<sup>474</sup> In that position, the yogi must meditate on “Oum” in his heart. He must be seated upright in the asana, with the legs drawn in. The mouth must be closed and the thighs must be firmly fixed. He must attempt to sit so that the heels do not touch the genital

organs or the anus. The head must be raised up a bit and one set of teeth should not touch the other set of teeth. He must fix his glance on the tip of his nose and not look in any other direction. The person engaged in yoga must use rajas to conquer tamas and sattva to conquer rajas, thereby fixing himself on the unblemished sattva. He will progressively engage in pratyahara to control the aggregate of the senses, the objects of the senses, the breath of life and the mind. Like a tortoise drawing in all its limbs, he will withdraw from desire. Always fixing himself on the atman, he will see the atman in his own atman. A learned person will purify himself inside and outside, from the throat down to the navel. He will inhale and fill his body and engage in pratyahara. Twelve cycles of pranayama are said to amount to one cycle of dharana. Those who have insight about the truth of yoga say that there are two kinds of dharana. If a yogi controls himself and engages in yoga, he destroys all kinds of taints, obtains a state of well-being and perceives the supreme brahman, distinct from the gunas of Prakriti, the sky and other things, paramanus and the unblemished atman. Therefore, controlling his food, a yogi must engage in pranayama. This is like gradually climbing through bits of land to ascend into one's own house. If one does not climb through those bits of land, one is assailed by taints, disease and delusion and these increase in importance. Thus, one should climb through those bits of land. Pranayama is said to be the control of prana. That which restrains the mind is said to be dharana. When yoga is used to withdraw from sounds and other sensations and control the soul, this is said to be pratyahara. The methods have been spoken about by the supreme rishis, the yogis. Using these, yogis ensure that they do not suffer from disease and other taints. A person desiring water uses a tube to slowly drink water. In that way, without any exertion, a yogi inhales air slowly. Dharana must first be focused on the navel, then the heart, the chest as the third, the throat, the mouth, the tip of the nose, the eyes, the space between the eyebrows, the head and finally on the supreme. These are said to be the ten forms of dharana used to attain the serene and undecaying state. O Indra among kings! A yogi who wishes to achieve his objective must try to practise yoga when he is not proud, hungry or exhausted, nor when his

mind is distracted. He should not engage in it when it is too hot or too cold. He must avoid extremes and a place where there are strong winds. At such times and places, one should not practise yoga and dhyana. A person who knows the truth should avoid the practice of yoga in a spot that has sound, fire or water, in cow sheds that are dilapidated, at crossroads, on heaps of dry leaves, in rivers, in cremation grounds, in places where there are a lot of reptiles, in places where there is fear, near wells, in chaityas and on termite mounds. While practising yoga, the sight of anything evil must be avoided. Ignoring the taints, if a foolish person engages in yoga, those taints give rise to impediments. Listen to me. This immediately leads to deafness, stupidity, loss of memory, blindness and fever in these ignorant yogis. If through their inattentiveness, yogis suffer from these taints, there are antidotes. Yogis should attempt to counter these taints. Listen to me. Because of bata, there may be an enlargement of the spleen. To counter this, mild rice gruel must then be heated. When it has cooled down, it must be applied to the navel and the stomach. Rice gruel counters flatulence, rheumatism and enlargement of the spleen. When he is trembling, he must make his mind as steady as a giant mountain. When the power of speech is impaired, he must think of speech. When the power of hearing is impaired, he must think of hearing. Just as a thirsty person concentrates on a mango fruit, he must think of the impaired organ of sense. Whenever any part of the body is suffering, he must think of whatever will counter it. When it is hot, he must think of cold. When it is cold, he must think of heat. When the yogi suffers from loss of memory, he must place a wooden peg on his head and strike it with another piece of wood. He will immediately regain his memory. He must think of the wind and the fire that pervade the region between heaven and earth. The impediments may have superhuman causes, or they may be due to sattva. The superhuman causes or sattva enter the yogi and the counters are accordingly determined. He must burn down what is inside the body by thinking of the wind and the fire. O king! Thus, a person who knows about yoga protects himself in every possible way. Since it is the source of dharma, artha, kama and moksha, the body must be protected. The indications of what he can do and wonder at this can destroy a yogi's

*vijnana*. Hence, what he can do must be kept a secret. The first signs of being engaged in yoga are steadiness, physical well-being, lack of cruelty, an auspicious fragrance in the body, limited urine and excrement, beauty, contentment and a melodious voice. People are attracted to him and praise his qualities behind his back. Creatures are not frightened of him. These are the excellent signs of obtaining *siddhi*. Excessive heat and cold no longer cause any impediments. Others are no longer scared of him. These are the signs of *siddhi*. ”””

## Chapter 37

“Dattatreya said, ‘When the yogi perceives the atman, there are things that will disturb him. I will describe them briefly. Listen. There will be a desire to engage in many acts, a desire to pursue human objects of enjoyment—women, fruits of donations, learning, the ability to use maya, constructing wells, wealth, heaven, the status of being a god, the status of being a lord of the immortals, chemical works, flying along with the wind, performing sacrifices, residing in the water, entering the fire, performing shraddhas, pursuing the fruits of all kinds of donations, observing rituals, fasting, civic works and worshipping the gods. When the mind desires to be attracted towards such acts, the yogi must carefully control his mind and withdraw. If he fixes his mind on the brahman, he will free himself from these disturbances. When these disturbances are conquered, other disturbances will present themselves before the yogi and these have their origins in sattva, rajas and tamas. For the yogi, there are five kinds of dreadful disturbances that act as impediments along the path of yoga. They are *pratibha*, *shravana*, *daiva*, *bhrama* and *avarta*. When the meanings of the Vedas, the meanings of kavya literature, the meanings of the sacred texts and knowledge of texts about artisanship manifest themselves before the yogi, this is known as *pratibha*. When he understands the meanings of all kinds of sound and can hear sound that is a distance of one thousand *yojanas*, this is known as *shravana*. When the yogi becomes like a person who is mad and like a god, can see all the eight directions, the learned refer to this as *daiva*. When the mind is so polluted that, without any support, the yogi violates all norms of conduct and wanders around everywhere, this is known to be *bhrama*. Like a whirlpool in the water, when the whirlpool of knowledge agitates his mind, this is known as *avarta*. These disturbances

destroyed the yoga of all those who were born in the lineage of the gods. Assailed by these terrible disturbances, they were repeatedly whirled around. Therefore, the yogi must cover himself with his mind, which is like a white blanket. Within the circle of his body, he must hunt out that superior knowledge. The learned know that yoga can only be attained through knowledge. He must fix his mind on the supreme brahman and meditate. A yogi engaged in yoga must always be restrained in diet and must conquer his senses. In his head, he must conceive and hold the seven subtle elements, the earth and the others. <sup>475</sup> If the yogi meditates on the earth, he will comprehend its subtle element. He must think of himself as the earth and cast aside its attribute of smell. Similarly, he must think of the subtle attribute of taste in water, form in fire, touch in the wind and the subtle attribute of sound in space. He must cast aside these subtle attributes. When the mind is used to enter all the elements and they are held in the mind, the mind itself becomes subtle. Thus, a person who knows about yoga uses his intelligence to enter all creatures and having cast them aside, his intelligence becomes subtle and excellent. Thus, a person who knows about yoga abandons the seven subtle elements. O Alarka! A person who understands this perfectly does not have to follow these attributes again. <sup>476</sup> A person who has control over his atman repeatedly perceives the seven subtle elements. Having perceived them, he abandons them, obtaining success and proceeding to what is supreme. O lord of the earth! If he becomes excessively attached to any of the elements, that excessive attachment brings about his destruction. Therefore, if an embodied person knows about these subtle elements and their connections with each other and casts them aside, he obtains the supreme state. O king! Thus, a person who knows about what is good searches out the seven subtle elements and thereafter destroys them, thereby obtaining liberation. However, if he becomes attached to smell and the other senses, he is destroyed. O king! Far from the brahman, he is born as a human and is whirled around in samsara. O lord of men! As he wishes, a yogi can meditate on the seven subtle elements and transcend them. He can enter any of those subtle elements and enter the bodies of gods, asuras, gandharvas, serpents or rakshasas. But

since those subtle elements are destroyed, he does not become attached to any of them. O tiger among men! He progressively obtains the eight siddhis —*anima*, *laghima*, *mahima*, *prapti*, *prakamya*, *ishitvam*, *vashitvam* and *kamavasayitvam*.<sup>477</sup> These are the signs of attaining *nirvana*.<sup>478</sup> When one becomes subtler than the most subtle, this is the quality of *anima*. When one becomes swifter than the most swift, this is *laghima*. When one is worshipped by everyone, this is *mahima*. When everything desired is obtained, this is *prapti*. When one pervades everything, this is *prakamya*. When one becomes the lord of everything, this is *ishvitam*. When one controls everything, this is *vashitvam*. This is the seventh quality of a yogi. When one can go anywhere and do anything, this is known as *kamavasayitvam*. These are said to be the eight divine powers of a yogi. O lord of the earth! These are the indications of obtaining emancipation and the atman attaining *nirvana*. One is no longer born. One is no longer bound down. One is no longer destroyed. There is no longer any increase or decrease, there is no destination. One cannot be severed. One cannot be made wet. One cannot be burnt. One cannot be dried up. One is no longer affected by the earth and the other elements. One is immune to the attributes of the elements, sound and other things. One no longer enjoys sound and the other attributes. Nor is one attached to them. O king! When an impure lump of gold is burnt in the fire, its impurities are destroyed and it can be united with another lump of gold. There is no longer any difference between the two. In that way, when the yogi uses the fire of yoga to burn down his taints, he achieves union with the brahman. When fire is thrown into another fire, it is known as fire and there is no difference between the two. When the sins are cleansed, the yogi thus obtains union with the supreme brahman and no longer has a separate existence. O lord of the earth! When water is flung into water, it becomes one with the water. Thus, the yogi's atman becomes one with the paramatman.''''



## Chapter 38

““Alarka asked, ‘O illustrious one! I wish to hear the truth about a yogi’s conduct. How is it that a yogi who follows the path of the brahman does not suffer?’

“Dattatreya replied, ‘Honour and dishonour cause joy and misery among men. However, for a yogi, they act in the opposite way and are the means to ensuring success. Honour and dishonour are known as both poison and amrita. For them, dishonour is amrita and honour is terrible poison. He examines the ground with his eyes before placing a foot, he only drinks water after it has been strained through a piece of cloth.<sup>479</sup> He does not speak words that have not been purified by the truth. He does not have thoughts that have not been purified through intelligence. To accomplish his objective, a person who knows about yoga never accepts hospitality, attends the performance of shraddhas and sacrifices, or participates in processions that honour gods and great men. A yogi goes and seeks alms from what has been thrown away, when the smoke and the fire in a household have been extinguished and when everyone in the household has eaten. However, he must never resort to all three.<sup>480</sup> Without abusing the path of virtue, the yogi must always act so that he is despised and disrespected. Begging alms from householders and the houses of vagrant mendicants<sup>481</sup> is the best. Of these, the former is said to be better. The yogi must always go to a householder who is good in conduct, faithful, controlled, learned, great-souled, superior in every way—not a householder who has fallen down. Begging from a householder who has no varna is said to be an inferior means of subsistence. Alms should be rice gruel, buttermilk, milk, barley gruel, fruits, roots, seeds of the *priyangu* creeper, broken grain, oilseeds and pounded ground meal.<sup>482</sup> These are said to be auspicious foods for a yogi

and ensure his success. Before eating, the sage must control himself and remain silent. He must meditate and first touch water. He must say, “To prana”. This is said to be the first oblation. He must next say, “To apana”. This is the second oblation. He then says, “To samana”. This is the next oblation. As the fourth oblation, he then says, “To udana”. As the fifth oblation, he says, “To vyana”. Having separately performed these acts of pranayama, he then eats, as he wishes. After this, he again sips water and rinses his mouth, thereafter touching his heart. Honesty, brahmacharya, renunciation, lack of avarice and non-violence—these are said to be the five supreme vows for a mendicant. Lack of anger, service to the guru, purity, restricted diet and constant studying—these have been described as the daily rituals. He must pursue the essence of jnana. This will ensure that he accomplishes the objective. Too many kinds of knowledge become impediments to yoga. If one wanders around, thirsty for knowledge and exclaiming, “This is knowledge. This must be known,” one can spend a thousand kalpas without knowing what should be known. Without attachment, conquering anger, limited in diet, conquering his senses and using his mind as a gate, he must immerse his mind in dhyana. A yogi must always practise dhyana in secluded places, caves and forests. Control over speech, control over action and control over the mind—these are the three staffs of control used by a yogi who is a *tridandi*.<sup>483</sup> He considers everything in this universe, cause and effect, to be pervaded by the atman. Everything is pervaded by gunas and delinked from gunas. O king! Whom does he love and whom does he hate? His intelligence has been purified. A clod of earth and a lump of gold are the same to him. He is controlled and impartial towards all beings. This mendicant goes to the supreme, undecaying and eternal region, from which, there is no rebirth. The Vedas and all the rites and sacrifices are the best. But meditation is better than sacrifices and the path of jnana is better than meditation. Dhyana, without association and attachment, is superior to jnana. Through this, one realizes the eternal. If a great-souled person is controlled and immersed in the brahman without any distraction, if he is pure and single-mindedly conquers

his senses and if he engages in this yoga, then through his own yoga, he attains emancipation.””

## Chapter 39

“Dattatreya said, ‘If a yogi is properly established in yoga, even hundreds of births are incapable of dislodging him from his position. He directly sees the paramatman, manifested in the form of the universe. His feet, head and neck are the universe. He is the lord of the universe. He is the creator of the universe. On obtaining him, the yogi chants the extremely sacred akshara of “Oum”. Studying the nature of this supreme akshara is the same as hearing its sound. There are three letters—“O”, “U” and “M”. These three matras are said to respectively represent sattva, rajas and tamas. There is also half a matra that is placed above these. It is without qualities and can be perceived by the yogi. Since it is based on the svara of gandhara, it is known as *gandhari*. Its motion is like that of an ant <sup>484</sup> and it can be perceived on the top of the head. When “Oum” is pronounced, it moves upwards towards the head. The yogi becomes full of the akshara *Oumkara*, he becomes one with the akshara. Prana is the bow, the atman is the arrow and the supreme brahman is the target. Unwavering like an arrow, he becomes one with what is to be known. “Oum” represents the three Vedas, Rig, Sama and Yajur Veda, the three worlds, and the three fires that are Vishnu, Brahma and Hara. However, the supreme meaning must be known—there are three and a half matras in Oumkara. United with it, the yogi gets fused into it. “O” is said to represent bhuloka and “U” represents bhuvarloka. With “a” added, “Ma” is thought of as svarloka. The first matra of “O” is manifest, the second matra of “U” is not manifest, the third matra of “M” is the power of consciousness <sup>485</sup> and the half matra is the supreme state. These should be known as the progressive bases for practising yoga. By pronouncing “Oum”, everything manifest and unmanifest is realized. The first matra of “O” is short, the second matra of “U” is long, the third

matra of “M” is drawn out <sup>486</sup> and the half matra cannot be grasped through speech. This supreme akshara is the sign of the brahman. If a man understands this properly and repeatedly meditates on it, he casts aside the cycle of samsara and abandons the three types of bondage. <sup>487</sup> He obtains the brahman and fuses himself into the supreme paramatman. In case his bondage of karma has not been exhausted, omens inform him about the time of his death. He remembers everything at the time of his death and becomes a yogi. Through success in yoga in this life, he also attains success in yoga in the next life. Since omens always inform him about the time of his death, he does not suffer at the time of his death.””

## Chapter 40

““Dattatreya said, ‘O great king! I will describe the omens to you.

Listen. On looking at them, a person who knows about yoga will know about the time of his death. If a man cannot see the path of the gods,<sup>488</sup> Dhruva, Venus, the shadow in the moon or Arundhati,<sup>489</sup> he will die at the end of the year. If a man cannot see the rays in the solar disc or the rays encircling a fire, he will not live for more than eleven months. In a dream, if he sees gold or silver in vomit, urine or excrement, he will live for ten months. If he sees pretas, pishachas, a city of the gandharvas or a tree that is golden in complexion, he will live for nine months. If a fat person suddenly becomes thin, or if a thin person suddenly becomes fat, his natural lifespan will end after eight months. When he steps on dust or mud, if the mark of the front part of the foot or heel is cracked, he will live for seven months. If a vulture, pigeon, raven, crow, predatory bird or any blue bird comes and perches on his head, this indicates he will live for six months. If a man is attacked by a flock of crows, if dust is showered on his head, or if he sees his own shadow appear crooked, he will live for four or five months. When there are no clouds, if he sees lightning in the southern direction or a rainbow in the night, he will live for three months. If he cannot see the reflection of his body in ghee, oil, a mirror or water, or if the head has been lopped off, he will not live for more than a month. O king! If a smell like that from a corpse is exuded by a yogi’s body, it is known that he will live for half a month. If a person’s heart and feet become dry immediately after bathing, or if his throat is dry despite drinking water, he will live for ten days. If scattered winds strike at his inner organs and if his body hair does not stand up at the touch of water, his death is imminent. In a dream, if a man sees that he is being carried in a southern direction by bears and

monkeys while he is singing, his death is extremely close. In a dream, if he is conveyed in a southern direction by a woman clad in a red or black garment, while she is singing and laughing, he will not live. If in his dream, a man sees an immensely strong and naked *kshapanaka* <sup>490</sup> laughing and leaping, it should be known that the person's death is imminent. In a dream, if a man sees himself immersed, right up to the neck, in a sea of mire, he will immediately die. In a dream, if a person sees hair, coal, ashes, snakes or rivers that have no water, after ten days, he dies on the eleventh day. In a dream, if a man sees terrible, hideous and dark men who strike him with upraised weapons and stones, he dies immediately. At the time of sunrise, if a female jackal howls in front or behind a man, crosses his path or circles him, he dies instantly. If a person feels hungry immediately after eating, or if his teeth gnash against each other, there is no doubt that his lifespan is over. If a person does not recognize the smell of a lamp, if he is frightened day or night, or if he sees his own reflection in another person's eyes, he will not remain alive. If a person sees a rainbow at midnight or the large number of planets during the day, if he knows about himself, he will know that his lifespan is short. If the nose becomes crooked, if the ears are raised or bent down, or if tears flow from his left eye, then his lifespan is over. When the face becomes red and the tongue becomes yellow, the wise man comprehends that his death is near. O lord of men! In a dream, if a person is conveyed in a southern direction in a vehicle drawn by camels or donkeys, then he will die immediately. If a person cannot hear a humming sound when his ears are covered, or if the light in his eyes is dimmed, he will not remain alive. In a dream, if a person sees that he has fallen into a pit, with the door closed so that he cannot raise himself up, his life is over. Eyes that cannot steadily look upwards, eyes that are red and roll around, a mouth that is hot and a navel that is cold are indications that the man will adopt another body. In a dream, if a person enters a fire or water and cannot emerge again, his life is over. If wicked bhutas attack a man during the day or at night, there is no doubt that he will die at the end of seven nights. If a man sees his own clean and white garment as red or black, this is an indication that his death is near. When a man's character and nature turn



contrary, this is an indication that Yama and Antaka will soon approach him. <sup>491</sup> When a man disrespects and criticizes those who should be revered and towards whom he has always behaved humbly, when he doesn't worship the gods, when he criticizes seniors, preceptors and brahmanas, when he doesn't honour the mother, the father and the son-in-law, when he slights yogis, those learned in knowledge and other great-souled ones—the accomplished know that his death is near. O lord of the earth! Yogis should always pay attention to these omens. It is known that these yield fruits day and night and at the end of the year. Those who are accomplished should always consider this range of terrible fruits. O lord of men! Having determined the time of death, they should make up their minds about what to do. Having ascertained the time, the yogi should seek out an appropriate place and engage in yoga, so that the remaining time is not fruitless. Having seen these omens, the yogi must cast aside all fear of death. He must consider the time when those omens manifest themselves. A person who knows about yoga must look at the omens and practise yoga at the time of the day when those omens manifest themselves—forenoon, mid day, afternoon, day or night. He must keep practising until the actual day presents itself. He discards all fear. This is the way a person who knows about the atman conquers time. He steadies his mind and remains in the chosen place, engaged in yoga, conquering the three gunas and immersing himself in the paramatman. Immersed in the atman, he must cast aside all his mental inclinations. That is the way he attains the supreme state of nirvana, impossible for the senses to perceive. He attains a state that the intelligence is incapable of describing. O Alarka! I have described all this to you accurately. Now hear briefly about how the brahman can be attained. When the *chandrakanta* jewel <sup>492</sup> unites with the moon's beams, it releases water, but it does not release water when it is not united. This is said to be a simile for yogis. When the *suryakanta* jewel <sup>493</sup> unites with the sun's rays, it emits fire, but it does not emit fire when it is not united. This is a simile for yogis. O Indra among kings! As long as the master of the house is alive, the ant, the rat, the mongoose, the house lizard and the chataka bird <sup>494</sup> reside in the same house. However, when the master of the house dies, they do not

grieve. They simply move to another house. <sup>495</sup> This is a simile for success in yoga. Though its mouth is small, an earthworm gathers up some earth. This has an instruction for yogis. <sup>496</sup> Trees full of leaves, flowers and fruit are destroyed by animals, birds, humans and others. Seeing this, the yogi strives for success. <sup>497</sup> The tip of the horn of a ruru antelope fawn is as small as a sesamum seed. But as the fawn grows, so does the horn. Seeing this, the yogi strives for success. <sup>498</sup> He looks at the movements in the limbs of a person who climbs from the surface of the ground to an elevated spot, holding a vessel filled with liquid in his hand. What does a yogi learn from this? <sup>499</sup> Understanding the truth that a person will give up everything to save his life, the yogi attempts to ensure success. The spot where one resides is the house. Whatever ensures subsistence is food. Whatever ensures the objective is happiness. What is this sense of ownership? An instrument is used to accomplish the intended task. Like that, the yogi uses his intelligence to ensure the best in the world hereafter.”

‘The dumb one continued, “After this, King Alarka bowed down to Atri’s son. Filled with delight, he addressed him in these humble words. “O brahmana! It was good fortune that destiny brought me an extremely fierce enemy. I faced the fear of being defeated by him and feared for my life. It is good fortune that the king of Kashi is extremely strong and valiant. I came here to ensure his destruction and met you. It is good fortune that my strength has been diminished. It is good fortune that my servants have been killed. It is good fortune that my treasury has been exhausted. It is good fortune that I have come here, scared. It is good fortune that I remembered your feet. It is good fortune that everything you said has found a place in my heart. It is good fortune that I met you and jnana has been generated in me. O brahmana! It is good fortune that you have shown this compassion towards me. When a man’s time is auspicious, something evil becomes something good. Thus, a hardship did me a good turn and I met you. O lord! Subahu is my benefactor and so is the lord of Kashi. O lord of yoga! It is because of them that I came to your presence. Your favour is like a fire and has burnt down the sin of my ignorance. I will make efforts so that I do not suffer from miseries again. O great-souled one! O one who imparts

jnana! I will abandon the state of a householder, which is like a tree in a forest full of miseries. Please grant me permission.’ Dattatreya replied, ‘O Indra among kings! O fortunate one! By all means, leave. As I have described to you, roam around free, without a sense of ownership and without a sense of ahamkara.’ Thus addressed, he prostrated himself before him and left quickly for the spot where the king of Kashi and his elder brother, Subahu, were. Alarka approached the mighty-armed lord of Kashi. In Subahu’s presence, he seemed to smile as he spoke to the valiant one. ‘O lord of Kashi! O one who desires this kingdom! Enjoy the kingdom that you have earned. Or if you so wish, give it to Subahu.’ The king of Kashi asked, ‘O Alarka! Why do you want to give up the kingdom without a fight? You know about the dharma of kshatriyas. This is not dharma for a kshatriya like you. Having cast aside the fear of death and having conquered the large number of advisers of the enemy, a king must aim his arrow in the enemy’s direction. Having conquered the enemy, a king must enjoy the supreme and desired objects of pleasure. Having enjoyed this supreme success, he performs great sacrifices.’ Alarka answered, ‘O brave one! This used to be the state of my mind earlier. However, I now hold the opposite view. Listen to the reason. Just as the bodies of men are nothing but an aggregation of the elements, so is everything inside. Everything inside a being is nothing but an aggregation of the gunas. Nothing except the power of consciousness exists. O king! With that knowledge, who is a friend, an enemy, a master or a servant? Because of you, I suffered from great misery and fear. O lord of men! Through Dattatreya’s favours, I have obtained jnana. I will conquer this collection of the senses and abandon all kinds of association. I will fix my mind on the brahman. That victory is the supreme victory. Nothing else exists and one must make efforts to achieve that success. The control of the senses makes one progress towards that success. I am not your enemy, nor are you my enemy. This Subahu is not my malefactor. I have comprehended all this properly. O king! Therefore, search out some other enemy.’ Addressed in this way by the Indra among men, Subahu was filled with delight and got up. He welcomed his brother and said, ‘This is good fortune indeed.’ He addressed the lord of Kashi in the following words.”

## Chapter 41

““Subahu said, ‘O tiger among kings! There was a reason why I sought refuge with you and that objective has been completely achieved. May you be happy. I will leave.’

““The king of Kashi asked, ‘O Subahu! Why did you seek refuge with me and what objective has been achieved? Tell me about this. I have great curiosity. Alarka was in possession of the great kingdom of your ancestors. You urged me to defeat him and hand over the kingdom to you. Therefore, I attacked your younger brother’s kingdom and conquered it by force. It is appropriate for your lineage. Enjoy it.’

““Subahu replied, ‘O king of Kashi! Hear about the reason why I made this effort and made you undertake the exertion. Though my brother knows about the truth, he became addicted to the enjoyment of carnal pleasures. I and my two elder brothers were foolish. When our mother suckled us at her breast, she awoke understanding in them and me. O lord of the earth! That understanding entered through our ears. She made us know everything that men should know about material objects. O king! However, our mother could not make this manifest in his mind. When people travel together, if any one of them suffers, all the other virtuous ones are also miserable. O lord of the earth! That is exactly what happened with us. O lord of men! Because he was deluded as a householder, he was suffering. He has been thought of as my brother. Therefore, I have a connection with his body. I decided that grief might lead to sentiments of non-attachment in him. Therefore, I sought refuge with you and made you undertake the effort. O lord of the earth! Because of the grief, non-attachment has been generated in him. I have accomplished my objective. O fortunate one! Therefore, I will leave. He has spent time in Madalasa’s womb and has drunk milk from

her breast. He should not proceed along the path followed by the sons of other women. Thinking about all of this, I sought refuge with you earlier. Since I have accomplished my objective, I shall leave and strive for success in yoga again. O Indra among men! If a man sees his relatives, friends and well-wishers suffer and ignores them, I regard them as insensate, even though they may possess senses. If a man is capable and his well-wishers, relatives and kin suffer, then it is said that he does not achieve dharma, artha, kama or moksha. Through association with you, I have accomplished this great objective. May you be fortunate. O excellent one! I will now leave in search of jnana.'

“The king of Kashi said, ‘You have done an extremely great service to the virtuous Alarka. Why don’t you turn your mind towards doing a good deed for me? Association with the virtuous always brings fruits. It cannot be fruitless. Therefore, having been associated with you, it is appropriate that there should be some upliftment for me.’

“Subahu replied, ‘The four objectives of human existence are said to be dharma, artha, kama and moksha. You have already obtained dharma, artha and kama. What you lack is the remaining one. I will describe it to you briefly. Listen with single-minded attention. O king! After hearing and reflecting properly on what you have heard, you should strive for your benefit. O king! You must never harbour notions of “I” and “mine”. But you should properly consider dharma. The absence of dharma takes away all support. When one reflects, one obtains a proper understanding of—who am I? Towards the second half of the night, you must think about the external and the internal. One must reflect on the unmanifest, whose beginning, characteristics, end and transformations cannot be thought of. What is manifest and what is not manifest? What must be known! Who is the knower? Who am I? When one knows this, one knows everything. To think of what is not the atman as the atman and to consider it as “mine” is foolishness. O lord of the earth! I am present everywhere. According to the norms used in this world, I have described everything that you asked me about. I will leave now.’”

‘The dumb one continued, “Having said this to the king of Kashi, the intelligent Subahu departed. Worshipping Alarka, the king of Kashi left for his own city. Alarka instated his eldest son as the king and left for the forest. He cast aside all association and strove for his own success. He was without any possessions and devoid of the opposite pair of sentiments. After a long period of time elapsed, he achieved the unmatched objective of yoga and supreme nirvana. He saw the entire universe, with gods, asuras and humans. Bound by the nooses of the gunas, they were always in bondage because of sentiments like sons and other things, my possessions and the possessions of others. Attracted by such sentiments, they were miserable and afflicted and looked at everything with notions of differentiation. They were submerged in the mire of ignorance and were incapable of being saved. Since he had transcended this, the immensely intelligent one chanted this song. ‘Alas! This is great hardship. I used to rule over the kingdom earlier. However, I subsequently came to know that supreme bliss only comes through yoga.’ O father! For the sake of liberation, you should also resort to this excellent yoga. You will then obtain the brahman. Having gone there, one does not grieve. I will also go there. What will sacrifices and meditation achieve? For a person who has achieved everything, there is nothing other than thinking about the brahman. Therefore, I seek your permission. I will have no possessions and will be free of the opposite pair of sentiments. I will strive for liberation, so that there is no return.”’

The birds continued, ‘O brahmana! Having spoken to his father in this way, he obtained his permission. The intelligent one left, abandoning all association. The extremely intelligent father also resorted to vanaprastha and in the course of time, to the fourth ashrama. Casting aside all bondage resulting from the gunas, he met his son there. Since time developed this intelligence in his mind, he obtained supreme success. O brahmana! In detail, we have described everything that you asked us about. What else do you want to hear? If a person controls himself and reads this, or hears it, he obtains the fruits obtained from bathing after completing a horse sacrifice. O excellent sage! From hearing this, all those are obtained. If a man listens

to this conversation between Alarka and Dattatreya, that is an excellent means of saving himself from being whirled around in samsara.'



## Chapter 42

Jaimini said, ‘O excellent birds! You can properly describe to me the two kinds of acts mentioned in the Vedas—driven by pravritti and nivritti. How wonderful. Through the favours of your father, you have obtained this kind of jnana. Despite being born as inferior species, your delusion has been dispelled. Since you are based in the original state of success, you are blessed. Your minds are not agitated by the delusion that results from material objects. You are supreme ones who dispel all kinds of doubts. It is good fortune that the intelligent Markandeya told me about you. Men who wander around in this extremely difficult hardship of samsara do not come into contact with ascetics like you. You possess the insight of jnana. I have come into contact with you. If I do not accomplish success from this, where else can I achieve success? I do not think that anyone else possesses the unblemished intelligence and knowledge of distinguishing between acts of pravritti and nivritti as you do. O best among birds! If your minds are favourably inclined towards me, you should describe these to me completely. How did this universe, with its mobile and immobile objects, originate? O excellent ones! When the time for destruction presents itself, where will it go? How did the lineages of the gods, the rishis and the ancestors originate? What are the manvantaras? What are the royal dynasties? How did creation happen? How does it end at the time of destruction? What are the divisions into kalpas and manvantaras? What is the position and the size of the earth? What are the positions of the oceans, the mountains, the rivers and the forests? What are bhuloka and the other worlds? What are the different components of the nether regions? What is the movement of the sun, the moon, the planets, the nakshatras and the

stellar bodies? I wish to hear everything, from origin to destruction. When the universe is drawn in at the time of destruction, what remains?’

The birds replied, ‘O excellent sage! O Jaimini! The burden of the questions that you have asked is great. We will tell you. Listen. Earlier, Markandeya spoke about this to Kroushtuki. The intelligent and tranquil one was the son of a brahmana and had bathed after the completion of his vows. <sup>500</sup> O lord! When the great-souled Markandeya was seated in a circle of excellent brahmanas, Kroushtuki asked him this. Delighted, the sage, the descendant of the Bhrigu lineage, spoke to him. O excellent among brahmanas! We will repeat that to you. Listen. He bowed down to the protector of the universe. For the sake of creation, that origin of the universe is established in the form of the grandfather, who originated from the lotus. For the sake of preservation, he is in the form of Vishnu. And at the time of destruction, he is in the form of the terrible Rudra, the Destroyer.

‘Markandeya said, “In ancient times, the unmanifest Brahma came into being. As soon as he was born, the Puranas and the Vedas emerged from his mouths. The supreme rishis compiled many collections of the Puranas and classified the Vedas into thousands of branches. Dharma, jnana, non-attachment and lordship—these four cannot be accomplished without the great-souled one’s instructions. Therefore, the seven rishis born through his mental powers accepted the Vedas. Other original sages born through his mental powers accepted the Puranas. Chyavana accepted the Puranas from Bhrigu and revealed them to the brahmanas. Those great-souled rishis spoke about these to Daksha. At that time, it was Daksha who told me about these. I will now tell you about them. They destroy the sins of kali yuga. O immensely fortunate one! O sage! Listen attentively to everything I had earlier heard from Daksha. I bow down to Brahma, the supreme being, the creator of everything in this universe, mobile and immobile. He is the refuge and is the undecaying origin of this universe. He is the original being, the cause behind creation, preservation and destruction. I seek refuge with the one in whom everything is established. He is the intelligent Hiranyagarbha, who controls the worlds. I will bow down before him and

tell you completely about the excellent creation of beings, beginning with Mahat and ending with the specific, all the forms and their characteristics, the five types of proof,<sup>501</sup> the six kinds of flow<sup>502</sup> and the eternal Purusha, because of whom, everything transient is established. O immensely fortunate one! With great attention, hear about all this. In Samkhya, the unmanifest Pradhana is spoken of as the cause. The maharshis speak of the subtle and eternal Prakriti, encompassing both cause and effect. O sage! In the beginning, there was the eternal brahman, without decay. It has no age and it cannot be measured. It does not need anything else for support. It has no smell, taste or form. It is not subject to sound or touch. It has no beginning and no end. It is the origin of the universe. It knows no creation or destruction and the three gunas originated in it. It is ancient and cannot be comprehended. Even after destruction, it pervades everything. The equilibrium of the three gunas is also based on it. At the time of creation, the gunas are created again. Pradhana is created and pervades Mahat. Just as a seed is covered in its skin, Mahat is covered by the unmanifest Pradhana. With the three gunas of sattva, rajas and tamas, three kinds of ahamkara are created—*vaikarika*, *taijasa* and *tamasa*.<sup>503</sup> The elements are also created in this way. Just as the manifest Mahat is surrounded by Pradhana, Mahat is surrounded by ahamkara and leads to the creation of the tanmatra known as sound. When the tanmatra known as sound was created, space, which has the attribute of sound, was created. Space is pervaded by the tanmatra of sound. There is no doubt that the tanmatra of touch was created from this. It is held that the powerful wind has the attribute of touch. Wind created the tanmatra of form. Form is said to be the attribute of fire and fire was thus created from the wind. The tanmatra of touch led to the wind. The tanmatra of form led to the fire. The tanmatra of taste was created after that. Water has taste as its essence and water was thus created. Water has the tanmatra of taste and it is covered by the tanmatra of form. Water again leads to the creation of the tanmatra of smell. It is held that the quality of smell results from interaction between these. In this way, the elements are known by their tanmatras. They are based in their respective tanmatras. There is nothing else to distinguish them, since they are

undifferentiated. They are not distinguished by characteristics of being serene, agitated or confused. The tanmatras of the elements are created by *tamasa ahamkara*. Simultaneously, urged by sattva, *vaikarika ahamkara* leads to a *vaikarika* creation. These are the five senses of perception and the five organs of action. Though the senses are *taijasa*, there are ten *vaikarika* divinities who preside over these. The mind is the eleventh and these are said to be the *vaikarika* divinities. The ears, the skin, the eyes, the tongue and the fifth one, the nose, perceive sound and the other attributes and are spoken of as the senses of perception. The feet, the anus, the genital organs, the hands and the organ of speech are the organs of action. Movement, excretion, pleasure, artisanship and speech are achieved with these. The tanmatra of space is sound. The tanmatra of touch entered it. It is held that this led to the creation of the wind, which has two qualities, that of sound and touch. In this way, the tanmatras of sound and touch entered the tanmatra of form. This led to the creation of fire, which has three qualities, those of sound, touch and form. The tanmatra of taste entered the tanmatras of sound, touch and form. Water has the tanmatra of taste. It is thus known that this led to the creation of water, which has four qualities of sound, touch, form and taste. The tanmatras of sound, touch, form and taste entered the tanmatra of smell. The tanmatra of smell pervades the earth. Therefore, the gross element of earth is seen to possess five qualities of sound, touch, form, taste and smell. The elements are known as serene, agitated or confused because they enter each other and support each other. Everything, perceived or not perceived, is densely packed into the earth. As they are perceived by the specific senses, they are said to possess those specific characteristics. Each tanmatra accepts the characteristic of the preceding one and passes on its characteristic to the succeeding one.

“Without being united, these seven principles <sup>504</sup> have their own independent powers. However, unless they combine with each other, they are incapable of creation. They interact with each other and become dependent on each other. They unite with each other and obtain the signs of that specific union. This happens when Purusha pervades them and the unmanifest <sup>505</sup> shows its favours. Starting with Mahat and ending with the

specific elements, an egg is created. Like a bubble in the water in the beginning, it increases in size. O immensely intelligent one! Created from the elements, this giant egg lies down in the water. The *kshetrajna*, known as Brahma, grows inside this natural egg. This is the first embodied form and is spoken of as Purusha. Brahma existed before everything else and is known as the original creator of beings. Everything in the three worlds, mobile and immobile, is pervaded by him. Meru was created from him. The mountains are the outer skin of the embryo. The oceans are the fluid in the womb, the egg from which the great-souled one was born. Everything in the universe, gods, asuras, humans, the dvipas, <sup>506</sup> the rivers, the mountains, the oceans, the stellar bodies, the collection of the worlds and the elements, water, air, fire, space and earth—was inside that egg. The outside of this egg was covered by the ten characteristics, <sup>507</sup> collectively and independently. In addition, that expanse was covered by Mahat. With Mahat, everything was also covered by the unmanifest. <sup>508</sup> Indeed, that egg was covered by seven forms of Prakriti. <sup>509</sup> They covered each other and existed there. In addition, there was the eighth form of Prakriti. <sup>510</sup> This is the eternal form of Prakriti. When this also ends, <sup>511</sup> it ends in Purusha. I will again briefly tell you about the one who has been referred to as Brahma. Listen. When a person immersed in water rises from the water, he flings aside some water and seems to be born in water. Brahma is Prakriti and he is also the lord. <sup>512</sup> The unmanifest is spoken of as kshetra. <sup>513</sup> Brahma is spoken of as kshetrajna. <sup>514</sup> Know that all these are the signs of kshetra and kshetrajna. This is the natural creation, presided over by kshetrajna. This first creation manifested itself like a flash of lightning, without thinking about it.””

## Chapter 43

‘Kroushtuki asked, “O illustrious one! You have spoken to me about the creation of the egg. You have also spoken to me about the great-souled Brahma’s birth from this cosmic egg. O descendant of the Bhrigu lineage! I wish to hear the truth about how all the beings were created after this. What happens at the end of universal destruction, when everything is drawn in? What exists then?”

‘Markandeya replied, “When this entire universe is dissolved into Prakriti, the learned refer to that withdrawal as *prakrita pralaya*. The unmanifest is then established within its own atman and all kinds of transformation are suspended. Following the same kind of dharma, Purusha and Prakriti exist. Sattva and tamas gunas are in equilibrium then, interwoven with each other. Neither is in excess then and neither is in deficit. Just as oil exists in sesamum and ghee exists in milk, rajas follows and exists within sattva and tamas. From birth, Brahma’s lifespan is for two half *parardhas*.<sup>515</sup> The supreme lord’s day has the same duration as his night, which is when he sleeps. Eight thousand mahayugas<sup>516</sup> are Prajapati’s day and night. According to this measure, Brahma lives for one hundred years. One hundred years for Brahma amount to one day for Vishnu. Fourteen thousand Vishnus are created and destroyed during a half *nimesha*<sup>517</sup> for Shambhu and innumerable grandfathers are created and destroyed during this period. At the beginning of the day, the lord of the universe, the origin of the universe, the one who is without beginning and without measurement, awakes.<sup>518</sup> He is the cause behind everything. He is immeasurable in his soul and cannot be reached through rites. The supreme lord quickly enters Purusha and Prakriti. Using supreme yoga, he agitates them, just as a spring breeze agitates and intoxicates young maidens. The

embodiment of yoga enters and agitates in this way. As I have told you earlier, when Pradhana is agitated, the god known by the name of Brahma emerges from the sac of the egg. He is the one who agitated earlier. Having become Prakriti's husband now, he is himself agitated. In this way, established in the state of Pradhana, he contracts and expands. The origin of the universe is devoid of gunas. However, to initiate the process of creation, he assumes the form of Brahma and adopts rajas guna. Once he has created subjects as Brahma, there is an excess of sattva and assuming the form of Vishnu, he follows dharma and preserves. Thereafter, when there is an excess of tamas guna, he assumes the form of Rudra and withdraws the entire universe and the three worlds. The one with the three gunas sleeps, devoid of gunas. He is the creator, preserver and destroyer of all fields and accordingly assumes the forms of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva. As Brahma, he creates the worlds. As Rudra, he destroys them. As Vishnu, he preserves. Svayambhu <sup>519</sup> is indifferent to these three states. The lord of the universe is Brahma with rajas, Rudra with tamas and Vishnu with sattva. These are the three gods and these are the three gunas. Just as they base themselves on these gunas, they are united with each other too. They are not separated. Nor do they give each other up even for an instant.

“In this way, before the creation of the universe, Brahma, the god of the gods who has four faces, resorted to rajas guna for the sake of creation. He is Hiranyagarbha, the first among the gods. However, he is really without an origin. Brahma was created from the pericarp of a lotus that was the origin of the world. The great-souled one's lifespan is one hundred years, according to the *brahmya* standard of measurement. Hear what that is. Fifteen nimeshas are said to make up one *kashtha*. Thirty *kashthas* make up one *kala* and thirty *kalas* amount to one *muhurta*. It is said that thirty *muhurtas* amount to a human day and night. Thirty days and nights amount to a month and there are said to be two *pakshas* in a month. Six of those months amount to one *ayana* and there are two of those—*uttarayana* and *dakshinayana*. These two human *ayanas* are day and night for the gods. *Uttarayana* is their day and *dakshinayana* is their night. Twelve thousand divine years is a cycle of the four *yugas*, *krita*, *treta* and the others. Four



thousand such years are said to be krita yuga. The sandhya <sup>520</sup> portion of this yuga has a duration of four hundred years. Treta is said to amount to three thousand years of the gods and its sandhya portion has a duration of three hundred years. *Dvapara* has a duration of two thousand years and its sandhya portion is said to amount to two hundred years. O supreme among brahmanas! *Kali* has one thousand years of the gods and its sandhya portion is said to amount to one hundred years. The wise ones have said that twelve thousand such years are a mahayuga and one thousand mahayugas amount to Brahma's day. There are fourteen Manus in one of Brahma's days and each of these manvantaras is again divided into one thousand parts. The gods, saptarshis, Indra, Manu and his sons, and the kings are created along with Manu and are dissolved along with him. There are more than seventy-one mahayugas in a manvantara. <sup>521</sup> Hear about the duration of a manvantara in human years. O brahmana! There are thirty crores, sixty-seven million and twenty thousand human years in a manvantara. I will tell you about the duration of a manvantara in years of the gods. Listen. There are eight hundred and fifty-two thousand divine years in a manvantara. <sup>522</sup> Fourteen manvantaras are said to be Brahma's day. At the end of Brahma's day, the learned say that *naimittika pralaya* takes place. <sup>523</sup> At that time, bhuloka, bhuvarloka and svarloka and their residents are destroyed. <sup>524</sup> *Maharloka* remains. But because of the heat, its residents leave for *satyaloka*. When Brahma sleeps during the night, the three worlds become a single ocean. When the night, of the same duration, is over, creation starts afresh. The duration of Brahma's year is like that and his lifespan is one hundred years. Fifty of his years is known as a parardha. O supreme among brahmanas! After the end of one such parardha, there occurred the great kalpa known as Padma. O brahmana! A second parardha is going on right now and the first of its kalpas can be thought of as Varaha.'"

## Chapter 44

‘Kroushtuki said, “Tell me in detail about how the illustrious Brahma Prajapati, the original creator of beings, went about the task of creation.”

‘Markandeya replied, “O brahmana! I will tell you about how the illustrious and eternal Brahma created the universe, with its mobile and immobile objects. When Padma was over, at the end of the night, the lord woke up. Permeated by sattva, Brahma saw that the world was empty. In this connection, there is a shloka mentioned about Narayana. He is the undecaying and powerful lord of the universe and Brahma is his form.

‘Water is known as nara and the water is his refuge. Since he lies down on water, he is known as Narayana.’ He <sup>525</sup> saw the water and thought that the earth was submerged in the water. He desired to raise up the earth. In those earlier kalpas, he had assumed the form of a fish and a tortoise. <sup>526</sup> He now assumed the form of a boar. The Vedas and the yajnas are the divine lord’s form. He can go everywhere and everything originates in him. Assuming this form, full of the Vedas and the yajnas, he entered the water. He raised the earth from Patala and placed it in the water. The Siddhas who were in Janarloka saw that the lord of the universe was thinking. Like a gigantic boat, he placed it on the flood of water. Since the earth’s body was so extended, it did not sink. He levelled the earth and created the mountains on earth. Everything from the earlier cycle of creation had been burnt up in the *samvartaka* fire of universal destruction. All the mountains on earth had also been shrivelled up by that fire. The mountains had become submerged in that single ocean of water and the wind and the heat there had reduced them to a single mass. Those mountains were now placed in the exact places where they used to be earlier. He divided up the earth and adorned it with seven dvipas. As was the case earlier, he fashioned the first four lokas,

staring with bhuloka. Then, as in the earlier kalpas, he started to think about creation. The wrong kind of intelligence manifested itself and it was full of darkness. As was the case earlier, five kinds of ignorance manifested themselves from the great-souled one—tamas, moha, *mahamoha*, tamisra and andha-tamisra. As he thought, five kinds of creation resulted and they lacked intelligence. It existed both inside and outside. It lacked illumination and the atman was concealed. It consisted of mountains. Since this creation primarily consisted of vegetation, it is known as the *mukhya* creation. <sup>527</sup> As this creation wasn't successful, he thought of another creation. As he thought, this creation exhibited an oblique flow. Since the flow was oblique, this creation is said to be the one with the inferior flow. Animals are said to belong to this creation. Generally, they do not possess knowledge and are full of tamas. They follow perverse paths. Though they are ignorant, they pride themselves on their learning. They are full of ego and insolence and there are twenty-eight different classes. Though they possess illumination inside, it is covered on the outside and they are also covered from each other. Taking this creation to be unsuccessful, he thought again. This third creation followed the dharma of sattva and flowed upwards. Happiness and joy was plentiful. Both inside and outside, this creation was not covered. Resulting from this upward flow, it was illuminated both inside and outside. He was satisfied with this third creation and it is known as the creation of devas. As a result of this creation, Brahma was filled with contentment. He started to think about another excellent creation that would be successful. His reflections are always true. When the unmanifest one thought, another successful creation resulted and it started to flow downwards. Starting from the top, it flowed downwards. Though it possesses a lot of illumination, it is urged by tamas and has an excess of rajas. Therefore, there are repeated reasons for suffering from many kinds of misery. This successful creation of humans possesses illumination, both inside and outside. The fifth creation is known as *anugraha* and is divided into four types—exhibiting contrary behaviour, success, serenity and contentment. <sup>528</sup> The sixth creation is said to be of beings who know about the past, the present and the future of all creatures and also know about the elements. They receive shares and divide

those among themselves. They are not known for their good conduct and they urge others. They are known as the source of the gross elements. Among Brahma's creations, the first is known as Mahat. The second is the creation of the tanmatras and is known as the creation of the elements. The third creation is known as vaikarika and is dominated by the senses. The fourth creation is known as mukhya and is said to consist of immobile objects. The fifth creation is the one with the oblique flow and has the inferior species. The sixth creation has the upward flow and is the creation of devas. The seventh creation has the downward flow and consists of humans. The eighth creation is anugraha and has elements of both sattva and tamas. Of these eight creations, five are said to result from *vikriti* and three from *prakriti*.<sup>529</sup> With elements of both *vikriti* and *prakriti*, the ninth creation is known as *koumara*. I have thus described Prajapati's nine creations. The *vikriti* and *prakriti* creations are the root causes of the world and were created by the lord of the universe. What else do you wish to hear?"

## Chapter 45

‘Kroushtuki said, “O illustrious one! You have described creation to me, but the account has been extremely brief. O brahmana! Tell me in detail about the creation of gods and others.”

‘Markandeya replied, “O brahmana! Creation depends on the good and bad deeds one has performed earlier. At the time of destruction, everything is withdrawn. Beings are not freed. O brahmana! Brahma made up his mind to create four kinds of beings, beginning with gods and ending with inanimate objects. These four are gods, asuras, ancestors and humans. Wishing to create, Prajapati united with the water and a small bit of tamas was created. As he desired to create, asuras were thus first generated from his thighs. He abandoned that body, which was infused with the subtle element of tamas. Thus cast aside, night was instantly generated from this form. Desiring to create, he created another form and was delighted with it. Infused with sattva, the gods were generated from his mouth. The lord, the lord of beings, cast aside that body too. Thus cast aside, day was created from this sattva. He assumed another form that consisted of the subtle element of sattva. When he thought of himself as an ancestor, the ancestors were generated from this. Having created the ancestors, the lord cast aside this form too. Thus cast aside, sandhya, the intervening period between day and night, was created from this. The lord then created another body, consisting of the subtle element of rajas. Infused with the subtle element of rajas, humans were generated from this. Having created humans, the lord cast aside this body too. This resulted in the creation of moonlight, seen at the end of the night and the beginning of the day. O brahmana! These are known as the bodies of the intelligent god of gods—night, day, sandhya and moonlight. Moonlight, sandhya and day—these three originated from the

subtle element of sattva. Night originated from the subtle element of tamas and therefore, has an excess of darkness. That is the reason why the gods are powerful during the day and the asuras are powerful during the night. Humans are powerful during moonlight and the ancestors during sandhya. Since they are powerful during these respective periods, there is no doubt that adversaries cannot assail them then. When a contrary period ensues, they accordingly head towards calamity. Moonlight, night, day and sandhya—these are the lord’s four forms. These are Brahma’s forms, generated from the three gunas.

“After Brahma had created these four forms, Prajapati was filled with hunger and thirst and created another form during the night. It was full of rajas and tamas. In that darkness, filled with hunger and thirst, the illustrious Aja, <sup>530</sup> created this. He created malformed and bearded creatures who started to eat this body. Some said, ‘We will protect it’ and they became rakshasas. <sup>531</sup> O brahmana! Others said, ‘We will eat it’ and they became yakshas. <sup>532</sup> On witnessing this unpleasant sight, the creator’s hair started to fall down from his head. When the hair fell down from Brahma’s head, it became inferior species. Since they writhed around, they became *sarpas*. <sup>533</sup> Since they are inferior, they are also known as *ahis*. <sup>534</sup> Seeing these snakes, he was filled with rage and creatures that were angry and cruel resulted. These were tawny in complexion and fierce. These were beings that ate flesh. When he meditated on the earth, gandharvas were created. Since they were born from speech, they are known as gandharvas. <sup>535</sup> After the lord created eight classes of devas, <sup>536</sup> he created other things from his body—animals and birds. Goats were created from his mouth and sheep from his breasts. Brahma created cattle from his sides. Horses, elephants, asses, hares, deer, camels, mules and many others were born from his feet. Herbs, fruits and roots were created from his body hair. In this way, creating animals and herbs, the lord performed a sacrifice. This was at the beginning of the kalpa, at the start of treta yuga. Cows, goats, buffaloes, sheep, horses, mules and donkeys—these are known as domesticated animals. Hear about the ones that are from the forest. As the fifth category, these are predatory creatures, those with two hooves, elephants, monkeys

and birds. <sup>537</sup> Animals that dwell in water are the sixth class and reptiles the seventh.

“From the mouth towards the east, he created *gayatri*, *trich*, *trivrit sama*, *rathantara* and the agnishtoma sacrifice. <sup>538</sup> From the mouth towards the south, he created the hymns of the Yajur Veda, the *trishtubh* metre, the fifteen *stomas*, *brihat sama* and *uktha*. <sup>539</sup> From the mouth towards the west, he created the Sama Veda hymns, the *jagati* metre, the fifteen *stomas*, <sup>540</sup> the *vairupa* hymn and the *atiratra* sacrifice. From the mouth towards the north, he created the twenty-one Atharva Veda texts, the *aptoryama* sacrifice, the *anushtubh* metre and the *vairaj* mantra. The illustrious lord created lightning, thunder, clouds, red rainbows and birds at the beginning of the kalpa. Inferior and superior creatures were created from his body. After having first created the four categories, gods, asuras, ancestors and subjects, <sup>541</sup> he created mobile and immobile objects—yakshas, pishachas, gandharvas, large numbers of apsaras, humans, kinnaras, rakshasas, birds, animals, deer, serpents, those that decay and those that do not, those that are mobile and those that are not. Depending on the karma that they had performed in the earlier cycle of creation, they are thus born again and again. Whatever appealed to them and was thought of is thus reaped in this creation—violence, non-violence, mildness, cruelty, preference for dharma, preference for adharma. The lord, the creator, himself created this addiction to the senses in the diverse bodies of beings. With the sounds of the Vedas as the beginning, he created gods and many other names and forms of beings in this visible universe. He gave names to the rishis and the gods who were created at the end of the night. <sup>542</sup> In different seasons, many different kinds of signs are seen. Like that, different kinds of signs are seen at the beginning of a yuga. In this way, when night is over, from one kalpa to another kalpa, Brahma, whose origin is not manifest, engages in creation.”

## Chapter 46

‘Kroushtuki asked, “O brahmana! You have spoken about the downward flow of creation whereby humans were created. Please tell me in detail about this. O immensely intelligent one! How were the varnas and their attributes created? Tell me about what is spoken about as duties for brahmanas and others.”

‘Markandeya replied, “O sage! As Brahma reflected on creation and the truth, one thousand couples were created from his mouth. When they were born, they were filled with sattva and their own energy. He created one thousand other couples from his chest. They were filled with rajas. They were angry and intolerant. He again created one thousand couples from his thighs. They were filled with rajas and tamas and their conduct was imbued with envy. He created another one thousand couples from his feet. They were filled with tamas. They were limited in energy and devoid of prosperity. Produced in pairs, these couples desired each other and engaged in intercourse with each other. In this kalpa, birth has thus been through intercourse. At that time, women did not have their periods every month. Therefore, though they engaged in intercourse, they did not give birth. They only gave birth to another couple at the end of their lives. In this kalpa, birth has always been in pairs. However, this birth was through a pure mental process and each subject possessed the five qualities of perception of material objects, sound and the others. This was Prajapati’s first human creation. The entire universe was populated through this kind of creation. Those subjects could roam around and enjoy rivers, lakes, oceans and mountains. In that yuga, it was not too hot. Nor was it too cold. O immensely intelligent one! They were naturally content with material objects. There was nothing to obstruct them. There was no hatred. Nor was



there any anger. There were no habitations and they resided in mountains and oceans. They roamed around as they willed, always happy in their minds. They were not impeded by pishachas, serpents, rakshasas, envious people, animals, birds, crocodiles, fish, reptiles or others born from eggs, since these are the creations of adharma. There were no roots, fruits, flowers, seasons or years. It was pleasant all the time. It was not too hot. Nor was it too cold. In course of time, those ancestors obtained success. Whether it was the forenoon or the afternoon, if they were dissatisfied, as soon as they desired success in their minds, they obtained success without making any efforts. Such was the subtle power of water then that they obtained success through the sensation of taste. In that way, all their other desires were also satisfied. They did not need any samskaras to cleanse their bodies. They possessed perpetual youth. Without desiring it, they had offspring in pairs. They were exactly like their parents in birth, form and death. They did not wish to harbour any hatred towards each other. They were all equal in beauty and lifespan. There was no superior or inferior. In human years, their lifespans were of four thousand years. They did not suffer from any hardship or calamity. However, in the course of time, the earth's good fortune was diminished. Here and there, people started to die. Progressively, all that success started to be destroyed. When these were destroyed, juices started to be showered down from the sky. This water led to the sprouting of *kalpavrikshas* <sup>543</sup> in homes. Every object of desire was satisfied through these trees. This is how they subsisted at the beginning of treta yuga.

“But in the course of time, attachment started to grow. The monthly periods started and conception followed. They got attached to the trees that were there in the homes. Those trees were destroyed and other trees with four branches sprouted. These yielded fruits, garments and ornaments. There were cups of fruit in those trees, filled with honey that was not produced by bees. It possessed fragrance, colour and taste and was full of energy. At the beginning of treta yuga, they subsisted on this. In the course of time, avarice was generated in them. They seized those trees, with a sense of ownership in their minds. Because of this perverse conduct, these

trees were destroyed. The opposite pairs of sentiments resulted, heat, cold, hunger and so on. To overcome these opposite pairs of sentiments, the first cities were constructed. They found refuge in fortresses in deserts, mountains, caves, trees, valleys and water. Those artificial fortresses were measured according to the size of the human finger. Measurements were laid down for the first time. The first unit is a paramanu, the fine particle of dust that can be seen when the sun's ray is filtered through a net. Then follow *trasarenu*, *mahiraja*, *valagra*, *liksha*, *yuka* and *yava*.<sup>544</sup> It is said that each unit is eight times the preceding one. Eight yavas constitute an *angula*.<sup>545</sup> Six angulas constitute a *pada*. Two padas are said to constitute a *vitasti*. Two vitastis constitute a *hasta*, as measured up to the root of the thumb.<sup>546</sup> Four hastas constitute a *dhanurdanda* or two *nadikas*. Two thousand dhanurdandas constitute a *krosha* or *gavyuti*. Four gavyutis are said to make up one *yojana*. The wise have thought of measurements in this way. Out of four kinds of fortresses, three are natural and the fourth is artificial. The artificial one is constructed. O brahmana! Separately, they also constructed and laid out *pura*, *khetaka*, *dronimukha*, *shakha-nagara*, *kharvataka*, *dromi*, *grama* and *samghosha*. A *pura* is surrounded by walls and moats on all sides. The diameter measures one quarter of a *yojana* and it is divided into eight segments. The best *puras* slope down towards water in the northern or eastern direction and are populated by those born from pure families. A *khetaka* has half the qualities of a *pura*, a *kharvataka* has half the qualities of a *khetaka* and a *dronimukha* is said to have one-eighth the qualities of a *kharvataka*. A *kharvataka* is said to be a *pura* without walls and moats. A habitation populated by ministers and vassals is known as a *shakha-nagara*. A *grama* is known as that which is generally populated by *shudras*. It obtains its prosperity on the basis of its own agriculture. It is located in the midst of fertile fields. When men from another city come to undertake business in a city and create a settlement there, men know this as a *vasati*. When there is a *grama* which is generally inhabited by wicked people who do not possess land, but use their power to seize the land of others, populated by those who are dear to the king, that is known as a *dromi*. There are regions where cowherds bring their vessels on carts and reside as

they please, without building houses. There are no shops there and there are herds of cows. These are known as *ghosha*.<sup>547</sup> Remembering the trees that existed earlier, to overcome the opposite pairs of sentiments, they thus created those kinds of cities.

““The branches of a tree grow in one direction, while other branches grow in a different direction. Some branches grow upwards, others downwards. O supreme among brahmanas! The branches of the kalpavrikshas used to be like that earlier. Those houses were like the branches of those trees.<sup>548</sup> To overcome the opposite pairs of sentiments, they started to think about means of subsistence. In particular, the kalpavrikshas and their honey had been destroyed. The subjects were miserable and anxious, afflicted by hunger and thirst. At the beginning of treta yuga, their success was manifested in a different way. They obtained a means of subsistence through a different mode. Whenever they wished for it, it rained. The water from this rain flowed downwards. This water from the rain flowed in the form of canals and rivers. Earlier, the flow of water on earth was limited. Devoid of any impurities, that water united with the land. Without being tilled and without being sown, fourteen types<sup>549</sup> of trees and creepers sprouted in villages and forests and these yielded seasonal flowers and fruits. At the beginning of treta yuga, herbs also manifested themselves. O sage! At the beginning of treta yuga, subjects suddenly started to suffer from attachment and avarice. However, they used the herbs for sustenance. Suffering from jealousy, according to their strength, they seized rivers, fields, mountains, trees, creepers and herbs. O brahmana! Because of this sin, as they looked on, those herbs were destroyed. O immensely intelligent one! Because of this sin, the earth instantly devoured these herbs. Suffering from hunger, the subjects again went and sought refuge with Parameshthi Brahma. The illustrious lord got to know the truth about the earth having devoured the herbs. Like milking a cow, he used Mount Meru as a calf to milk crops on the surface of the earth. At this, the seeds of domestic crops and forest crops were generated again. The herbs that lead to ripe crops are said to be of seventeen types—*vrihi*, *yava*, *godhuma*, *anu*, *tila*, *priyangu*, *kovidara*, *koradusha*, *tinaka*, *masha*,

*mudga, mashura, nishpava, kulatthaka, adhaka, chanaka and shana.* <sup>550</sup>

Earlier, these herbs grew near villages. From the village and from the forest, there are fourteen kinds of herbs that can be used in sacrifices—paddy, barley, wheat, millet, sesamum, saffron as the sixth, fine pulse as the seventh, *shyamaka*, wild paddy, wild sesamum, *gavedhuka*, *kuruvinda*, *markataka* and bamboo. <sup>551</sup> These are said to be the fourteen kinds of herbs, from the village and from the forest. But though these herbs were created, they did not germinate again. Therefore, he ensured a means so that they would grow and be nurtured. The illustrious Svayambhu Brahma ensured that success would be brought about through the use of the hands. Since then, herbs ripened after tilling and sowing. That is the way the lord himself ensured a means for these to be nurtured. The supreme among the upholders of dharma also established the proper ordinances and norms of dharma for the varnas and the ashramas, according to their qualities. This set out the proper means of achieving dharma for all the varnas and also established their worlds. Prajapati's world is for brahmanas who perform the rites, Indra's world for kshatriyas who do not run away from battle, Marut's world for vaishyas who follow their own dharma and the world of the gandharvas for those among the shudras who observe servitude. There are eighty-eight thousand rishis who hold up their seed. Their world is for those who reside with their *gurus*. The world of the saptarshis is said to be for those who reside in the forest. Prajapati's world is for those who are householders and Brahma's world, for a temporary period, for those who resort to sannyasa. The immortal world is for yogis. These were the worlds that were fashioned.”

## Chapter 47

‘Markandeya continued, “As he meditated, subjects were born through his mental powers. They were born with bodies, with tasks and with the means for accomplishing these. The bodies were generated from the intelligent one’s body. I have already described how they were created. Beginning with the gods and ending with inanimate objects, everything is said to consist of the three gunas. In this way, mobile and immobile objects were created. However, all these subjects did not grow. Therefore, the intelligent one used his mental powers to create sons who were exactly like him. The Puranas have determined that Brahma’s nine sons, born through his mental powers, are Bhrigu, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, Angiras, Marichi, Daksha, Atri and Vashishtha. After this, from his rage, Brahma again created Rudra. After this, Samkalpa and Dharma were created. There were others who had been created earlier, Sananda and the others.<sup>552</sup> But their minds turned to dharma. They were indifferent and controlled, not attached to the worlds. All of them knew about the future. They were devoid of envy and devoid of attachment. The great-souled Brahma saw that they were indifferent towards creating subjects and was filled with great rage. From this anger emerged a being with an extremely large body. He was half-man and half-woman and like the sun in his complexion. ‘Divide yourself in two.’ Saying this, he<sup>553</sup> vanished. Thus addressed, he divided the man from the woman. He also divided the man into eleven parts. The lord segregated the divine masculine and feminine beings into many parts, depending on whether they were amiable or not, serene or not, fair or not.

“O brahmana! In this way, the lord Brahma first created Svayambhu Manu, who was just like him, for the purpose of protecting subjects. He also created the woman, Shatarupa, whose sins were cleansed through her

austerities. The lord Svayambhu Manu accepted her as his wife. Shatarupa gave birth to two sons, Priyavrata and Uttanapada. They were famous because of their own deeds. She also had two daughters, Akuti and Prasuti. In those ancient times, their father bestowed Prasuti on Daksha and Akuti on Ruchi. Prajapati <sup>554</sup> accepted her as his wife and Yajna and Dakshina were born from them. O immensely fortunate one! When Yajna and Dakshina indulged in intercourse as a couple, twelve sons were born to them. These are known as the Yamas, the gods during Svayambhuva manvantara. These were the radiant sons of Yajna and Dakshina. Daksha and Prasuti had twenty-four daughters. Listen to their correct names. The lord Dharma accepted thirteen of Daksha's daughters as his wife— Shraddha, Lakshmi, Dhriti, Tushti, Pushti, Medha, Kriya, Buddhi, Lajja, Vapu, Shanti, Siddhi and Kirti. <sup>555</sup> In due order, the eleven well-behaved and beautiful-eyed younger daughters, Khyati, Satya, Sambhuti, Smriti, Priti, Kshama, Santati, Anasuya, Urja, Svaha and Svadha, were bestowed on the rishis Bhrigu, Bhava, Marichi, the sage Angiras, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, Vasishtha, Atri, Vahni and the ancestors. Shraddha gave birth to Kama, Shri <sup>556</sup> to Darpa, Dhriti to Niyama, Tushti to Santosha, Pushti to Lobha, Medha to Shruta, Kriya to Danda, Buddhi to Bodha, Lajja to Vinaya, Vapu to Vyavasaya, Shanti to Kshema, Siddhi to Sukha and Kirti to Yasha. All these were born through Dharma. Kama gave birth to Atimuda and Harsha, Dharma's grandsons. Adharma's wife was Himsa and Anrita was born through them. Their daughter was Nirriti and she had two sons, Naraka and Bhaya. These two respectively united with Vedana and Maya. Maya gave birth to Mrityu, who bears created beings away. Through Rourava, <sup>557</sup> Vedana gave birth to a son named Duhkha. Mrityu gave birth to Vyadhi, Jara, Shoka, Trishna and Krodha. All those born from Duhkha are said to be characterized by adharma. None of them had wives or children. <sup>558</sup> They held up their seed. O sage! Other than Nirriti, Mrityu had another wife. Her name was Alakshmi and she had fourteen sons. All of Alakshmi's sons follow Mrityu's instructions and at the time of death, present themselves before men. Hear about them. Ten of them base themselves on the ten senses and the eleventh bases himself on the mind. They respectively

engage the man or the woman in the object of the senses. O brahmana! They attack the senses of men with attachment and anger, engaging them excessively with adharma and causing harm. Another bases himself in ahamkara. Yet another bases himself in buddhi. Thus deluded, men make efforts to destroy women.

“Finally, there is one who is known by the name of Duhsaha and he bases himself in the houses of men. He is afflicted by hunger and his face is downcast. He is either naked, or is dressed in rags. His voice is like that of a crow. With tamas as his store, Brahma created him so that he could devour everything. His teeth are excessively cruel and his terrible face gapes. He is full of desire and delusion. The undecaying Brahma, the grandfather of the worlds and the pure cause behind the universe that is full of the brahman, spoke to him. Brahma said, ‘You should not devour this universe. Conquer your rage and be pacified. Give up the conduct that is based on tamas and follow the conduct that is based on rajas.’ Duhsaha replied, ‘O protector of the universe. I am afflicted by hunger. I am thirsty and weak. O protector! How will I obtain satisfaction? How will I become strong? Tell me. Where will I seek refuge? If I withdraw from these things, how will I subsist?’ Brahma said, ‘Your refuge is the houses of men. People who follow adharma constitute your strength. O child! You will always obtain sustenance when the rituals are destroyed. Boils and the webs of spiders will be your garments. I will give you your food. For the sake of your sustenance, I am giving you—food that has been sneezed on; food full of insects; food a dog has glanced at; food kept in broken vessels; food cooled by blowing on it with the mouth; leftovers; food not cooked; food that perspiration has fallen into; food licked; food that is unclean; food partaken on a broken seat; food eaten without offering it to a guest; food eaten when facing the south; food eaten at the time of sandhya; food eaten to the sound of dancing or the playing of musical instruments; food cooked, eaten or looked at by a woman going through her periods; and any food or drink so polluted that it should not be had. There are other things I will give you—food eaten without offering oblations, without bathing, or eaten disrespectfully; food given without touching water first; that flung away as



useless; discarded food that is discovered; food given because one has been caught by surprise; and food given by a person who is angry or wicked. O yaksha! You will obtain these as your shares. O yaksha! For your satisfaction, I am giving you—sacrificial rites performed for the next world by the son of a remarried widow; sacrificial rites performed for the next world by the daughter of a remarried widow; rites undertaken through wealth obtained by charging a bride price for one's daughter; all the rites performed by following wicked texts; everything undertaken for the purpose of obtaining wealth; and everything studied through falsehood. O yaksha! All these are for your sustenance. I give you all these so that your desires are successful. O Duhsaha! Men who have intercourse with pregnant women; those who do not perform the regular rites at the time of sandhya; and all the men who are polluted by following wicked texts—all these will always be under your subjugation. You will always reside in pankti differences, in pointless cooking, in differences created while cooking and in quarrels within homes. <sup>559</sup> When servants tether cattle and mounts without feeding them first and when the house is not sprinkled in the evening with water, men will truly be scared of you. You will subjugate men who suffer from nakshatras, planets and portents about the three kinds of hardship, <sup>560</sup> without trying to pacify them. O yaksha! You will reap the fruits of all those who fast without any reason; those whose minds are such that they are always addicted to gambling and women; those who malign their benefactors; those who follow the cat's vows; <sup>561</sup> those who study without being brahmacharis; those who are ignorant, but perform sacrifices; those who live in hermitages, but have not conquered their senses and indulge in carnal pleasures; brahmanas, kshatriyas, vaishyas and shudras who have deviated from their own tasks; and those who undertake rites only for the sake of gains in the world hereafter. Hear about the other things I am giving you for your sustenance—after sacrifices to the Vishvadevas, anything that is offered to you, mentioning you by name. You should avoid the house of a man who eats after the food has been properly purified, a man who is not greedy and who has not become subservient to his wife. Roam around, outside his house. O yaksha! Avoid the house of a person



who worships the gods and the ancestors with havya and kavya and tends to daughters and guests, and the house of a man who looks after children, women and the aged. Also avoid a house where there is affection among the relatives. O yaksha! Always avoid a house where the women are loving and bashful and do not want to go out. O yaksha! Listen to my words. Avoid a house where the seats and beds offered are appropriate to the age and the relationship; where the members are compassionate and always engaged in virtuous deeds; and where they are content with ordinary possessions. O yaksha! Always avoid such a house. O yaksha! Always avoid a house where the householder sits only after preceptors, seniors and brahmanas are seated. A house where trees and creepers have not covered the gate and a house where the inner organs of men are not suffering, is not a good house for you. Avoid a house where the man eats leftover food from a vessel after gods, ancestors, servants and ancestors have eaten. O yaksha! Avoid men who are truthful in speech, forgiving, non-violent and remorseful, those who possess good conduct and are not envious. Avoid women who are devoted to serving their husbands, those who avoid association with evil women and those who eat leftover food after relatives and husbands have eaten. Avoid brahmanas whose minds are such that they are always attached to sacrifices, studying, officiating at sacrifices and teaching and those who subsist on whatever comes without asking for it. O Duhsaha! Always avoid a kshatriya who is engaged in donations, studying and sacrifices and who ensures his subsistence through taxes or bearing arms. Avoid a blameless vaishya who follows the three qualities mentioned earlier <sup>562</sup> and who earns subsistence through animal husbandry, trade and agriculture. O yaksha! Avoid a shudra who donates and performs sacrifices and sustains himself by serving brahmanas and the others. If there is a household where the householder ensures his subsistence through acts that are in conformity with the shruti and smriti texts, if his wife follows him in all this, if sons worship preceptors, gods and the father and if the wife worships the husband, how can there be fear from Alakshmi <sup>563</sup> in such a house? O yaksha! You are incapable of glancing towards a house that is always smeared and sprinkled with water during sandhya and where offerings of flowers are made.

Lakshmi serves the house where the beds are not seen by the sun, where fire and water are always present and where the sun and lamps offer light. You cannot find refuge in a house where there are bulls, sandalwood, veenas, mirrors, honey and ghee and where copper vessels are used for poison. A house where the trees are full of thorns, where nishpava creepers grow,<sup>564</sup> where a widow has remarried and where there is a termite hill—that immediately becomes your temple. You will reside in a house where there are five men, three women and three cows and where the fire is kindled in the darkness. O yaksha! You will quickly dry up a house where there are two sheep,<sup>565</sup> three cows, five buffaloes, six horses, seven elephants and one goat. You are promised refuge in a place where shovels, sickles, baskets, plates and vessels are strewn around. O yaksha! When women sit on mortars, pestles or udumbura wood and converse with each other while relieving themselves, they are doing you a good turn. O Duhsaha! As you will, roam around freely in a house where ripe and unripe grain are winnowed and threshed together and where the sacred texts are shown disrespect. A house where fire is offered on a plate, the lid of a vessel or the tip of a ladle, is an infinitely wicked place. Resort to it. O yaksha! When there are human bones in a house, or where a dead body is kept for a day and a night, that is your abode and also that of other rakshasas. You will instantly serve men who eat a dead relative's pinda and drink his water, without first offering these to sapindas and sahodakas.<sup>566</sup> Avoid houses where there are *padmas*, *mahapadmas*, cows that eat sweet cakes, bulls and white elephants.<sup>567</sup> Frequent houses where the gods are without weapons, but men wield weapons, without there being a battle. But avoid temples where men worship gods. Do not go to houses when the inhabitants of the city and the countryside observe great festivities in their houses, as used to be the practice earlier. Those who fan themselves with fans meant for winnowing, bathe with water poured from pots, bathe using the water that drips from their garments, or with water sprinkled with the tips of the nails—they are bereft of auspicious signs.<sup>568</sup> You must associate with those. You should not associate with men who follow the good conduct and ordinances appropriate for the place, their lineage and their dharma; those who

meditate and offer oblations, worshipping the gods; and those who properly observe the rites of purification in the world.' Brahma told Duhsaha this and immediately vanished.'"

## Chapter 48

‘Markandeya said, “Duhsaha had a wife whose name was Nirmarshti.

She was born through Kali’s wife when she happened to see a chandala at the time of her season. They <sup>569</sup> had sixteen terrible offspring who covered the world. Eight were sons and eight were daughters. Their sons were Dantakrishti, Ukta, Parivarta as the next, Angadhruk, Shakuni, Gandaprantarati, Garbhaha and Sasyaha as the last. Hear about the names of their eight daughters—Niyojika was the first, Virodhini was another, Svayamharika, Bhramani, Rituharika, Smritihara, and Bijahara. These were extremely terrible daughters. The eighth was Vidveshani, who caused terror to the worlds. I will tell you about their deeds and how their taints can be pacified. O supreme among brahmanas! Hear about the eight sons.

Dantakrishti <sup>570</sup> dwells in the teeth of newborn babies and makes them gnash their teeth, wishing to ensure Duhsaha’s arrival. He can be pacified by sprinkling white mustard seed on the bed and on the teeth of the sleeping child. The child must be bathed in water mixed with radiant herbs, the sacred texts must be chanted, an amulet made out of the bone of a camel or rhinoceros must be slung around the child’s neck <sup>571</sup> and the child must be made to wear a silk garment. The other son exists and repeatedly says, ‘This is it’, making men engage in the good and the bad. <sup>572</sup> The learned always speak of the auspicious, so as to counter his taints. When wicked things are heard or spoken, Janardana’s name must be chanted, or that of the family deity, or of Brahma, the preceptor of mobile and immobile objects.

Parivarta <sup>573</sup> is known as the one who always transfers the foetus from one womb to another, or takes delight in converting the meaning of a spoken word into its opposite. A person who knows about the truth must protect himself against this through white mustard, or by chanting a mantra that

destroys rakshasas. The fourth, Angadhruk, <sup>574</sup> acts like the wind and causes throbbing in the limbs of men, leading to good and bad. He is countered by striking the limb with kusha grass. Another son, Shakuni, resides in the bodies of crows and other birds, dogs and jackals, announcing good and bad portents. <sup>575</sup> Prajapati has said that when there are bad omens, one must desist from action. When there are good omens, one must quickly undertake the act. O supreme among brahmanas! Another son <sup>576</sup> resides inside the cheek for half a muhurta and destroys the foundation of everything that has been undertaken, everything a brahmana has said and every worship to a god. Gandaprantarati can be pacified by bathing in water mixed with cow's urine and mustard, worshipping nakshatras and planets, listening to sacred texts of dharma like the Upanishads, which lead to indifference towards birth in this world. There is an extremely terrible son, Garbhaha. <sup>577</sup> He resides in the wombs of women and destroys their fruits. One must always protect oneself against him by observing purification, etching famous mantras, <sup>578</sup> wearing garlands, dwelling in pure homes and refraining from over-exhaustion. O brahmana! Another one, Sasyaha, destroys the growth of crops. <sup>579</sup> One must protect oneself against him through wearing old footwear, walking towards the left, making a chandala enter, offering sacrifices outside and chanting hymns to Soma and water. <sup>580</sup> The daughter Niyojika <sup>581</sup> urges men towards robbing others of their wives and others of their possessions. A wise and learned person counters her by reading sacred texts, renouncing anger and avarice, realizing that Niyojika is doing this, avoiding conflict even when one is abused by others, not coming under Niyojika's control and shunning attraction towards the wives of others. Couples, well-wishers, fathers and sons and those from the same varna should be affectionate towards each other. However, Virodhini <sup>582</sup> causes conflict between them. One must protect oneself against her through sacrificial deeds, tolerating abuse and practising the good conduct mentioned in the sacred texts. The daughter known as Svayamharika <sup>583</sup> steals grain from houses and stores, milk from cows, ghee from milk and prosperity from all objects. She is known as Svayamharika. Having stolen, she always disappears. She steals food that has not yet been cooked from

the kitchen, grain from the granary and food that has been served. She eats with the ones who are eating. She is hard to restrain and steals leftover food from men. O brahmana! She steals prosperity from houses where deeds have brought success and milk from the breasts of women and cows. She always steals milk, ghee from curds, oil from oilseeds, liquor from the places where liquor is stored, colour from flowers and fibres from cotton. O brahmana! Since she is engaged in stealing, she is known by the name of Svayamharika. To protect against her, it has been said that the images of a couple of peacocks and a woman must be kept in the house, there must be auspicious etchings in the house, leftover food must not be scattered around and the vessels used for milk must be cleaned with ashes and incense from oblations offered to the fire and to gods. There is another daughter known as Bhramani. <sup>584</sup> Though she remains in one place, she causes anxiety among men. To protect against her, a man must scatter white mustard on his couch, seat and the ground where he resides. The man must reflect that the wicked one is causing this evil agitation in his senses. He must guard against the bewilderment by controlling himself and chanting the *bhuva sukta*. <sup>585</sup> There is another daughter who steals the menses of women, before they have started, or after they have started. She is impossible to control. Since she is engaged in this task, she is known as Rituharika. <sup>586</sup> To pacify her, at dawn and on auspicious days, a woman must bathe in tirthas sacred to the gods, chaityas, slopes of mountains and the confluences of rivers, with mantras being chanted by those who know the truth about them. O brahmana! They <sup>587</sup> must be worshipped with incense and other objects. Physicians who know about medication must use excellent herbs to treat the women. There is another daughter who steals memory. Since she is engaged in the task of stealing the memory of men, she is known as Smritihara. <sup>588</sup> To counter her, one should reside in solitude in a deserted spot. There is an extremely terrible daughter who steals the seed of men and women. <sup>589</sup> To counter her, one should eat pure food and bathe. She is horrible, extremely dreadful in conduct. She gives rise to great fear. To pacify her, one should worship auspicious brahmanas. The eighth daughter is named Dveshini <sup>590</sup> and she causes terror among men. She causes enmity between men and

women. To pacify her, oblations of honey, milk and ghee mixed with sesamum must be offered through the sacrifice known as *mitravinda*.

“O supreme among brahmanas! These sons and daughters have thirty-eight offspring. <sup>591</sup> Hear their names from me. Dantakrishti had two daughters known as Vijalpa and Kalaha. Vijalpa <sup>592</sup> causes disrespect and false and wicked statements. To pacify her, a wise householder will control himself and think about her. Kalaha <sup>593</sup> incessantly creates quarrels in the houses of men. She is the reason behind the destruction of the family. Hear about the means to pacify her—offering oblations of *durva* grass mixed with honey, ghee and milk; offering oblations into the fire; and chanting the following hymn to Mitra. ‘This is for the pacification of creatures, mothers, children, learning, austerities, self-control, discipline and gains through agriculture and trade. May I always have peace everywhere. Worshipped in the proper way, let everyone obtain satisfaction. Let the *kushmandas*, yatudhanas and all the other categories <sup>594</sup> be satisfied, through the favours of Mahadeva and the sanction of Maheshvara. Let all these men quickly obtain satisfaction. Let all of them be satisfied. Let all the wicked deeds that lead to hell be destroyed. Let all the great sins be destroyed and every other kind of impediment. Through their favours, let every kind of obstruction be destroyed in the course of marriages, tasks for prosperity, attempts to undertake sacred rites, worship of preceptors and gods, meditation, sacrifices and the fourteen kinds of journey. <sup>595</sup> May my body be healthy and may I be happy through objects of pleasure, wealth and donations. May the moon, the water, the ocean, the sun, the fire and the wind always confer peace on me, the aged, the young and the afflicted.’ Ukti had a son known as Kalijihva. He dwells in palm trees. When he resides in the tongues of wicked people, he causes quarrels among them. O brahmana! Parivarta had two sons, Virupa and Vikrita. They live on the tops of trees, moats, walls and oceans. O Kroushtuki! When pregnant women walk amidst trees, they exchange fetuses from one womb to another. Therefore, women who are expecting should not walk amidst trees, in mountains, along moats and walls and along the great ocean. Angadhruk had a son named Pishuna. He enters the bones and marrow of men who have not conquered themselves

and devours their strength. Shakuni had five sons—the hawk, the crow, the pigeon, the vulture and the owl. These were accepted by the suras and the asuras. Mrityu accepted the hawk, Kala the crow, Nirriti the terrible owl, Vyadhi the vulture and Yama himself accepted the pigeon. These are said to result in wickedness in creatures. O supreme among brahmanas! Therefore, if the hawk and the others alight on the head or enter the house, for the sake of protection, rites of pacification are required. A man must abandon a house where they breed or build their nests. O brahmana! If the top of a house is occupied by a hawk, crow, pigeon, vulture or owl, that house must be avoided. If they enter a house, the days of the occupant are numbered. A learned person avoids such a house and arranges for pacification. The sight of a pigeon, even in the course of a dream, is not praised. Gandaprantarati's offspring are said to number six. They reside in the menses of women. Hear about their duration from me. One resides four days before menstruation, the second on the thirteenth day, the third offspring on the eleventh day, the fourth at dawn, the fifth when shraddha ceremonies are performed or alms are given and the sixth on special festive parva days. Therefore, the learned avoid intercourse on these days. Garbhaha had a son named Nighna and a daughter named Mohini. The first enters the womb of an expecting woman and eats the foetus, the second confounds the woman. Because of the confusion, the woman delivers snakes, frogs, tortoises, reptiles and creatures that feed on excrement. In this way, if a pregnant woman eats flesh, spends the night under the shadow of a tree or at a place where three or four roads meet, visits a cremation ground or a similar foul place, discards her upper garment or weeps in the night, they assail such a woman for six months. Sasyaha had a son named Kshudraka. Whenever he finds an opportunity, he destroys the strength of crops. Hear about him. If a man sows when he is dissatisfied, or sows on an inauspicious day, he enters that field and other fields that border on that field, thus ensuring the inauspicious and preventing the auspicious. Those associated with him suffer from great fear. Therefore, after worshipping the moon, the sowing should take place on an auspicious day. One must be content and cheerful at heart and take the help of others. Duhsaha had a daughter named Niyojika. I



have spoken about her earlier. Niyojika had four daughters named Prachodika, Matta, Unmatta and Pramatta. These terrible ones enter men and women and goad them towards their destruction. They present adharma as dharma, kama as lack of kama, that which is not artha as artha and lack of moksha as moksha to insolent men who lack purification. When they enter, men deviate from the objectives of human existence. They cross the threshold and enter a house in the evening, when offerings are not rendered to Dhatri and Vidhatri at the right time. They suddenly attack men and women who are eating and drinking together, with water still clinging to their bodies. <sup>596</sup> Virodhini had three sons—Chodaka, Grahaka and Tamahpracchadaka. Hear about their natures from me. Virodhini's sons spread and sport themselves in houses where the mortar and pestle, footwear, seats and women are polluted by contact with oil from lamps; where winnowing baskets, hatchets, other implement and seats are drawn by the foot; where one sports in a house without it having been smeared first; and where fire is conveyed with the tip of a ladle. The one known as Chodaka enters the tongues of men and women, causing the utterances of lies and falsehood and engendering calumny. Another known as Grahaka is extremely evil-minded. He resides in the ears and accepts these wicked words. Tamahpracchadaka is evil-minded and attacks the minds of men. He envelops them in darkness and generates anger. Through Chourya, Svayamharika had three sons—Sarvahari, Ardahari and Viryahari. As they will, they take pleasure and delight in houses where there is deviant and wicked conduct; where inmates enter the kitchen without washing the feet; and where there are quarrels in granaries, cattle pens and homes. Bhramani had one son and he was known as Kalajangha. O sage! Those possessed by him can find no pleasure. O brahmana! He enters men who sing while eating, those who laugh and sing with their friends while eating and those who have intercourse during sandhya. The daughter known as Rituharika had three daughters—the first daughter was Kuchahara, the second was Vyanjanaharika and the third daughter was known as Jataharini. Kuchahara <sup>597</sup> robs the breasts of women whose marriage rites are not performed properly and of those whose marriage rites are performed after the due

course of time. If a woman is married without a funeral ceremony having been duly performed for her dead mother, Vyanjanaharika robs her of the marks of womanhood. <sup>598</sup> O brahmana! Vyanjanaharika enters a delivery chamber that doesn't have fire, water, incense, a lamp, a weapon, a pestle, ashes or mustard seed. She instantly steals the infant who has been delivered and leaves a dead infant in its place. The one named as Jataharini is extremely terrible and feeds on flesh. Therefore, the delivery chamber must be carefully guarded against her. Smritihara's son was known as Prachanda. He steals the memories of those who do not control themselves and inhabit empty houses. Prachanda had hundreds and thousands of grandchildren known as Likas. Eight different categories of chandalas were descended from him. Wielding staffs and nooses, they were extremely terrible. Those born as Likas and chandalas were afflicted by hunger. Wishing to eat each other up, they rushed against each other. Prachanda restrained those born as chandalas and established rules for them to follow. Listen. 'From today, if anyone gives shelter to a Lika, there is no doubt that I will bring down unmatched punishment on him. If a Lika has a child through a chandala woman, the child will instantly die first and the woman will die the same day.' Bijahara robs men and women of their seed and she had two daughters, Vatarupa and Arupa. They are her weapons. After impregnation, if Vatarupa decides to attack a man, because of disease of the wind, the man's semen dries up and the woman also suffers. <sup>599</sup> If a man eats without bathing, or has intercourse with someone he shouldn't have intercourse with, Arupa immediately makes him sterile. The daughter known as Dveshini has a terrible frown on her face. She had two sons, Apakara and Prakashaka. If men or women do not observe purification, they make them sterile. Dveshini's sons attack and reside with men who use impure water and make them fickle and fond of calumny. Such a man is hated by his mother, brother, friends, well-wishers, relatives and enemies and his dharma and artha are destroyed. Prakashaka makes a man reveal his wicked qualities to the world. The other, Apakara, takes away the quality of friendship among men. These are all the offspring of Duhsaha and the

yaksha. They are known for their wicked conduct and they pervade the entire world.””

## Chapter 49

‘Markandeya said, “Brahma’s birth is not manifest and this was his tamasa creation. I will now describe Rudra creation. Listen attentively. I will speak about his eight sons and their wives. At the beginning of the kalpa, the lord thought about a son who would be exactly like him. O supreme among brahmanas! A son, Nilalohita, <sup>600</sup> manifested himself on his lap. He wept in a melodious voice and started to run around. Hearing him cry, Brahma asked, ‘Why are you crying?’ He replied to the lord of the universe, ‘Give me a name.’ Brahma said, ‘O god! Your name will be Rudra. <sup>601</sup> Do not cry. Be patient.’ Thus addressed, he again cried seven times. At this, the lord gave him seven other names. O brahmana! The lord gave him eight places to reside in, wives and sons. The lord, the grandfather, conferred these eight names—Bhava, Sharva, Ishana, Pashupati, Bhima, Ugra and Mahadeva. <sup>602</sup> In addition to names, he gave them places to reside in. In due order, the abodes were the sun, water, the earth, the fire, the wind, space, an initiated brahmana and the moon. In due order, the wives were Suvarchala, Uma, Vikeshi, Svadha, Svaha, Disha, Diksha and Rohini. O best among brahmanas! These were the abodes, the sun and others. These were the names, Rudra and others. In due order, the sons were Shanaishchara, Shukra, Lohitanga, Monajava, Skanda, Sarga, Santana and Budha. In this way, Rudra obtained Sati as his wife. Because of her anger with Daksha, Sati gave up her own body. <sup>603</sup> O supreme among brahmanas! She became the daughter of Himavat and Mena. Her brother was Mainaka, the great friend of the ocean. In this form, the illustrious Bhava married her again. Bhrigu’s wife, Khyati, gave birth to the divinities Dhatri and Vidhatri and to Shri, the wife of Narayana, the god of the gods. The great-souled Meru’s daughters were Ayati and Niriyati and they became

the wives of Dhatri and Vidhatri. They had two sons—Prana and my immensely illustrious father, Mrikandu. My mother is Manasvini and through Dhumravati, I have a son named Vedashira. Hear about those who were born from Prana. Prana had a son named Dyutiman and he also had another son known as Ajara. Many sons and grandsons were born through them. Sambhuti, Marichi's wife, gave birth to Pournamasa and this great-souled one had two sons—Viraja and Parvata. O brahmana! I will tell you about their sons when I recount the lineages. Smriti, the wife of Angiras, had daughters—Sinivali, Kuhu, Raka and Anumati. Through Atri, Anasuya had sons who were without blemish—Soma, Durvasa and the yogi, Dattatreya. Priti, Pulastya's wife, had a son known as Dattya. In an earlier birth, during Svayambhuva manvantara, he used to be Agastya. Kshama, Prajapati Pulaha's wife, gave birth to three sons—Kardama, Arvavira and Sahishnu. Sannati, Kratu's wife, gave birth to the valakhilyas. These were sixty thousand rishis who held up their seed. Urja, Vasishtha's wife, had seven sons—Raja, Gatra, Urddhabahu, Sabala, Anagha, Sutapa and Shukla. These are known as the saptarshis. O brahmana! Through the proud Agni, Brahma's eldest son, Svaha had three energetic sons—Pavaka, Pavana and Shuchi. They subsist on water. They also had forty-five other sons. But the father and these three sons are spoken about the most. Together, the forty-nine are spoken of as those who cannot be vanquished. I have described to you the ancestors whom Brahma created—Agnishvatta and Barhishad, those who did not maintain the fire and those who maintained the fire. <sup>604</sup> Through them, Svadha had the daughters known as Mena and Dharini. O brahmana! Both of them were *yoginis* <sup>605</sup> and knew about the brahman.”

## Chapter 50

‘Kroushtuki asked, “O illustrious one! You have spoken to me about Svayambhuva manvantara. I wish to hear everything about it in detail. Tell me. What was the duration of the manvantara? Who were the gods and the divine rishis? O illustrious one! Who were the lords of the earth! Who was the Indra of the gods?”

‘Markandeya replied, “The duration of a manvantara is a little over seventy-one mahayugas. Hear about the duration of a manvantara in human years. The duration of a manvantara is thirty crores, sixty-seven lakhs and twenty thousand human years, without adding the small bit that is more. In divine years, it is eight hundred thousand and fifty-two thousand years. The first Manu was Svayambhuva, the next was Svarochisha. Outtama, Tamasa, Raivata and Chakshusha followed. These six Manus have passed. The present Manu is Vaivasvata. The seven future Manus are the five Savarnis, <sup>606</sup> Rouchya and Bhoutya. When I describe the manvantaras, I will again tell you about them in detail. I will tell you about the gods, the rishis, the Indras among the gods and the ancestors. O brahmana! You will hear about the origin, duration, offspring, wives and sons of these great-souled ones. Svayambhuva had ten sons who were just like him. They populated the entire earth, with its seven dvipas and *varshas*, with the mountains, oceans and mines. In the treta yuga that was the first of the Svayambhuva manvantara, the earth was inhabited by the sons of Priyavrata and the grandsons of Svayambhuva. <sup>607</sup> Through Prajavati, the valiant Priyavrata had an immensely fortunate daughter. Through Kardama Prajapati, she gave birth to two daughters, known as Samrat and Kukshi, and ten sons. These ten brave brothers were Prajapati’s equal. They were Agnidhra, Medhatithi, Vapushmat, Jyotishmat, Dyutimat, Bhavya and Savana as the seventh.

Three immensely fortunate ones, Medha, Agnibahu and Bahumitra, remembered their past lives. They were not interested in kingdoms and devoted themselves to yoga. Following dharma, Priyavrata instated the other seven as seven kings over the seven dvipas. Listen to me. Their father made Agnidhra the king of Jambu-dvipa, Medhatithi the king of Plaksha-dvipa, Vapushmat the king of Shalmali-dvipa, Jyotishmat the king of Kusha-dvipa, Dyutimat the king of Krouncha-dvipa, Bhavya the lord of Shaka-dvipa and Savana the lord of Pushkara-dvipa. Savana, the lord of Pushkara-dvipa, had two sons, Mahavita and Dhataki. He divided Pushkara-dvipa into two parts and made the sons kings in these separate parts. Bhavya had seven sons. Listen to their names—Jalada, Kumara, Sukumara, Manivaka, Kushottara, Medhavi and Mahadruma as the seventh. He made each of them the king of one part of Shaka-dvipa. Listen to me. In that way, Dyutimat had seven sons. Their names were Kushala, Manuga, Ushna, Prakara, Arthakaraka, Muni and Dundubhi. Krouncha-dvipa was divided among them and those regions were named after them. In that way, the regions of Kusha-dvipa were named after the sons of Jyotishmat. Hear about their names and the names of those regions. Those seven greatly energetic sons were known as Udbhida, Vainava, Suratha, Lambana, Dhritimat, Prakara and Kapila as the seventh. Vapushmat had seven sons and divided Shalmali-dvipa among them—Shveta, Harita, Jimuta, Rohita, Vaidyuta, Manasa and Ketumat as the seventh. In that way, the seven parts of Shalmali-dvipa were named after them. Medhatithi, the lord of Plaksha-dvipa, had seven sons and the seven parts of Plaksha-dvipa were named after them. The names of these regions were Shakabhava, Shishira, Sukhodaya, Ananda, Shiva, Kshemaka and Dhruva. In five of these dvipas, from Plaksha-dvipa to Shaka-dvipa, it is known that the observance of the varna and ashrama dharma is always natural. There is no violence and no deviation from the ordinances. With the exception of the Himalayas, the region populated by the kimpurushas is an area where there is always happiness, beauty, strength, dharma and long lifespans. <sup>608</sup> In these five regions, it is held that these generally exist.

“O brahmana! His father first gave Jambu-dvipa to Agnidhra. He had nine sons who were Prajapati’s equal. <sup>609</sup> The eldest one was known as Nabhi and Kimpurusha was his younger brother. Harivarsha was the third and the fourth was Ilavrita. The fifth son was Vashya and the sixth was known as Hiranya. The seventh was Kuru and the eighth was known as Bhadrashva. The ninth was Ketumala and after them, the names of the varshas were decided. <sup>610</sup> With the exception of the Himalayas, in Kimpurusha and the other varshas, success and happiness are generally naturally obtained, without making efforts. There are no calamities. There is no fear from old age or death. There are no notions of dharma and adharma. There is nothing that is superior, middling or inferior. The four yugas do not exist. There is no exhaustion and the seasons do not exist. O brahmana! Nabhi, Agnidhra’s son, had a son known as Rishabha. Rishabha had a valiant son named Bharata and he was the best among his one hundred sons. Rishabha instated this son in the kingdom and resorted to the great vow of retiring to the forest. The immensely fortunate one dwelt in Pulaha’s hermitage and tormented himself through austerities. His father gave Bharata the region that was to the south of the Himalayas. Therefore, after the great-souled one’s name, this is known as Bharatavarsha. Bharata had a son named Sumati, who was devoted to dharma. Bestowing the kingdom on him, Bharata retired to the forest. In Svayambhuva manvantara, his sons and grandsons, and those of Priyavrata’s other sons, enjoyed the earth, divided into the seven dvipas. O supreme among brahmanas! I have thus properly described to you the creation at the time of Svayambhuva manvantara. What else will I speak about?”



## Chapter 51

‘Kroushtuki asked, “O brahmana! How many dvipas, oceans and mountains are there? O sage! How many varshas are there and how many rivers? What are the dimensions of the great elements and of Lokaloka? <sup>611</sup> What are the dimensions of the sun and the moon and their progress and their changes? O great sage! Tell me all this in detail.”

‘Markandeya replied, “O brahmana! The entire earth measures fifty crore yojanas. I will describe to you all the places that are in it. Listen. O brahmana! O immensely fortunate one! I have already spoken to you about the dvipas, beginning with Jambu-dvipa and ending with Pushkara-dvipa. Hear about everything in detail again. Jambu-dvipa, Plaksha-dvipa, Shalmali-dvipa, Kusha-dvipa, Krouncha-dvipa, Shaka-dvipa and Pushkara-dvipa—each of these is double the size of the dvipa that precedes it. Each of these is surrounded on all sides by the oceans Lavana, Ikshu, Sura, Sarpi, Dadhi, Kshira and Jala, each ocean double the size of the ocean that precedes it. I will tell you about the location of Jambu-dvipa. Listen. It is circular and the dimension on each side is one hundred thousand yojanas. The seven great mountains of this region are Himalayas, Hemakuta, Nishadha, Meru, Nila, Shveta and Shringi. The two great mountains in the centre <sup>612</sup> are each one hundred thousand yojanas long. There are two mountains to the south and two to the north and each is progressively ten thousand yojanas shorter than the preceding one. <sup>613</sup> All the mountains are two thousand yojanas high and broad. There are six great mountains that are submerged in the ocean. The earth rises up in the middle and slopes downwards to the north and the south. Know that there are three varshas to the north and three to the south. Ilavrita varsha is situated between them, shaped like a half moon. Bhadrashva is to the east of this and Ketumala to

the west. The golden mountain, Meru, is in the centre of Ilavrita. The height of this great mountain is eighty-four thousand yojanas. It penetrates sixteen thousand yojanas into the earth and its breadth is sixteen thousand yojanas. Since it is in the shape of an inverted cone, the breadth at the top is thirty-two thousand yojanas. Beginning with east, its complexion is progressively white, yellow, black and red. <sup>614</sup> Beginning with the east, brahmanas, kshatriyas, vaishyas and shudras reside in the eight directions and sub-directions. <sup>615</sup> Beginning with the eastern direction, there are the assembly halls of Indra and the other guardians of the world. Brahma's assembly hall is in the middle, rising up fourteen thousand yojanas. Below it, on four sides, there are four adjacent mountains, each ten thousand yojanas high. Starting in the east, in due order, these are Mandara, Gandhamadana, Vipula and Suparshva. Each possesses a tree that rises up like a standard. A kadamba tree rises up like a standard in Mandara, a *jambu* tree in Gandhamadana, an ashvattha tree in Vipula and a giant *vata* tree in Suparshva. <sup>616</sup> Each of these mountains stretches for eleven hundred yojanas. The mountains Jathara and Devakuta are on the eastern side and are just next to Nila and Nishadha, without any gap between them. Nishadha <sup>617</sup> and Pariyatra are on the western side of Meru. As in the earlier case, they are just next to Anila and Nishadha. The giant mountains, Kailasa and Himalayas, are to the south. They stretch from the east to the west and extend up to the frontiers of the ocean. The mountains Shringavat and Jarudhi are to the north. In the south, they also extend up to the frontiers of the ocean. O supreme among brahmanas! These eight mountains are spoken of as those which identify boundaries. Between Hemakuta and Himalayas, and between the other mountains, from the east to the west and from the north to the south, there is a distance of nine thousand yojanas. In the centre of Ilavrita, Meru extends on four sides. The jambu fruit that grows on Mount Gandhamadana is as large as an elephant's body and falls down from the summit of the mountain. The flow of that juice is known as River Jambu and the gold known as *jambunada* is produced from this. The river circles Meru and again enters the source of River Jambu. People drink from this. O tiger among brahmanas! Vishnu exists in Bhadrashva in his Ashvashira

form, in Bharata in his kurma form, in Ketumala in his varaha form and towards the north, <sup>618</sup> in his matysa form. O best among brahmanas! The nakshatras and rishis exist in these four varshas and the progress of the planets is studied, for their good and bad results.””

## Chapter 52

‘Markandeya continued, “O supreme among brahmanas! In the four mountains beginning with Mandara, there are four groves and four lakes. Hear about them. In the east, there is the grove named Chaitraratha and in the south, Nandana. In the western mountain, there is the grove Vaibhrajā and in the northern mountain, the one known as Savitra. The lake Arunoda is to the east and Manasa to the south. The lake Shitoda is to the west of Meru and Mahabhadra to the north. To the east of the great mountain of Mandara, are the mountains Shitarta, Chakramunja, Kulira, Ashva, Kangavat, Manishaila, Vrishavat, Mahanila, Bhavachala, Venu, Tamasa, Nishadha and Devashaila. On the southern flank of the great mountain of Mandara are the mountains Trikuta, Shikharadri, Kalinga, Patangaka, Ruchaka, the mountain Sanumat, Tamraka, Vishakhavat, Shvetadara, Samula, Vasudhara, Ratnavat, Ekashringa, Mahashaila, Rajashaila, Pipathaka, Panchashaila, Kailasa and Himavat,<sup>619</sup> supreme among mountains. To the west of Meru, beyond the mountains that are adjacent, are the mountains Suraksha, Shishiraksha, Vaidurya, Pingala, Pinjara, Mahabhadra, Surasa, Kapila, Madhu, Anjana, Kukkuta, Krishna, Pandura, supreme among mountains, the mountain Sahasrashikhara, Pariyatra and Shringavat. Hear about the mountains that are known to be to the north. O brahmana! The mountains to the north of Meru are said to be Shankhakuta, Vrishabha, the mountain Hamsanabha, the mountain Kapilendra, Sanumat, Nila, Svarnashringa, Shatashringa, Pushpaka, Meghaparvata, Virajaksha, Varahadri, Mayura and Jarudhi. The valleys of these mountains are extremely beautiful. They are adorned with groves and lakes full of sparkling water. O supreme among brahmanas! Men who are auspicious in their deeds are born there. O best among brahmanas! These regions are like

heaven on earth and possess qualities that are superior to heaven. There is no acquisition of merit from good deeds or demerit from bad deeds there. It is said that even the gods enjoy the fruits of their good deeds there. O supreme among brahmanas! On these mountains, Shitanta <sup>620</sup> and the others, are the great and beautiful residences of vidyadharas, yakshas, kinnaras, *uragas*, rakshasas, gods and gandharvas. These are pure and pleasant places, filled with divine groves. The lakes are pleasant and the wind is pleasant in all the seasons. Nowhere is there any hardship, or agitation of the mind. I have spoken to you about the lotus on earth, with its four leaves. Bhadrashva, Bharata and the others are the leaves in the four directions. I have spoken about Bharatavarsha, which is to the south. This is *karma-bhumi*. There is no acquisition of merit from good deeds and demerit from bad deeds in any of the others. Know that because these are firmly established here, this is the most important region. O brahmana! It is here that men obtain heaven, hell, emancipation, birth as humans and birth as inferior species.””

## Chapter 53

‘Markandeya continued, “Narayana is the origin of the universe and his feet support the earth. The goddess Ganga, with its three streams, flowed from there. She entered the moon, the origin of nectar and the source of water. United with the rays of the sun, her flow extended and became extremely pure. Descending on the slopes of Meru, she proceeded along four streams. She descended between the peaks that surround Meru. Without any support, her water reversed itself and without a support, fell down. At the feet of Mandara and the other mountains, the water was divided into four equal flows and fell down, shattering the rocks on those mountains. The eastern flow, known as Sita, proceeded to Chaitraratha grove. It flooded the place and went to Lake Varunoda. From there, it went to Mount Shitanta,<sup>621</sup> and thereafter, progressively to the other mountains. Having reached earth, it flowed through Bhadrashva into the ocean. Similarly, to the south, the stream known as Alakananda flowed through Gandhamadana into Nandana, the grove of the gods at the foot of Meru. Its great force flooded Lake Manasa and reached the beautiful Trishikhara,<sup>622</sup> king among mountains. After that, it progressively went to all the mountains on the south. Having flooded them, it reached the giant mountain, the Himalayas. Shambhu, the one with the bull on his banner, held her there and would not release her. Bhagiratha fasted, praised and worshipped the lord. Released by Sharva, the seven streams flowed into the southern ocean. Towards the east, three streams flooded Mahanadi.<sup>623</sup> To the south, a single flow followed Bhagiratha’s chariot. In that way, on the west, the great river had a stream known as Suchakshu. This descended on Mount Vipula and went to the forest of Vaibhraja. This great river flooded Lake Shitoda and progressively descended on the summits of the mountains

there. It reached Mount Suchakshu <sup>624</sup> and went to Trishikha. <sup>625</sup> It passed through Ketumala and entered the southern ocean. The great and divine river, Ganga, flowed in a northern direction. She progressively passed through the mountains to the north, Rishabha and the other mountains. At the foot of Meru, she reached Mount Suparshva. Obtaining the name of Bhadrāsoma there, the stream went to the grove Savita. Having flooded it, she reached Lake Mahabhadra. Thereafter, the great river went to Shankhakuta. Thereafter, she progressively reached the range of mountains to the north, Vrishabha and the others. Having flooded Uttarakuru, she entered the great ocean. O bull among brahmanas! I have thus duly spoken to you about Ganga and also about the varshas that are there in Jambudvīpa. Kimpurusha and the other varshas are inhabited by subjects who are generally happy. They do not suffer from anxiety and there is no sense of superior and inferior. Each of these varshas has seven *kulachalas*. <sup>626</sup> In each region, there are rivers that flow from the mountains. O supreme among brahmanas! In eight varshas, Kimpurusha and the others, the water rises up from the ground. But this is not the case in Bharata, where water descends from the clouds. In those eight varshas, men naturally obtain success from the trees, from the water and from their mental state, and from their deeds. Trees provide all the objects of desire and that natural success is known as that which comes from trees. If success is innate in a region, that is known as success that comes naturally. This is also the case with the subtle success that comes from the water and the mental state. The only exception is success that comes through worshipping and other deeds. Therefore, in those regions, yugas do not exist. There are no physical or mental ailments. There are no undertakings that are auspicious or inauspicious.”

## Chapter 54

‘Kroushtuki said, “O illustrious one! You have described Jambu-dvipa completely and you have said that merits from good deeds or demerits from bad deeds do not exist anywhere else, with the exception of Bharata. O immensely fortunate one! It is here that one obtains emancipation, heaven, or a medium state. <sup>627</sup> Indeed, there is no other region where karma has been recommended for mortals. O brahmana! Therefore, tell me in detail about Bharata. What are its divisions! What are its boundaries? O tiger among brahmanas! What are the regions and mountains that exist within the varsha?”

‘Markandeya replied, “There are nine regions within Bharatavarsha. Listen to me. They are known to extend up to the limits of the ocean, but cannot be approached from each other. They are Indradvipa, Kasherumat, Tamravarna, Gabhastimat, Nagadvipa, Soumya, Gandharva and Varuna. The ninth dvipa is surrounded by the ocean. From the south to the north, this dvipa is one thousand yojanas. The Kiratas exist on the east and the Yavanas <sup>628</sup> on the west. O brahmana! There are brahmanas, kshatriyas, vaishyas and shudras inside, engaged in purifying themselves through sacrifices, studying, trade and other deeds. They interact with each other through these deeds and obtain emancipation, heaven, merits and demerits. The seven kulachalas here are Mahendra, Malaya, Sahya, Shuktimat, Mount Riksha, Vindhya and Pariyatra. Near them, there are thousands of other mountains. The peaks are tall, wide, beautiful, extensive and colourful. Their names are Kolahala, Vaibhraj, Mandara, Mount Durdura, Vatasvana, Vaidyuta, Mainaka, Svarasa, Tungaprastha, Nagagiri, Rochana, Mount Pandura, Mount Pushpa, Durjayanta, Raivata, Arbuda, Rishyamuka, Gomanta, Kutashaila, Kritasmara, Shriparvata and Kora. There are



hundreds of other mountains. These are divided into habitations of the mlechchhas and the *aryas*. They drink from the waters of excellent rivers. Hear duly about them—Ganga, Sarasvati, Sindhu, Chandrabhaga, Yamuna, Shatadru, Vitasta, Iravati, Kuhu, <sup>629</sup> Gomati, Dhutapapa, <sup>630</sup> Bahuda, <sup>631</sup> Drishadvati, Vipasha, Devika, Rankshu, <sup>632</sup> Nishchira, Gandaki and River Koushiki, which flows from the feet of the Himalayas. O brahmana! There are Vedasmriti, Vedavati, Vritraghni, Sindhu, <sup>633</sup> Vena, <sup>634</sup> Sanandana, Sadanira, <sup>635</sup> Mahi, Para, <sup>636</sup> Charmanvati, <sup>637</sup> Nupi, Vidisha, Vetravati, <sup>638</sup> Kshipra and Avanti. All these are said to have a base in Mount Pariyatra. Shona, Mahanada, <sup>639</sup> Narmada, Suratha, Adrija, Mandakini, Dasharna, Chitrakuta, Chitrotpala, Tamasa, <sup>640</sup> Karamoda, Pishachika, Pippalashroni, <sup>641</sup> Vipasha, the river Vanjula, Sumeruja, Shuktimati, Sakuli, Tridiva, Akramu and other forceful rivers emerge from the feet of Mount Riksha. Kshipra, <sup>642</sup> Payoshni, <sup>643</sup> Nirvindhya, <sup>644</sup> Tapi, <sup>645</sup> Nishadhavati, Venya, Vaitarani, <sup>646</sup> Sinivali, Kumudvati, Karatoya, Mahagouri, <sup>647</sup> Durga and Antahshiva—these auspicious rivers with sacred waters flow from the feet of Mount Vindhya. Godavari, Bhimarathi, <sup>648</sup> Krishna, Venya, Tungabhadra, Suprayoga, Vahya, and the River Kaveri—all these excellent rivers emerge from the feet of Mount Sahya. Kritamala, Tamraparni, Pushpaja and Sutpalvati—these rivers have cool water and originate in Mount Malaya. Pitrisoma, Rishikulya, Ikshuka, Tridiva, <sup>649</sup> Langulini <sup>650</sup> and Vamshakara <sup>651</sup>—these are said to flow from Mount Mahendra. Rishikulya, <sup>652</sup> Kumari, Mandaga, Mandavahini, Kusha and Palashini—these are said to flow from Mount Shuktimat. All these rivers are as sacred as the Sarasvati and the Ganga and all of them flow into the ocean. All of them are known as mothers of the world and cleanse all sins. O supreme among brahmanas! There are said to be one thousand other minor rivers. Some only flow during the rainy season and some flow in all seasons.

“Matsyas, Ashvakutas, Kulyas, Kuntalas, those from Kashi, those from Koshala, Arbudas, Arkalingas, Malakas and Vrikas—these are spoken of as those who generally inhabit the central region. River Godavari flows to the north of Mount Sahya. Among all the regions on earth, this is the most pleasant. There is the beautiful city of Govardhana, belonging to the great-

souled Bhargavas. Beyond this region dwell Bahlikas, Vatadhanas, Abhiras, Kalatoyakas, Shudras, <sup>653</sup> Pahlavas, Charmakhandikas, Gandharas, Yavanas, Sindhu-Souviras, Madrakas, those who live along the Shatadru, Kalingas, <sup>654</sup> Paradas, Harabhushikas, Matharas, Bahubhadras, Kaikeyas and Dashamalikas. Families of kshatriyas, vaishyas and shudras live there. Kambojas, Daradas, Barbaras, Angaloukikas, Chinas, Tusharas and Pahlavas <sup>655</sup>—these are known as those who reside in other countries. Atreyas, Bharadvajas, Pushkalas, Kasherukas, Lampakas, Shulakaras, Chulikas, Jagudas, Oupaghas, Animadras, the class of Kiratas, Tamasas, Hamsamargas, the categories of Kashmiras, Shulikas, Kuhakas, Urnas and Darvas—these are the ones from the north. Now hear about the ones from the east—Abhrarakas, Mudgarakas, Antargiras, Bahirgiras, Plavangas, Rangeyas, Maladas, Malavartikas, Brahmottaras, Pravijayas, Bhargavas, Geyamallakas, Pragjyotishas, Madras, Videhas, Tamraliptakas, Mallas, Magadhas and Gomedas. These are known as the inhabitants of the eastern region. After this, there are those who reside in *dakshinapatha* <sup>656</sup>—Pandyas, Keralas, Cholas, Kuntyas, Shailushas, Mushikas, Kumaras, Vanavasakas, Maharashtras, Mahishikas, all the Kalingas, Abhiras, Vaishikyas, Atavyas, Shabaras, Pulindas, Vindhyamaleyas, Vaidarbhas, Dandakas, Pourikas, Moulikas, Ashmakas, Bhogavardhanas, Naishikas, Kuntalas, Andhras, Udbhidas and Vandarakas. These are the ones who dwell in the southern regions. Hear about the others. <sup>657</sup> Suryarakas, Kalibalas, Durgas, Amikatas, Pulindas, Suminas, Rupapas, Svapadas, Kuruminas, all the Kataksharas, Karaskaras, Lohajanghas, Vajeyas, Rajabhadarakas, Tosalas, Kosalas, Traipuras, Vidishas, Tusharas, Tumburas, all the Karaskaras, <sup>658</sup> Nasikyavas, others who reside to the north of the Narmada, Bhirukacchas, Maheyas, Sarasvatas, Kashmiras, Surashtras, Avantyas and Arbudas—these are the ones who are at the other end. Now hear about the ones who reside in the Vindhyas—Sarajas, Karushas, Keralas, Utkalas, Uttamarnas, Dasharnas, Bhojyas, Kishkindhakas, Tumbaras, Tumbulas, Patas, Naishadhas, Annajas, Tushtikaras, Virahotras and Avantis. All these are the ones who reside on the slopes of the Vindhyas. I will now tell you about the regions that are in the mountains—

Niharas, Hamsamargas, Kurus, Gurganas, Khasas, Kuntapravaranas, Urnas, Darvas, Kritrakas, Trigartas, Galavas, Kiratas and Tamasas. The norms of the four yugas, krita, treta and the others, are established in Bharatavarsha, with its four directions. To the east, the south and the west, there is the great ocean. Like the string of a bow, the Himalayas extend in the north. O supreme among brahmanas! This Bharatavarsha possesses the seed of everything. O brahmana! Depending on auspicious and inauspicious deeds, everything can be achieved here—becoming Brahma, becoming the lord of the immortals, becoming a god, becoming a mortal, becoming an apsara, being born as a domestic or wild animal or reptile, or becoming every kind of immobile object. O brahmana! This is the land of karma and nothing like this exists. O brahmana rishi! Even gods who have been dislodged from their divine status desire to be born in this land as humans. Men here can achieve what the gods and the asuras cannot do. They are bound by the bonds of karma and are eager to accomplish their own karma. There are others who are confounded by a little bit of happiness and do not undertake any karma.””

## Chapter 55

‘Kroushtuki asked, “O illustrious one! You have properly described Bharata, its rivers, mountains and regions to me, and also those who live here. Earlier, you have said that the illustrious Hari lived here in the form of a tortoise. I wish to hear about this in detail. How did the god Janardana reside here in the form of a tortoise? How did the good and the bad among men manifest themselves? What were his mouth and feet like? Tell me this in detail.”

‘Markandeya replied, “O brahmana! The illustrious god was in the form of a tortoise, with his face towards the east. He covered Bharatavarsha, with its nine divisions. O best among brahmanas! All around him were placed nine nakshatras in nine regions. Hear about them accurately. Vedimadras, Arimandavyas, Shalvas, Nipas, Shakas, Ujjihanas, Vatsas, Ghoshasankhyas, Khashas, the middle Sarasvatas, Matsyas, Shurasenas, those from Mathura, Dharmaranyas, Jyotishikas, Gouragrivas, Gudashmakas, Vaidehakas, Panchalas, Sanketas, Kankamarutas, Kalakotis, Pashandas, the residents of Pariyatra, Kapinjalas, Kurobahyas, the Udumbura people and Gajahvayas—these are the ones who resided in the middle of the tortoise. O brahmana! For those who reside in the middle, the three nakshatras, Kritika, Rohini and Soumya, <sup>659</sup> are indicative of good and evil portents. O brahmana! Vrishadhvasas, Anjanas, Jambarakhyas, Manavachalas, Shurpakarnas, Vyaghrakarnas, Murvaras, Karvatashanas, Chandreshvaras, Khashas, Magadhas, Shibis, Maithilas, Shubhras, Vadanadanturas, Pragjyotishas, Louhityas, Samudras, Purushadakas, Purnotkatas, Bhadrakouras, those who live in Udayagiri, those who live in Kashi, Mekhalas, Mushtas, Tamraliptakas, Kapadapas, Varddhamanas and Koshalas are located in the tortoise’s mouth. Roudra, <sup>660</sup> Punarvasu and Pushya—these three nakshatras

are in the mouth. O Kroushtuki! I will tell you about the countries that are in the tortoise's right foot. Listen. These are Kalingas, Vangas, Jatharas, Koshalas, Mushikas, Chedis, Urddhakarnas, Matsyas, Andhras, those who inhabit the Vindhya, Vidarbhas, Narikelas, Dharmadvipas, Ailikas, Vyaghragrivas, Mahagrivas, bearded Traipuras, Kaishkindhyas, Hemakutas, Nishadhas, Katakasthalas, Dasharnas, naked Harikas, Nishadhas, Kakulalakas and Parnashabaras—these are located in the front right foot. The three nakshatras, Ashlesha, Paitya <sup>661</sup> and Purva Phalguni, are located in the front right foot. Lankas, Kalajinas, Shailikas, Nikatas, those who reside in the Mahendra, Malaya and Dardura mountains, those who live in Karkotaka forest, Bhrikugacchas, Konkarnas, all the Abhiras who dwell along the banks of the Venya, those from Avanti, Dasapuris, people from Akarina, Maharashtra, Karnatas, Gonarddhas, Chitrakutakas, Cholas, Kolagiris, those from Krouncha-dvipa with matted hair, Kaveris, Rishyamukas, people from Nasika, those who wander in Shankha, Shukti and other limits of Mount Vaidurya, Varicharas, Kolas, those who live in Charmapatta, Ganavahyas, Paras, those who reside in Krishna-dvipa, people who dwell on Mount Surya and Mount Kumuda, Roudrasvanas, Pishikas, Karmanayakas, the southern Kourushas, Rishikas, Tapasashramas, Rishabhas, Simhalas, those who live in Kanchi, Trilangas, Kunjaradaris, people who live in Kaccha and Tamraparni—these are the ones on the tortoise's right flank. O brahmana! The nakshatras there are Uttara Phalguni, Hasta and Chitra, on the tortoise's right flank. The tortoise's right rear foot comes next. <sup>662</sup> Kambojas, Pahlavas, Vadavamukhas, Sindhu-Souviras, Anartas, Vanitamukhas, Dravanas, Sargigas, Shudras, <sup>663</sup> Karnapradheyas, Barbaras, Kiratas, Paradas, Pandyas, Parashavas, Kalas, Dhurtakas, Haimagirikas, Sindhukalakavairatas, Sourashtras, Daradas, Dravidas and Maharnavas—these habitations are located in the right rear foot. The three nakshatras are Svati, Vishakha and Maitra. <sup>664</sup> Those who reside in the mountains Manimegha, Kshura and Khanja, those who reside in Mount Asta, Aparantikas, Nohayas, Shantikas, Viprashastakas, Konkarnas, those who live along the five rivers, Vamanas, Avaras, Tarakshuras, Angatakas, Sharkaras, Shalmaveshmakas, Gurusvaras,

Phalgunankas, people who live along the Venumati, Phalgulikas, Ghoras, Guruhas, Kalas, Ekekshanas, Vajikeshas, Dirghagrivas, Chulikas and Ashvakeshas—these are the people located on the tortoise’s tail. The three nakshatras there are Aindra,<sup>665</sup> Mula and Purva Ashadha. Mandavyas, Chandakharas, Ashvakalanadas, Kushattas, Ladahas, Stribahyas, Balikas, Nrisimhas along the Venumati, Balavas, Dharmabaddhas, Ulukas, the people in Urukarma, Phalgulakas, Ghoras, Ghuralas, Hematarakas, Ekekshanas, Vajikoshas and Dirghapadas—these are the people located in the tortoise’s left rear foot. The nakshatras Uttara Ashadha, Shravana and Dhanishtha are there. Kailasa, Himalayas, Dhanushmat, Vasumat, Krounchas, Kurubakas, the Kshudravina people, Rasalayas, Kekayas, Bhogaprasthas, Yamunas, Antardvipas, Trigartas, Agniyyas, the Sardana people, Ashvamukhas, Praptas, the Chibidas who sport hair, Dasarekas, Vatadhanas, Shavadhanas, Pushkalas, Adhamakairatas, those who reside in Takshashila, Ambashthas, Malavas, Madras, Venukas, Vadantikas, Pingalas, Ganakalahas, Hunas, Kohalakas, Mandavyas, Bhutiyuvakas, Shatakas, Hematarakas, Yoshamatyas, Gandharas, Kharasas, Gararashis, Youdheyas, Dasameyas, Rajanyas, Shyamakas and Kshemadhurtas—these are the ones who inhabit the tortoise’s left flank. The nakshatras there are Varuna and the two Proshthapadas.<sup>666</sup> O supreme among brahmanas! The kingdom of Kinnaras, Pashupalas, Kichakas, Kashmiras, the kingdom of the Abhisara people, Daradas, Tvanganas, Kulatas, Vanarashtrakas, Sairishthas, Brahmapurakas, Vanabahyakas, Kiratas, Koushikas, Nandas, the Pahlava people, the Lolana people, Darvas, Damarakas, Kuratas, Annadarakas, Ekapadas, Khashas, Ghoshas, Svarga-bhoumanavadyakas, Yavanas, Hingas, Chirapravaranas, Trinetras, Pouravas and Gandharvas—these are located on the tortoise’s front left foot. O supreme among sages! The three nakshatras on the foot there are said to be Revati, Ashvidaivatya<sup>667</sup> and Yamyā.<sup>668</sup>

“O brahmana! In due order, when they are in the ascendant, the nakshatras cause hardships in those regions and there are times when the planets are propitiously placed. O brahmana! O best among sages! When the nakshatra and the planet that is its lord are unfavourably placed, there is

fear in that country. When they are favourably placed, benefit results. O supreme among brahmanas! In each of these regions, the respective nakshatra and planet cause fear among people and also lead to the auspicious. If the nakshatra is unfavourably placed, people generally confront fear. However, depending on how inauspiciously placed the planet is, that hardship may be limited. In that way, if the planet is inauspiciously placed, the good may also be limited and there may be little benefit to men. The learned know about the regions and the respective ascendancies. When the planets are unfavourably placed, even men who are auspicious in their deeds, and their possessions, cattle-pens, servants, well-wishers, sons and wives, may face fear. Those who are limited in their auspicious deeds are themselves extremely tormented in every possible way. However, those who are not sinners never suffer from any fear. Depending on the direction, the region, the king, the general people there and he himself, a man experiences good and ill fortune. When the planets are favourably placed, there is mutual protection. O Indra among brahmanas! This is the way the good and the bad come about. I have spoken about the location of the tortoise and the positions of the nakshatras. In general, in different regions, these bring about the good and the bad. O excellent person! Therefore, an intelligent person must bear in mind popular sayings and know about the region, its nakshatras and the planets, and the hardship that can be caused to him. He must act to pacify these. When the good and bad wishes of gods and daityas descend on earth, people come to describe these as popular sayings. <sup>669</sup> Therefore, a learned man should not ignore a popular saying. He should act so as to counter the ill effects. O supreme among brahmanas! Thereby, the good will be ensured and the evil will be contained. Unless this is done, harm will be caused to possessions and other things. Therefore, a wise person pays attention to popular sayings and seeks to pacify popular sayings and hardships caused by planets. A learned person practises non-violence, fasting, praise and worship of the gods, meditation, offering of oblations, donations, bathing, avoidance of rage, lack of malice and friendliness towards all creatures. He avoids falsehoods and excesses in speech. O supreme among brahmanas! A man must worship the planets.



Through that, everything terrible and all the hardships are pacified. Men must seek to calm the planets and the nakshatras. I have thus spoken to you about the illustrious lord who is in Bharata in the form of a tortoise. He is the immeasurable Narayana and everything is established in him. Resorting to the respective nakshatra, all the gods are also here. O brahmana! The bearer of oblations, <sup>670</sup> the earth and Soma are in the middle. Three, Mesha and the others, are in the centre, with Mithuna and the other in the mouth. <sup>671</sup> Karkata and Simha are in the south-eastern foot. <sup>672</sup> Simha, Kanya and Tula <sup>673</sup>—these three *rashis* are located on the flank. Tula and Vrishchika are in the south-western foot. <sup>674</sup> Vrishchika and Dhanvi are on the back. <sup>675</sup> Starting with Dhanvi, three are in the north-western foot. <sup>676</sup> In that way, Kumbha and Mina are on the other flank. <sup>677</sup> Mina and Mesha are located on the north-eastern foot. <sup>678</sup> O brahmana! The regions are located on the tortoise and the regions are associated with nakshatras. The nakshtras are based on the rashis. Depending on the hardship determined by the positions of nakshatras, *grahas* and rashis, the hardship faced by the region is decided. O brahmana! When this happens, one should bathe, donate, render oblations and perform the other rites. In the midst of the planets, what exists is Vishnu's feet. He is spoken of as Narayana, immeasurable in his soul. He is the lord who is the origin of the universe.”



## Chapter 56

‘Markandeya said, “O sage! I have thus spoken to you about Bharatavarsha. The four yugas, krita, treta, dvapara and *tishya*,<sup>679</sup> exist here. O brahmana! It is here that the yugas and the four varnas exist. O brahmana! Depending on the progression of the yugas, krita, dvapara and so on, men here live for four hundred, three hundred, two hundred and one hundred years. Bhadrashva-varsha is to the east, to the east of the great-souled Indra among mountains, Devakuta. Hear about it. It has five kulachalas—Shvetaparna, Nila, the excellent mountain Shaivala, Kouranja and Parnashalagra. Many minor mountains lead from these. These are distinguished by thousands of habitations, of many different kinds. They<sup>680</sup> are like water lilies and their summits are pure and auspicious. Other than these, there are hundreds of thousands of other mountains. Sita, Shankhavati, Bhadra, Chakravarta—there are these and many other extensive rivers. They have flows of cool water. In this varsha, men are as pure as conch shells, with complexions like that of gold. They are auspicious and associate with the gods, with lifespans of one thousand years. They are impartial in their outlook and there is no one who is superior or inferior. They naturally possess the eight qualities, fortitude and the others.<sup>681</sup> The four-armed god, Janardana, exists there in the form of Ashvashira, with head, chest, penis, feet, hands and three eyes. He is the lord of the universe and this region should be known as belonging to him. Ketumala-varsha is to the west of this. Hear about it. Vishala, Kambala, Krishna, Jayanta, Mount Hari, Vishoka and Varddhamana—these are the seven kulachalas there. There are thousands of other mountains inhabited by people. The gigantic Mouleyas, Shakas, Potas, Karambhakas, those known as Acchulas and hundreds of other kinds of people reside there.

They drink from the great rivers Vamkshu, Shyama, Svakambala, Amogha, Kamini, Shyama <sup>682</sup> and thousands of other rivers. The duration of life is the same as in the earlier one. <sup>683</sup> The illustrious Hari is in the form of a boar, with feet, chest, back, flanks, mouth, nose, teeth, throat and tail. There are three nakshatras in this region. O excellent among sages! I have thus spoken to you about Ketumala-varsha. After this, I will tell you about Uttarakuru. Listen. The trees there yield sweet fruit and are always full of fruits and flowers. The fruits provide garments and ornaments. The trees yield all the objects of desire and yield fruit in all the seasons. The earth is full of jewels and the fragrant breeze is always pleasant. Men who have been dislodged from the world of the gods are born there. Couples are born at the same time and like chakravaka birds, remain devoted to each other. Their lifespan is fourteen and a half thousand years. The kulachalas in this varsha are Chandrakanta, Indra among mountains, and Suryakanta. Between them flows the great river Bhadrāsoma, full of torrents of sacred and clear water. There are thousands of other rivers in Uttarakuru. These other rivers have flows of milk and ghee. Among the other smaller mountains, there are lakes full of curds. There are many kinds of fruit with a taste like that of amrita. There are hundreds and thousands of beautiful groves there. The illustrious Vishnu is in the form of a fish, with his head facing the east. O brahmana! There are nine nakshatras, divided into three groups of three each. O supreme among sages! Accordingly, that region is divided into nine parts. O great sage! The sacred islands known as Chandradvipa and Bhadradvipa are in the ocean, located inside the ocean. O brahmana! I have thus spoken to you about Uttarakuru-varsha. I will now tell you about Kimpurusha and the others. Listen.””

## Chapter 57

‘Markandeya said, “O brahmana! I will tell you about Kimpurusha-varsha. There, the healthy men have a lifespan of ten thousand years. The men and women there do not suffer from any disease and do not face any grief. The extremely large plaksha tree in that region is said to be Nandana’s equal. The men always drink the juice from the fruits. The women possess perpetual youth and have the fragrance of lotuses. After Kimpurusha-varsha, I will tell you about Hari-varsha. The men born there possess the complexion of gold. All of them are those who have been dislodged from the world of the gods and all of them are like gods. All the men in Hari-varsha drink auspicious sugar cane juice. They do not face the impediment of old age, nor do they decay. As long as they are alive, they do not suffer from any disease. I have spoken about Meru, which is in the centre of Ilavrita-varsha. The sun does not scorch there and men do not decay. They do not strive after their own gains. The light from the sun, the moon, nakshatras and planets does not provide any radiance there. The supreme illumination is from Meru. The men born there possess the complexion of lotuses and have the fragrance of lotuses. They subsist on the juice of jambu fruit. Their eyes are as broad as lotus leaves. The lifespan there is thirteen thousand years. Meru is in the middle of Ilavrita and is shaped like a cup. Meru is said to be the great mountain in Ilavrita. I will now tell you about Ramyaka-varsha. Listen. There is an extremely tall *nyagrodha* tree there and its leaves are green. Those who subsist there drink the juice of its fruit. Men enjoy its fruits and live for ten thousand years. They sparkle and are addicted to sexual intercourse. They do not suffer from old age or bad odour. The varsha that is to the north of this is known by the name of Hiranmaya. The river there is Hiranvati and it is radiant with many lotuses.

The men born there possess great strength and energy. They are gigantic in size and great in spirit. They are handsome to behold and possess riches.””

## Chapter 58

‘Kroushtuki asked, “O great sage! You have properly described everything I asked you about—the location of the earth, the oceans and mountains, their dimensions and measurements, the locations of the planets and bhuloka and the worlds. O sage! You have also described Svayambhuva manvantara to me. After this, I wish to hear about the other manvantaras. Who were the lords of these manvantaras? Who were the gods, rishis and their sons? Who were the kings?”

‘Markandeya replied, “I have spoken to you about Svayambhuva manvantara. After that, there was the one known as Svarochisha manvantara. Hear about it. There was a foremost brahmana who lived in the city of Arunaspada, on the banks of the Varuna. This brahmana surpassed the Ashvins in his beauty. He was mild in nature and his conduct was good. He was accomplished in the Vedas and the Vedangas. He loved guests and was a refuge for those who arrived in the night. However, he had a thought. ‘I will see the entire earth, with its extremely beautiful gardens and groves, ornamented with many cities.’ On one occasion, a guest arrived in his house and this guest knew about the powers of many herbs. He was accomplished in the knowledge of mantras. With his mind purified with devotion, he served this guest, who told him the news about beautiful cities, rivers, groves and mountains, sacred and extensive. Extremely astounded, he spoke to that excellent brahmana. ‘Having seen many countries, you must be extremely exhausted. But you are not too old in age. You are not much older than a youth. O brahmana! How have you travelled the earth in such a short span of time?’ The brahmana replied, ‘O brahmana! Because of the power of mantras and herbs, my movement is unimpeded. In half a day, I can travel one thousand yojanas.’ He trusted the words of that learned

brahmana and spoke respectfully to the brahmana again. ‘O illustrious one! Show me your favours and grant me the power of the mantras. I have this desire to see the world.’ The generous brahmana pronounced mantras over some paste and smeared his feet with it. He carefully described the directions to him.

“O supreme brahmana! His feet smeared with the paste, the brahmana wished to go and see the Himalayas, full of many springs. He thought, ‘I will travel one thousand yojanas in one half of a day and return in the other half of the day.’ Though he reached the slopes of the Himalayas, the brahmana’s body was not excessively exhausted. He roamed around there, on the ground under the snow-covered mountain. The power of the excellent herbs was in the paste smeared on his feet and when the melting snow touched his feet, it washed the paste away. Though his movements became slow, he roamed around here and there. He saw the agreeable summits and slopes of the Himalayas. These were the sporting grounds of large numbers of Siddhas, gandharvas and kinnaras. Here and there, there were beautiful pleasure grounds of gods and others. He saw that the place was populated by hundreds of divine apsaras. O sage! The brahmana’s body hair stood up in delight, but he was still not satisfied. Some places were beautiful because of the water that descended from springs. There were other places that resounded with the calls of dancing peacocks. Some places were pleasant because of *datyuhās*, *koyashtikas* <sup>684</sup> and other birds. There were the pleasant sounds of male cuckoos warbling. The breeze that blew was fragrant with the scent of blossoming trees. Filled with delight, he saw the giant mountain, the Himalayas. The son of a brahmana saw the Himalayas, the lofty mountain, and thought, ‘I will examine it tomorrow.’ He made up his mind to return home. However, the paste had been washed away and before long, he found it difficult to move. He thought, ‘What have I done in my ignorance? The melting snow and water has washed the paste away. This mountain is extremely difficult to traverse and I have come a long distance away. How will I observe rites like tending to the fire? Now that I face this great calamity, what will I do? This mountain is supremely beautiful. Nevertheless, even if my sight is attracted to it, I will not obtain

satisfaction in hundreds of years. The conversation of kinnaras enchants the ear in every direction. I have been greatly satisfied by the fragrant scent of blossoming trees. The breeze is pleasant to the touch and the fruits are succulent. The beautiful lakes forcefully attract the mind. That being the state I am in, if I see some store of austerities, he may instruct me about the path I should follow to return home,’ Thinking in this way, the brahmana wandered around in the Himalayas. With the great strength of the paste having been washed away, he was filled with great lassitude.

“Varuthini saw that best among sages wandering around. The immensely fortunate apsara was Muli’s daughter and she was beautiful. As soon as Varuthini saw that noble brahmana, goaded by Madana, her mind was instantly filled with desire. She thought, ‘Who is this extremely handsome person? If he does not disregard me, my birth will be successful. How wonderful is his beauty and sweetness! How wonderful is his graceful gait! How profound is his gaze! Where is his equal on earth? I have seen gods, daityas, Siddhas, gandharvas and pannagas. But there is not a single one who is the great-souled one’s equal in beauty. If he is as attracted towards me as I am towards him, I will then indeed have accumulated merits from good deeds. If he glances gently at me now, I will then think that no other woman in the three worlds has undertaken as much of good deeds.’ Smitten by love, the celestial lady thought in this way. She approached him with gifts and addressed him in these words. ‘Who are you, with a complexion like the cup of a lotus? Whom do you belong to? Why are you here?’ ‘I am a brahmana. I have come here from the city of Arunaspada. Washed away by the melting snow and water, the paste on my feet has been destroyed. O one with the maddening eyes! Using their powers, I had come here.’ Varuthini replied, ‘I am the immensely fortunate daughter of Muli and I am known by the name of Varuthini. I always roam around on this beautiful and great mountain. O brahmana! Having seen you today, I have been smitten by desire and am helpless. I have now been conquered by you. Instruct me about what I should do.’ The brahmana replied, ‘O one with the sweet smiles! What means can I use to return to my own home? O fortunate one! Tell me that. All my rites are suffering. If the nitya and naimittika rites

are not performed, that causes great harm to brahmanas. O fortunate one! You should save me from the Himalayas. For brahmanas, residing away from home is never praised. O timid one! Curious to see countries, I have committed a crime. Foremost brahmanas must perform all the rites in their homes. When they reside elsewhere, nitya and naimittika rites suffer. What is the need to speak a lot? O illustrious one! Act so that I can see my own home before the sun has set.’ Varuthini said, ‘O immensely fortunate one! Let the day when you forsake me and return to your own home never come. O son of a brahmana! Heaven is not more beautiful than this spot. That is the reason we give up the abode of the gods and reside here. O beloved! When you sport in this beautiful snow-covered region with me, you will not remember your mortal relatives. Because of love, I am under your control and here, I will give you garlands, garments, ornaments, food, unguents and objects for enjoyment. There will be the melodious sounds of veenas and flutes and the sweet songs of kinnaras. The breeze will cause delight. The food will be warm and the water will be pure. There are beds that the mind desires and fragrant unguents. O immensely fortunate one! What exists in your home that is superior to this? No one suffers from old age here. This is the land of the gods and it yields perpetual youth.’ Having said this, the lotus-eyed one’s mind was filled with love. She said, ‘Show me your favours,’ and suddenly embraced him. The brahmana replied, ‘O wicked one! Do not touch me. Go to those who are like you. I asked you for something, but you have approached me in a completely different way. Through offering oblations in the morning and the evening, one obtains the eternal worlds. O foolish one! The three worlds, and everything, are established in oblations. Tell me of a means whereby I can return to my own house.’ Varuthini said, ‘O brahmana! Do you not love me? Aren’t these mountains beautiful? Giving up the gandharvas, kinnaras and others, whom else do you desire? It is undoubtedly true that you will return to your own home. But spend a little bit of time with me and enjoy these extremely rare objects of pleasure.’ The brahmana replied, ‘The three fires, garhapatya and the others, are what I always desire. I find the altar for the fire to be beautiful. Vishtarini <sup>685</sup> is my beloved.’ Varuthini said, ‘O brahmana!



Among the eight qualities, compassion comes first. If you are a person who follows true dharma, why are you not exhibiting that towards me? I have fallen in love with you and, separated from you, I shall not live. O delight of your lineage! I do not utter a lie. Show me your favours.’ The brahmana replied, ‘If you are in love with me and if you truly do not lie, then tell me about a means whereby I can return to my own home.’ Varuthini said, ‘It is undoubtedly true that you will return to your own home. But spend a little bit of time with me and enjoy these extremely rare objects of pleasure.’ <sup>686</sup> The brahmana replied, ‘O Varuthini! A brahmana’s pursuit of enjoyment is not praised. A brahmana faces hardships in this world, but his efforts yield fruits after death.’ Varuthini said, ‘I am about to die. If you save me, you will obtain auspicious fruits in the world hereafter and enjoy objects of pleasure in another birth. Both of these will be reasons for your advancement. However, if you refuse me, I will die and you will reap the fruits of that sin.’ The brahmana replied, ‘My guru has told me that I should not desire another person’s wife. Therefore, whether you lament or shrivel up, I do not desire you.’ Having said this, the immensely fortunate one controlled himself and purified himself by touching water. He prostrated himself before the garhapatya fire and meditated in these words. ‘O illustrious garhapatya fire! You are the seed of all rites. The ahavaniya fire and dakshinagni fire spring from you and not from anywhere else. When you are satisfied, the gods yield rain and crops. The entire universe is established on crops and not on anything else. Everything is established in you and the universe is established in truth. By virtue of that truth, let me see my home today, while the sun is still in the firmament. While the sun is still in the firmament, let me see my own house, so that I am able to perform the rites mentioned in the Vedas at the right time. I have never desired another person’s objects. My mind has never turned towards another person’s wife. By virtue of that truth, let my wishes be met.’”

## Chapter 59

‘Markandeya continued, “While he was speaking in this way, the garhapatya fire entered the body of the son of a brahmana and established itself there. Since he was possessed by it, in the midst of that circle of radiance, he was like the personified form of the bearer of oblations and illuminated that region. The celestial lady saw the brahmana in that fierce and radiant form and her mind was suffused with even greater love. As soon as the bearer of oblations was established in him, the descendant of the brahmana lineage was again able to move, as he had been able to do earlier. While the slender-limbed one looked on, he swiftly departed and she was no longer able to see him. She sighed deeply and her body trembled. In an instant, the best among brahmanas reached his own home and completed all the rites that have been mentioned.

““She was beautiful in her limbs and her mind was still attracted to him. She sighed throughout the rest of the day and the night. Unblemished in her limbs, she repeatedly sighed, lamented and wept. The one with the maddening eyes censured her own ill fortune. She found no pleasure in walking, eating, the pleasant forest or the beautiful mountain. On seeing a couple of chakravaka birds, she was smitten by desire. However, left alone, the beautiful lady censured her own youth. ‘Drawn by the power of evil fate, why did I come to this mountain? Why did a man like him come within the range of my vision? Since that immensely fortunate one did not wish to have intercourse with me, this fire of desire is impossible to withstand and will certainly consume me. The call of the male cuckoo used to sound pleasant. But separated from him, it is harming and burning me now.’ O supreme among sages! She wandered around in this way, overwhelmed by desire. At every instant, her love for him waxed.

“There was a gandharva named Kali. He was in love with her, but had been refused by her earlier. He saw her in that state and wondered, ‘What has now happened to the one whose stride is like that of a she-elephant? She is sighing and wandering around on this mountain, faded. Is this the same Varuthini? Has she been cursed by a sage? Has someone dishonoured her? Her distraught face is awash with floods of tears.’ Filled with curiosity, Kali thought about this for a very long time. Through the powers of meditation, he got to know the truth. Having got to know about the sage,<sup>687</sup> Kali started to think again. ‘This good fortune has resulted from my having done something good earlier. Filled with love, I entreated her several times, but she refused me. I will now be able to obtain her. Since she is in love with a man, I will assume his form and unsuspecting, she will enjoy herself with me. Without any delay, that is what I must do.’ Using his own powers, he assumed the brahmana’s form. Having done this, he sauntered over to the place where Varuthini was seated. On seeing him, the beautiful lady’s eyes were delighted and opened a little. The slender-limbed one approached him and repeatedly entreated, ‘Please show me your favours. Having been abandoned by you, there is no doubt that I would have given up my life. That adharma would have been greater than the adharma that results from your rites being destroyed. With me, find your pleasure in this great and beautiful mountain and valley. Having saved me, there is no doubt that you will accomplish dharma. O immensely wise one! There is no doubt that my lifespan still remains. That is indeed the reason why you have caused pleasure to my heart and have returned.’ Kali replied, ‘What can I possibly do? If I remain here, my rites will be destroyed. O slender-waisted one! However, you have addressed me in such words. That is the reason I face a dilemma. I will do what you ask me to. I will agree to have intercourse with you only if you say so, not otherwise.’ Varuthini said, ‘Show me your favours. I will do whatever you wish. This is true. Tell me without any hesitation and I will immediately act accordingly.’ Kali replied, ‘O one with the excellent eyebrows! When we have intercourse in this forest now, I must not be seen. Therefore, while you have intercourse with me, you must keep your eyes closed.’ Varuthini said, ‘O fortunate one! It shall be as you

wish. It shall be that way. In every possible way, I am under you control now.'""

## Chapter 60

‘Markandeya continued, “He found pleasure with her on the slopes of the mountain, the delightful flowering groves, the pleasant lakes, the beautiful valleys and banks of rivers and other agreeable spots. O brahmana! He was delighted. At the time of intercourse, with her eyes closed, she thought of the energetic brahmana’s form, with the fire established in him. O supreme among sages! After some time, she conceived. Though the seed was the gandharva’s, she thought of the brahmana in her mind. When she was pregnant, in the form of the brahmana, he happily comforted her and took his leave of her. She gave birth to a son who was as radiant as the blazing fire. Like the sun illuminates everything with its own rays, he illuminated all the directions. Since the child made everything radiant with his own light, he came to be known by the name of Svarochisha. <sup>688</sup> From one day to another day, the immensely fortunate one grew in age. As the kalas <sup>689</sup> of the moon develop, the child’s store of qualities grew. In due order, the immensely fortunate one learnt *dhanurveda*, the Vedas and all the other kinds of knowledge. He thus became a young man.

“Once, handsome in his gait, he was roaming around Mount Mandara. On the slope of the mountain, he saw a maiden who was afflicted by fear. On seeing him, she exclaimed, ‘Save me.’ Her eyes were distraught with fear and the great-souled and brave one responded, ‘Do not be scared. What is the matter?’ She sighed and answered in a stuttering voice that choked with tears. The maiden said, ‘I am the daughter of vidyadhara Indivara. I am known by the name of Manorama and am Marudhanva’s daughter. <sup>690</sup> Vibhavari, the daughter of vidyadhara Mandara, is my friend. Kalavati, the daughter of the sage Para, is another friend. With those two friends, I went

to the excellent slopes of Kailasa. There, I saw a sage who was exceedingly lean in form. Exhausted from hunger, his throat was wasted. He was without energy and the pupils of his eyes were deeply embedded into the sockets. When I laughed at him, he angrily cursed me. His voice quavered and his lips trembled a little. ‘O ignoble and wicked woman! You have laughed at an ascetic. Therefore, very soon, a rakshasa will overcome you.’ When he cursed me in this way, my two friends censured the sage. ‘Shame on your status of being a brahmana. Since you do not possess forgiveness, all these austerities will be destroyed. You are haggard not because of your austerities, but because of your great intolerance. A brahmana’s wealth is in forgiveness. His austerities are the control of rage.’ When he heard this, the extremely radiant one cursed them too. One of them would have leprosy in her limbs and the other one would suffer from consumption. As soon as he said this, that is exactly what happened to them. ‘A gigantic rakshasa is pursuing me and is following in my footsteps. Can you not hear the loud sound? He is roaring nearby. He is not letting me go. This is the third day that he is pursuing me. I will now confer on you the supreme among all weapons. It strikes at the heart. O immensely intelligent one! I will bestow it on you. Save me from the rakshasa. In the beginning, Rudra, the wielder of the Pinaka bow, himself conferred it on Svayambhuva. Svayambhuva gave it to Vasishtha,<sup>691</sup> the most noble among the Siddhas. He gave it to Chitrayudha, my mother’s father. As a wedding gift, it was given to my father by his father-in-law himself. O brave one! When I was a child, I learnt it from my father. This is the essence of all weapons and it can destroy all enemies. Therefore, quickly accept it. All weapons seek a refuge in it. Slay the evil-souled rakshasa as soon as he approaches.’ When he agreed to this, she touched water and gave him the essence of all weapons.<sup>692</sup> She taught him the secrets of releasing it and withdrawing it.

“Meanwhile, the rakshasa, terrible in appearance, quickly approached near. It roared extremely loudly and shouted, ‘When you are overwhelmed by me, how can you be saved? Come to me swiftly. I will devour you.’ Svarochisha saw it approach, saying this. He thought, ‘If the rakshasa seizes her, the great sage’s words will come true.’ It approached and quickly

seized her. The slender-waisted one lamented piteously, ‘Save me. Save me.’ At this, Svarochisha was overcome by rage. Without blinking, he fixed his glance on the rakshasa and aimed the fierce and extremely dreadful weapon. <sup>693</sup> Overwhelmed by this, the roamer in the night released her and said, ‘Please show me your favours and pacify the weapon. Listen to me. O immensely radiant one! Free me from the extremely terrible and fierce curse invoked on me by the intelligent Brahmamitra. O immensely fortunate one! There is no one else who can do me a greater favour. I am suffering a great deal from this great curse. Save me.’ Svarochisha asked, ‘Why did the great-souled sage, Brahmamitra, curse you? Earlier, what is the nature of the curse he invoked on you?’ The rakshasa replied, ‘After having comprehended the thirteen branches of Atharva Veda, <sup>694</sup> the brahmana Brahmamitra studied the eight different branches of Ayurveda. <sup>695</sup> I am known as Indivaraksha <sup>696</sup> and my father is Nalanabha, the wielder of a sword who is the lord of the vidyadharas. I had earlier requested the sage Brahmamitra that the illustrious one should bestow on me the complete knowledge of Ayurveda. O brave one! Though I prostrated myself and humbly requested him, he did not bestow on me the essence of the knowledge of Ayurveda. O unblemished one! While he was instructing his disciples, I hid myself and by overhearing, learnt the essence of the knowledge of Ayurveda. Within eight months, I mastered the complete knowledge. Because I was happy, I laughed repeatedly. The sage discerned the reason behind my laughter and was filled with rage. His throat quivered and he addressed me in harsh words. “O evil-minded one! You remained hidden like a rakshasa and mastered this knowledge. You showed me dishonour and laughed. O evil one! Therefore there is no doubt that within seven nights, because of my curse, you will become a malformed and terrible rakshasa.” When he said this, I prostrated myself and gratified him with gifts. The brahmana immediately became mild of manner and spoke to me again. “O gandharva! What I have spoken will come true. It cannot but be otherwise. However, having become a rakshasa, you will again get back your own form. Having lost your memory, you will angrily try to eat your own offspring. Because of the fire of a weapon, you will then cease to be a

roamer in the night. You will again regain your senses and get back your own form. That is when you will get back your own station and name in the world of the gandharvas.” O immensely fortunate one! You have now saved me from that great fear of remaining a roamer in the night. O brave one! Seek a boon from me. I am bestowing this daughter of mine on you. Accept her as your wife. I will also bestow on you the knowledge of the eight branches of Ayurveda, which I obtained from the sage. O immensely wise one! Accept it.’ He said this and bestowed the knowledge. He blazed in his divine garments. His garlands and ornaments were divine and he got back his old form. As he got ready to bestow the knowledge and the maiden, the maiden spoke to her father, who had got back his own form. ‘As soon as I saw this great-souled one, I fell in love with him. In addition, he has done us a special favour. But what about my two friends? Because of me, they are suffering. Therefore, I do not desire to enjoy myself with him. Even a man is incapable of acting in such a cruel way. How can a woman, who is naturally mild, do this? O father! Those two maidens are suffering on my account. O father! Therefore, with them, I will also suffer from the fire of grief.’ Svarochisha said, ‘Through the powers of Ayurveda, your two friends will become as good as new. O slender-waisted one! Hence, do not suffer from this great misery.’ At this, following the norms, the father himself bestowed his daughter. On the mountain, Svarochisha married the one with the beautiful eyes. Having bestowed his beautiful daughter and comforted her, the gandharva used a divine mode <sup>697</sup> to return to his own city. With his slender-limbed wife, he went to the grove where the two maidens were suffering on account of their curse. The unvanquished Svarochisha knew the truth about how to counter diseases through herbs and juices. He made their bodies hale. Thus, those beautiful and auspicious maidens were cured of their diseases and began to roam around the mountain, illuminating all the directions with their own radiance.”



## Chapter 61

‘Markandeya said, “Having been cured of her disease, the maiden was delighted and addressed Svarochisha in these words. ‘O lord! Listen to my words. I am the daughter of vidyadhara Mandara and am known by the name of Vibhavari. You have done me a great favour. Therefore, I desire to give myself to you. Accept me. I will confer on you a knowledge so that you can understand the speech of all creatures. Show me your favours.’ Thus addressed, Svarochisha, who knew about dharma, agreed to this. After this, the second maiden addressed him in these words. ‘My father observed brahmacharya when he was young. He is a brahmana rishi and his name is Para. The extremely fortunate one is accomplished in the Vedas and the Vedangas. There was a time, during spring, when the beautiful calls of male cuckoos could be heard. At that time, the apsara known as Punjikasthala arrived there. At this, the bull of a sage became helpless with desire. As a result of their intercourse, I was born on that great mountain. My mother left me in that deserted forest and went away. The infant was left alone on the slope of the mountain and the place was full of carnivorous and predatory creatures. O excellent one! I drank the kalas of the moon and started to grow, from one day to another day. However, I did not decay when the moon waned. Therefore, my great-souled father accepted me and gave me the name of Kalavati. I was pure-souled and a gandharva sought me. But though beseeched, my great-souled father did not bestow me on him. At this, when he was asleep, my father was killed by that enemy of the gods. Desolate and suffering from great despair, I was about to kill myself. But I was restrained by Sati, Shambhu’s wife, who is true to her pledges. “O one with the excellent eyebrows! Do not grieve. You will have an immensely fortunate husband. His name will be Svarochisha and your son

will be a Manu. The *nidhis* <sup>698</sup> will honour you and obey all your commands. O auspicious one! They will give you all the riches that you wish for. O child! This will happen through the powers of the knowledge named Padmini, <sup>699</sup> worshipped by Mahapadma and the others. Accept this from me.” Sati, Daksha’s daughter, devoted to the truth, said this. O Svarochisha! You must be that person. The goddess couldn’t have said something untrue. I am conferring my life, that knowledge and my body on you. Accept me. Show me your favours with a pleasant face.’ He agreed to what the maiden Kalavati had said. With a pleasant glance, he assented to what Vibhavari and Kalavati had said. The immensely radiant one accepted their hands. The trumpets of the gods were sounded. The apsaras danced.”

## Chapter 62

‘Markandeya said, “As radiant as the immortals, he enjoyed himself with his wives on that Indra among mountains, among the beautiful groves and springs. Under the control of Padmini, the nidhis brought all the objects of pleasure, jewels and the sweetest of honey. As was desired, they brought garlands, garments, ornaments, fragrances, unguents and sparkling and golden seats. O immensely fortunate one! There were golden pots and vessels and many beds with celestial spreads. Radiant in his own resplendence, he amused himself with them on that supreme mountain, filled with divine perfumes. With him, they also obtained supreme pleasure. They sported on that store of rocks, as if it was heaven. A female *kalahamsa* <sup>700</sup> spoke to a female chakravaka who was in the water. At the sight of their delightful relationship, it was itself filled with desire. ‘If a person enjoys the desired pleasure with his beloved when he is young, he is blessed and has acquired great merits. There are many praiseworthy and young men whose wives are not extremely beautiful. In the world, there are few instances where the husband and the wife are equally beautiful. In some cases, the husband loves his beloved. In other cases, the wife loves her beloved. Among a couple, mutual love is extremely rare. This man is desired by his beloved and he is blessed. The wife is desired by her beloved and she is blessed too. It is the mutual love that leads to the blessing.’ Hearing the words of the female *kalahamsa*, the mind of the female chakravaka was not greatly impressed. She replied, ‘He is not blessed. He should be ashamed. When the other wives are present, he enjoys himself with one wife. His mind is not completely in any of them. O friend! The mind can be completely devoted to only one person. How can he be extremely devoted to all his wives? They do not love their husband. Nor

does the husband love them. This is mere amusement, just as one amuses oneself with any companion. If they really love their husband, why do they not give up their lives? When he is embracing one wife, he is thinking of the other wives. Having been bought with the price of the knowledge being given, he is just like a servant. Love cannot be equally divided. O female kalahamsa! My husband is blessed and I am blessed, since our hearts are firmly fixed on one person alone. In this world, when a man has many wives, that leads to both good and bad. The objects in the home, food, seats and ornaments are divided unequally and this inequality leads to great sin. The senior takes herself to be the junior, the junior takes herself to be the senior. Just as the best objects are to be given to the preceptor and oblations are to be offered into the fire, the nitya and naimittika rites must be performed with a single wife. If a man acts in a contrary way, he suffers from a sin.’ The unvanquished Svarochisha could understand the speech of all creatures. Hearing these words, he was ashamed and thought, ‘This is both true and false.’ He found his pleasure on that great mountain for one hundred years. While he amused himself in various directions, he saw a deer in front of him. The deer’s hide was glossy and its body was plump. It was surrounded by does which were just like it in appearance and it was the rutting season. Attracted by the scent,<sup>701</sup> the does started to smell the buck and the buck said, ‘This is enough. If you are going to abandon shame, go somewhere else. O beautiful-eyed doe! I am not Svarochisha and my conduct is not like his. There are many who are as shameless as him. Go to them. If a woman loves many men, people laugh at her. That is also the case when a man looks at many women with eyes of desire. Every day, his rites of dharma are destroyed. While engaged in intercourse with one wife, he is attached to the other wives. Such a person is wicked in conduct and turns himself away from the world hereafter. O fortunate one! Desire such a person. I am not like Svarochisha.’”

## Chapter 63

‘Markandeya continued, “Hearing the way the doe was repulsed by the buck, Svarochisha thought that he had fallen down. O supreme among sages! He made up his mind to abandon his wives. He had been censured by the female chakravaka and the deer and he had seen how the buck had behaved. However, as soon as he met his wives, the detachment was flung away and desire increased in his mind. Therefore, he enjoyed himself for six hundred years. Nevertheless, Svarochisha’s intelligence was generous. Though he enjoyed those objects of pleasure with them, he did not act contrary to dharma and observed all the rites of dharma. Through them, Svarochisha had three sons—Vijaya, Merunanda and the immensely strong Prabhava. Indivara’s daughter, Manorama, gave birth to Vijaya. Vibhavari gave birth to Merunanda and Kalavati gave birth to Prabhava. The knowledge named Padmini could provide all the objects of pleasure. Through its powers, the father constructed three cities. In the east, on the supreme mountain of Kamarupa, he constructed the excellent city of Vijaya and gave it to his son Vijaya. In the north, he constructed the city known as Nandavati, garlanded with extremely high ramparts, and gave it to Merunanda. Kalavati’s son, Prabhava, was established in the city known as Tala, located in dakshinapatha. The bull among men thus established his sons in those cities. O brahmana! After this, he amused himself with his wives on the agreeable slopes of the mountains.

““Once, with a desire to sport, he went to the forest, wielding a bow. He saw a boar in the distance and drew his bow. At this, a doe approached and repeatedly spoke to him. ‘Show me your favours. Shoot your arrow at me. What will be accomplished by killing it? Quickly bring me down instead. If your arrow brings me down, I will be freed from my miseries.’ Svarochisha

replied, ‘I do not see any signs of disease on your body. What is the reason why you desire that I should take away your life?’ The doe said, ‘I have given my love to one whose mind is attached to another. Without him, death is my medication. What else can be done?’ Svarochisha replied, ‘O timid one! Who does not desire you? Who are you in love with?’ The doe said, ‘O fortunate one! It is you I desire. You have taken my mind away. That is the reason I have chosen death. Use your arrow to bring me down.’

Svarochisha replied, ‘You are a doe whose eyes flicker. I am in the form of a man. How can there be intercourse between the two of us?’ The doe said, ‘If your heart is in me, embrace me. If your mind thinks that this is wicked, I will do whatever you wish for. No matter what form you are in, I will be greatly honoured.’ At this, Svarochisha embraced the doe. Thus embraced, she instantly assumed a divine form. Extremely surprised, he asked, ‘Who are you?’ In a voice that stuttered because of love and shame, she said, ‘I am the divinity who presides over this forest and I have been entreated by the gods. O immensely intelligent one! Through you, I will give birth to a Manu. I love you and my son will rule over bhuloka. Through you, I will have such a son. I have reported the words of the gods to you.’ Through her, he had a son who possessed all the auspicious signs. He was as energetic as his own self and he was born that very instant. As soon as he was born, the musical instruments of the gods were sounded. The lords of the gandharvas sang and large numbers of apsaras danced. The clouds sprinkled him with water. In every direction, the rishis, stores of austerities, and the gods showered down flowers. On seeing his energy, his father himself gave him a name. He was radiant and his energy illuminated the directions. Therefore, the extremely strong and powerful son was named Dyutimat.<sup>702</sup> Since he was the son of Svarochisha, he was also known as Svarochisha.<sup>703</sup>

“Once, he was roaming around on the beautiful mountains and springs. Svarochisha<sup>704</sup> saw a swan, along with its wife. The female swan repeatedly spoke about her desire for him. But the male swan said, ‘Restrain yourself. You have pleased with me for a long time. Why should one seek pleasure all the time? Our old age is near. O one who roams in the water! For both you and me, it is the time to renounce.’ The female swan answered, ‘When

can there be a time not to seek pleasure? The entire universe is based on pleasure. Even brahmanas who are controlled in their souls undertake sacrifices and rites for the sake of objects of pleasure. Those who are discriminating hanker for objects of pleasure, seen and unseen. There are those who donate and perform auspicious acts of dharma. Why don't you desire pleasure? The fruit of human exertion is pleasure. This is true of discriminating people who have controlled their souls. Why should this not apply to inferior species?' The male swan said, 'If the mind is attracted towards pleasure, the intelligence never turns towards the supreme objective, especially if one is attached to relatives. Sons, friends and wives make a creature suffer. This is like a wild elephant that is destroyed by sinking into a pond full of mire. O fortunate one! Can you not see what attachment has done to Svarochisha? Since his childhood, because of attachment to desire, he has been submerged in the watery mire of affection. In youth, he was excessively attached to his wives, now to his sons and grandsons. Since the mind of Svarochisha is thus submerged, how can he be saved? O one who roams in the water! Unlike Svarochisha, I am not under the control of women. I possess discrimination. Therefore, I have now withdrawn myself from seeking pleasure.' Having heard the bird's words, Svarochisha was filled with anxiety. Taking his wives with him, he went to a hermitage to perform austerities. Broad in his intelligence, with them, he tormented himself through fierce austerities there. Withdrawing himself from all sins, he went to the sparkling worlds.'"

## Chapter 64

‘Markandeya said, “The illustrious Svarochisha, <sup>705</sup> known by the name of Prajapati Dyutimat, became the Manu. Hear about that manvantara, those who were gods, sages, his sons and the kings at the time. O Kroushtuki! Listen attentively. O brahmana! The gods were the Paravatas and the Tushitas. During Svarochisha manvantara, the name of Indra was Vipashchit. The saptarshis were Urja, Tamba, Prana, Dattoli, Rishabha, Nishchara and Charvavira. The great-souled one’s sons were Chaitra, Kimpurusha and others. These seven sons were extremely valiant and ruled over the earth. As long as that manvantara continued, their lineages extended. All of them enjoyed the earth. This then was the second manvantara. If a man listens faithfully to Svarochisha’s conduct and Svaarochisha’s birth, he is cleansed from sins.”’



## Chapter 65

‘Kroushtuki said, “O illustrious one! You have told me everything in detail about the conduct of Svarochisha and the birth of Svaarochisha. There was the knowledge by the name of Padmini, which provided all the objects of pleasure. All the nidhis were based on it. Tell me about this in detail. O guru! Tell me about the eight nidhis, their nature and what objects they resorted to. I wish to hear all this properly.”

‘Markandeya replied, “For the knowledge known by the name of Padmini, the presiding divinity is Lakshmi. The nidhis are based on it. Attentively, hear from me about them. The nidhis are Padma, Mahapadma, Makara, Kacchapa, Mukunda, Nandaka, Nila and Shankha as the eighth. They exist where there is prosperity, and success is attained through them. O Kroushtuki! I have spoken to you about the eight nidhis. O sage! Through the favours of the gods and by association with the virtuous, the wealth of a man is always illuminated by these. I will tell you about their nature. Listen attentively. O brahmana! If a man initially possesses the nidhi known by the name of Padma, it is always passed on to his sons and grandsons. When a person possesses this, he is full of generosity. Since this nidhi is sattvika, such an immensely fortunate person is full of sattva. He receives large quantities of gold, silver, copper and other metals and buys and sells these. He performs sacrifices and gives dakshina. In due order, he accomplishes everything he wishes for. He turns his mind towards getting assembly halls and temples of the gods constructed. The nidhi known as Mahapadma is also supported by sattva. A man who possesses this is mostly full of sattva. He receives jewels like *padmaraga*, <sup>706</sup> pearls and coral and buys and sells these. He gives to those who practise yoga and are of good conduct, getting houses constructed for them. His own conduct is

good and those he gives birth to, sons and grandsons, are also of good conduct. This nidhi results from prior prosperity and remains in the lineage for seven generations. The nidhi by the name of Makara is tamasa in nature. When it glances towards a man, even if he has been born in a good lineage, he becomes enveloped in darkness. He receives arrows, swords, double-edged swords, bows, shields and armour. <sup>707</sup> He is excessively friendly with kings and donates to those who are loved by kings and earn a living through the prowess of their arms and valour. He buys and sells weapons, but this does not bring him pleasure. This nidhi remains with the man alone and his sons do not possess it. He comes about his destruction when bandits desire his possessions, or in the field of battle. The nidhi known as Kacchapa is also full of tamasa. When it glances towards a man, he predominantly becomes full of tamasa. Along with those who are auspicious in conduct, he does undertake many tasks. But despite this, all these are mere rituals and he does not trust anyone. A tortoise <sup>708</sup> draws in its limbs. Just like that, though the nidhi is in his possession, his mind is always distracted and he is anxious with fear. Therefore, he does not give and nor does he enjoy. This nidhi remains on earth only for one generation. The nidhi known by the name of Mukunda is full of the quality of rajas. O brahmana! If it glances towards a man, he imbibes those qualities. He receives veenas, flutes, drums and other percussion instruments. <sup>709</sup> He gives his riches to those who sing and dance—*bandis*, *magadhas*, *sutas*, jesters and actors. O brahmana! Night and day, he gives objects of pleasure to them and enjoys himself with them. He has intercourse with harlots and others who are like them. This nidhi serves a single man and does not pass on to his descendants. The great nidhi known by the name of Nandaka has qualities of rajas and tamas. When it glances towards a man, he is stupefied. He receives all kinds of metals, jewels, auspicious grain and other articles and buys and sells these. He is a refuge for his relatives and guests who arrive. O great sage! He cannot tolerate the slightest bit of disrespect. He is greatly pleased when he is praised and gives a lot to those who praise him. However, he is mild and gives to those who wish for something. He has many extremely beautiful wives and they give him sons. When a man possesses the nidhi Nandaka, it

remains in the lineage for seven generations. O excellent one! Thereafter, the next generation only receives an eighth part. This nidhi always gives men long lifespans. He sustains relatives and those who have come from a long distance away. However, Nandaka makes the person ignore the world hereafter. Nor is he affectionate towards the people he lives with. He is indifferent towards his former friends and contracts friendship with others. Similarly, there is a great nidhi which has qualities of both sattva and rajas. This is known as Nila and a man who possesses it becomes good in conduct. O sage! He receives garments, cotton, grain and similar articles, fruits, flowers, pearls, coral, conch shells, mother of pearl, wooden objects and articles produced from the water. His mind finds no delight in buying and selling other things. Such a man has lakes, ponds, pleasure-gardens and bridges over rivers constructed and plants trees. He enjoys unguents, flowers and other objects of pleasure. The nidhi named Nila remains with him for three generations. The other nidhi, known by the name of Shankha, has qualities of rajas and tamas. O brahmana! The possessor of this nidhi therefore comes to acquire similar attributes. It is only owned by one man and does not pass on to anyone else. <sup>710</sup> O Kroushtuki! Hear about Shankha's nature. He eats excellent food alone and wears excellent garments alone. His relatives eat bad food and do not wear fine garments. He does not give anything to his well-wishers, wife, brothers, sons, daughters-in-law and others. A man with Shankha is always engrossed in his own subsistence. The nidhis are divinities who bring men wealth and they have thus been described. When their glances are mixed, depending on their nature, their fruits are also mixed. Their glances are said to depend on their nature. O brahmana! The one who presides over all of them is Shri, the divinity of Padmini.””

## Chapter 66

‘Kroushtuki said, “O brahmana! You have described Svarochisha manvantara to me in detail and also the eight nidhis I had asked you about. Earlier, you have described Svayambhuva manvantara. Now tell me about the third manvantara, the one known as Uttama.”

‘Markandeya replied, “The son of Uttanapada and Suruchi was famous by the name of Uttama. He was immensely strong and powerful. The great-souled king had dharma in his soul and he possessed the wealth of valour. He was like the sun in his valour and surpassed all other creatures. He knew about dharma and was impartial between friend and foe and between his own sons and others. O great sage! He was like Yama to the wicked and like Soma to the virtuous. Uttama, Uttanapada’s son, who knew about dharma married Babhru’s daughter, known by the name of Bahula, just as Indra married Shachi. O noble brahmana! His mind was extremely attached to her in love, just as the moon is attached to Rohini. <sup>711</sup> His mind never felt the need to be attached to anyone else. Even in his dreams, the lord of the earth’s mind was solely on her. As soon as the king saw the one with the excellent limbs, he would embrace her. He devoured his body with his eyes. As soon as he touched her body, he would become completely immersed in her. However, she found the lord of the earth’s pleasant words to be disagreeable to her ears. When he showed her a great deal of respect, she thought she was being humiliated. She disregarded the garlands and auspicious ornaments she was given. When he drank the best of wine, she got up, as if that caused her pain. O brahmana! While eating, if the Indra among men held her by the hand even for a short while and asked her to eat, she would not eat. In this way, she was not favourably inclined towards the great-souled one. However, the lord of the earth showed her a great deal of

affection. Once, the king was drinking, while the best of courtesans were singing sweet and melodious songs. Affectionately, the king picked up a vessel filled with liquor and offered it to her. While the lords of the earth and the courtesans looked on, she did not want it and turned her face away from the vessel of liquor. At this, in the presence of the lords of the earth, the king became angry. Sighing like a serpent, he summoned the doorkeeper and said, ‘This queen does not love a husband who loves her. She has dishonoured me. O doorkeeper! She is wicked of heart. Take her and leave her in a desolate forest. Swiftly abandon her. There is no need to reflect on my words.’ At this, the doorkeeper did not reflect on the king’s words. He placed the one with the excellent eyebrows on a chariot and left her in the forest. Having been taken to the desolate forest and abandoned there, she thought that a supreme favour had been done to her. She would not have to see the lord of the earth again.

“However, the lord of the earth who was Uttanapada’s son was still devoted to her and his mind was tormented. He did not take another wife. Night and day, he incessantly thought about her beautiful limbs. He followed his own dharma and protected the kingdom and the subjects. Like a father towards his own sons, he protected the subjects. On one occasion, a brahmana, who was afflicted in his mind, arrived. The brahmana said, ‘O great king! I am suffering greatly. Listen to my words. Other than a lord of men, there is no one else who can save men from their affliction. While I was asleep in the night, someone abducted my wife, though the door of the house was closed. You should bring her back.’ The king replied, ‘O brahmana! You do not know who has abducted her and where she has been taken. Whom will I seek to fight with? Where will I bring her back from?’ The brahmana said, ‘I was asleep, with the door to my house closed. My wife has been abducted. It is for you to find out who has abducted her and why. You are the king who receives one-sixth of our earnings as a share. Following dharma, it is your job to protect, so that people can peacefully sleep in the night.’ The king replied, ‘I have not seen your wife. What is her form like? What is her age? Tell me about the *brahmani*’s <sup>712</sup> conduct.’ The brahmana said, ‘Her eyes are hard and she is tall. Her arms are short and her

face is thin. O king! Her stomach hangs down. Her buttocks and breasts are small. O lord of the earth! I am not maligning her. She is ugly in form. O lord of the earth! Her words are harsh. She is not amiable and she does not possess good conduct. Her glance is cruel. I have thus described my wife. O lord of the earth! Her youth is long over. My wife is terrible in form. I have told you the truth.’ The king replied, ‘O brahmana! Enough. I will give you another wife. A fortunate wife brings happiness. If the wife is not like that, she is the cause of misery. A wife who is not the least bit ugly also ensures good conduct. If a wife is devoid of beauty and good conduct, she deserves to be abandoned.’ The brahmana said, ‘O lord of the earth! The supreme sacred texts have said that the wife must be protected. When the wife is protected, the offspring are protected. O lord of men! One’s own self is born through her. <sup>713</sup> Therefore, she must be protected. When the offspring are protected, one’s own self is protected. Hence, she must be protected. Otherwise, a mixture of varnas takes place. O lord of the earth! In that event, one’s ancestors are cast down from heaven. O king! With the permission of the seniors, I offered kindling into a fire and accepted her as my wife, even though her conduct is harsh. How can I abandon her and roam around with another wife? It is through following the dharma of a householder that a man obtains the eternal brahman. If a householder practices dharma with the wife he has formerly married, he never suffers. If she is abandoned, there will be no fruits from the rites and karma. Along with the fire, that auspicious one was certainly brought to my house. A former wife who has been accepted in accordance with dharma is to be praised. If one acts deceitfully towards her, those of mixed varnas are born. Without my wife, every day, my dharma will suffer. I will deviate from my nitya rites and that will lead to my downfall. O protector of the earth! I will obtain offspring through her. In the cause of dharma, she will give you a sixth part of the share. <sup>714</sup> O lord! The one who is known as my wife has been abducted. I have given you the reasons why you should bring her back. You are in a position of power so that you can protect us.’ Hearing his words, the lord of men was immersed in thought.

“But he ascended a great chariot that was stocked with all the necessary objects. On that, he roamed around, here and there on earth. He saw a great forest and an excellent hermitage. He got down and entered and saw a sage there. He was seated on a mat of kusha grass and blazed in his energy. On seeing the king approach, he quickly got up and honoured and welcomed him, asking his disciple to fetch the arghya. In a low tone, the disciple replied, ‘O sage! It should be considered whether he deserves to be given an arghya. Tell me and I will act according to your instructions.’ The brahmana knew about the atman and was therefore conversant about the king’s conduct. He honoured him only through words of welcome and by offering him a seat. The rishi asked, ‘Why have you come here? What do you wish for? I know that you are King Uttama, the son of Uttanapada.’ The king replied, ‘O sage! Someone has abducted a brahmana’s wife from his house. It is not known who he is. Wishing to find out, I have come here. O illustrious one! I am a guest who has come to your house. I am prostrating myself before you. Therefore, out of compassion, you should tell me whatever I ask you.’ The rishi replied, ‘O protector of the earth! Without any hesitation, ask me whatever you want. If it is something that I can tell you about, I shall certainly tell you the truth.’ The king said, ‘O sage! When you first saw me come to your house, you got ready to offer me arghya. But it was not given. Why was that?’ The rishi replied, ‘O king! On seeing you, I issued that instruction out of impetuosity. However, when my disciple spoke to me, my understanding was restored. Just as I know everything about the universe, the past, the present and the future, through my favours, so does my disciple. When he said I should think before ordering, I got to know everything. Therefore, following the norms, you cannot be given arghya. O king! It is true that having been born in the lineage of Svayambhuva, you deserve arghya. Nevertheless, we did not think that you deserved the best of arghya.’ The king asked, ‘O brahmana! Knowingly or unknowingly, what is it that I have done? Despite my having come here after a long time, why did I not deserve arghya?’ The rishi replied, ‘Have you forgotten that you abandoned your wife in the forest? O king! With her abandoned, you have also cast aside all your acts of dharma. Even if a man

forsakes his rites for a fortnight, he should not be touched. What need be said about a man whose nitya rites have suffered for a year? O lord of men! Whatever be the husband's conduct, the wife must be favourably disposed towards him. Similarly, even if the wife is wicked in conduct, she must be nurtured. O king! The brahmana's wife, who has been abducted, is not kindly disposed towards him. Nevertheless, for dharma and kama, he wishes to get her back. O lord of the earth! You establish others when they deviate from their own dharma. However, when you deviate from your own dharma, who is the person who will establish you? If wild wolves invade a field and the king is wicked in conduct, who will restrain the wicked? When a learned person behaves like an animal, who will control him?' As the intelligent one spoke to him in this way, the lord of the earth looked at him and accepted what he had said. He proceeded to ask about the person who had abducted the brahmana's wife. 'O illustrious one! You know everything in the universe, the past and the future. Who has abducted the brahmana's wife and where?' The rishi replied, 'There is a rakshasa named Balaka. He is Adri's son. He has abducted her. O lord of the earth! You will be able to see her now in the forest known as Utpalavataka. Go there quickly and unite the excellent brahmana with his wife. From one day to another day, you are suffering from sin. Let him not be like that.'""



## Chapter 67

‘Markandeya said, “At this, he prostrated himself before the great sage and mounted his own chariot. He went to the forest named Utapalavata <sup>715</sup> that he had been told about. The lord of men saw the brahmana’s wife and her nature and form were exactly as her husband had described. She was eating the fruit of a *bilva* tree. <sup>716</sup> He asked, ‘O fortunate one! How have you come to this forest? Tell me clearly. Are you the wife of Susharma, the son of Vishala?’ The brahmani replied, ‘I am the daughter of the brahmana Atiratra, who lives in the forest. I am the wife of Vishala’s son, whose name has been mentioned by you. <sup>717</sup> The evil-souled rakshasa, Balaka, has brought me here, while I was asleep in my house. I have been separated from my brothers and my mother. May the rakshasa who has caused this separation from my brothers, mother and others, be reduced to ashes. I am extremely miserable here. I do not know why he has brought me to this extremely desolate forest. He does not eat me, nor does he enjoy me in any other way.’ The king asked, ‘After leaving you here, do you know where the rakshasa has gone? O daughter of a brahmana! I have been sent here by your husband.’ The brahmani replied, ‘The roamer in the night resides near the boundaries of this forest. If you are not scared, enter and see him.’ He entered along the path indicated by her and saw the rakshasa, surrounded by his family.

“As soon as he saw him from a distance, the rakshasa swiftly touched the ground with his head. He approached close and touched his feet. The rakshasa said, ‘You have shown me a great favour by coming to my house. Tell me what I should do. I reside in your kingdom. Accept this arghya. Be seated on this seat. You are the master and we are servants. Instruct us firmly.’ The king replied, ‘You have honoured me with all the marks of

hospitality. O roamer in the night! Why have you abducted the brahmana's wife? She is not beautiful. You could not have abducted her so that she will become a wife and give you offspring. If you have brought her here to eat her, why have you not eaten her yet? Tell me that.' The rakshasa said, 'O king! We do not eat humans. Those are other rakshasas. O king! We eat the fruits of good deeds. O king! Those who are born in the rakshasa species are cruel and cause terror to the worlds. I will tell you about those fruits of good deeds. We do not eat flesh and therefore, we do not eat beings. However, we eat the character of those who show disrespect to men and women. When we devour forgiveness in men, they succumb to rage. When we devour wickedness of nature, people become full of qualities. O lord of the earth! We possess rakshasa women who are the equals of apsaras in beauty and remain content with them. Why should we become attached to human females?' The king asked, 'O roamer in the night! Since you did not wish to enjoy her, or eat her, why did you enter the brahmana's house and abduct her?' The rakshasa answered, 'O king! The best among brahmanas knows the mantras and bars me from every sacrifice I go to. He recites mantras that destroy rakshasas and expels me from those. Since he uses mantras and acts so as to expel us, we are hungry. Where will we go? The brahmana is an officiating priest at all sacrifices. That is the reason I generated this disability in him. Without his wife, no man is capable of engaging himself in sacrificial rites.' A disqualification was thus created in the immensely intelligent brahmana. On learning this, the king was filled with great misery. 'By speaking about the brahmana's disability, he is also censuring me. The excellent sage also said that I am not worthy of receiving arghya. The rakshasa spoke about the brahmana's disability, but I am also like that. Without a wife, I also face a great difficulty.' O sage! While he was thinking in this way, the rakshasa joined his hands in salutation and humbly bowed down before the king. He spoke yet again. 'O Indra among men! Show me your favours and command me. What shall I do? We dwell within your dominion and your servant is bowing down before you.' The king replied, 'O roamer in the night! You said that you devour nature. That is what I desire from you. Hear about what you can do for me. Eat up the

wicked nature of the brahmani now. When you devour her wicked nature, let her become humble. O roamer in the night! Then take this wife back to her husband's house. If you do this, you will have done everything for someone who has come to your house as a guest.' At this, the rakshasa used his own maya to enter her. Using his powers and following the king's command, he devoured her wicked nature.

“That extremely terrible and wicked nature left the brahmana's wife and she spoke to the lord of the world. 'Because of the fruits of my own deeds, I have been separated from my great-souled husband. The roamer in the night was only an instrument. It is not his fault. Nor is it the fault of my great-souled husband. It is my fault alone, not that of anyone else. I have reaped the fruits of my own deeds. In a former life, I must have been the reason behind some woman getting separated and have enjoyed the fruits of that deed. What is the great-souled one's fault?' The rakshasa said, 'O lord! Following your command, I will have her sent to her husband's house. O lord of the earth! What else should I do? Command me.' The king replied, 'O roamer in the night! Through this act, you have done everything for me. O valiant one! Other than that, when the time arrives for some task and I remember you, please come.' The rakshasa agreed to this. With her wicked nature having vanished, the brahmana lady was now pure and he took her to her husband's house.'”

## Chapter 68

‘Markandeya said, “After having sent the lady to her husband’s house, the king sighed and started to think. ‘What is the best thing to do now? The great-minded one told me that I was unworthy of receiving arghya. This is a hardship. The roamer in the night instructed me about the brahmana’s disability. I am just like that. What shall I do? I have abandoned my wife. Should I ask the excellent sage who possesses the insight of knowledge?’ Thinking in this way, the lord of the earth ascended his chariot and went to the great sage who knew about the three phases of time <sup>718</sup> and possessed dharma in his soul. He got down from his chariot, approached him and bowed down. He told him everything that had happened—his seeing the brahmani, the rakshasa’s arrival, the disappearance of her wicked conduct, her being sent to her husband’s house and the reason why he had now come. The rishi said, ‘O lord of men! I already knew everything that you had done and also the reason why you have come here now. I have been eagerly waiting for you to come and ask me about what you should do. O lord of the earth! Now that you have come here, hear about what you must do. For men, the wife is the most powerful means of achieving dharma, artha and kama. In particular, a person who casts her aside, casts aside dharma. O lord of the earth! A man without a wife is incapable of performing his own tasks, regardless of whether he is a brahmana, a kshatriya, a vaishya or a shudra. Having abandoned your wife, you have not done something that is proper. Just as wives must not abandon their husbands, husbands must not abandon their wives.’ The king replied, ‘O illustrious one! What can I do? This calamity must have been brought about by my karma. Though I loved her, she was not favourably inclined towards me. That is the reason I abandoned her. O illustrious one! Separated from her, my inner senses are

terrified and my mind is scorched. I have forgiven everything that she did. Since she has now been left in the forest, I do not know where she is. Or, in the desolate forest, perhaps she has been devoured by lions, tigers, or those who roam in the night.’ The rishi replied, ‘O lord of the earth! She has not been devoured by lions, tigers, or those who roam in the night. Her character is unsullied and she is now in Rasatala.’ The king asked, ‘Who took her to Patala? How can she be unsullied there? This is extremely extraordinary. O brahmana! You should tell me exactly what transpired.’ The rishi replied, ‘The famous king of the nagas, Kapotaka, resides in Patala. When she was abandoned by you, he saw her roaming around in the great forest. O lord of the earth! Since her form was beautiful, he fell in love with her. Having told her this, he took the young lady to Patala. O lord of the earth! His daughter was Nanda, the one with the excellent eyebrows. The intelligent king of the nagas had a wife named Manorama. On seeing her brought there, the beautiful lady <sup>719</sup> thought, “This one will become my mother’s co-wife.” Therefore, the auspicious one took her to her own house and hid her in the inner quarters. Though she was asked by the king, Nanda did not reply to him. Therefore, the father told his daughter, “You will become dumb.” O lord of the earth! The daughter was thus cursed and she <sup>720</sup> remains there. When the chaste lady was taken there by the Indra among the nagas, she has been kept there by his daughter.’ Hearing this, the king was filled with supreme delight and asked him, ‘O noble brahmana! Why have I suffered this misfortune from someone I love? O illustrious one! My love towards her is greater than that towards all the worlds. Therefore, what is the reason for my own wife not being affectionate towards me? O great sage! I desire her more than my own life. O brahmana! Nevertheless, why does she exhibit this evil conduct towards me? Tell me the reason.’ The rishi replied, ‘At the time when you accepted her hand, the sun, Mars <sup>721</sup> and Saturn glanced towards you. Venus and Jupiter glanced towards your wife. The moon and Mercury are mutually opposed. At that moment, the moon looked at you and Mercury at your wife. O lord of the earth! This proved to be terrible for you. Go, follow your own dharma and protect the earth. With your wife as an aide, perform all the rites of dharma.’ Thus addressed, he

prostrated himself and then ascended his own chariot. Uttama, the lord of the earth, returned to his own city.””

## Chapter 69

‘Markandeya said, “Having returned to his own city, the king saw the brahmana. He was with his wife, who now possessed good conduct, and was delighted. The brahmana said, ‘O noble king! I am gratified that you have protected dharma. You know about dharma. Therefore, you have brought my wife back to me.’ The king replied, ‘O best among brahmanas! Since you are able to follow your own dharma, you are gratified. O brahmana! However, since my wife is not in my house, I face a calamity.’ The brahmana said, ‘If she has been devoured in the desolate forest by predatory beasts, this is because you did not look towards dharma and came under the subjugation of rage. Enough of this. Why do you not accept someone else’s hand? O son of a king! There are many beautiful maidens in the houses of kings.’ The king replied, ‘My beloved has not been devoured by predatory beasts. She is alive. Her character is unpolluted. What will I do now?’ The brahmana asked, ‘Your wife is alive and she has not gone to anyone else. Why are you then committing a sin which will lead you to be wifeless in a subsequent birth?’ The king replied, ‘O brahmana! Even if I bring her back, she will always be against me. Since she bears no friendliness towards me, she will be the cause of misery, not the cause of happiness. O brahmana! Your brahmani is beautiful and is devoted to you. Make efforts so that my wife is subservient to me.’ The brahmana said, ‘There is an excellent sacrifice that will make you devoted to her and her devoted to you. I will perform the mitravinda sacrifice, which brings about affection between two parties. It generates supreme affection between a husband and a wife who do not love each other. O Indra among men! I will perform that sacrifice. O lord of the earth! Go to the place where your wife, the one with the excellent eyebrows, is. Bring her here. She will give you

great satisfaction. She will ensure your welfare, so that your dharma does not suffer.’ Thus addressed, the lord of the earth brought all the required objects. When all these had been brought, the excellent brahmana repeatedly performed the sacrifice seven times.

“‘When the brahmana, the great sage, felt that the queen, the wife, was filled with love towards her own husband, he spoke to the lord of men. ‘O best among men! Your mind is immersed in her. Bring her to your presence. Enjoy the objects of pleasure with her. Honoured by her, perform sacrifices with her.’ Thus addressed by the brahmana, the lord of the earth was surprised. He remembered the immensely valiant roamer in the night, who was firm in adhering to pledges. As soon as he had been remembered, he presented himself before the lord of men. O great sage! He bowed down and asked, ‘What will I do?’ The Indra among men told him everything in detail. He went to Patala, gathered the king’s wife, and brought her there. Having been brought there, she was delighted to see her husband. In great joy, she repeatedly exclaimed, ‘Please show me your favours.’ At this, the king eagerly embraced the proud lady. He said, ‘O beloved! Why are you repeatedly speaking in this way? I am indeed pleased with you.’ The wife answered, ‘O Indra among men! If your mind is favourably inclined towards me, as a mark of showing me honour, please do what I am asking you to.’ The king said, ‘Without any hesitation, tell me whatever you desire. O timid one! You will get it. I am under your control and it shall not be otherwise.’ The wife answered, ‘On my account, the naga has cursed his daughter, my friend. He told her that she would become dumb and she has become dumb. If you are capable of countering this, as a mark of love towards me, please do it. If you can correct this deprivation of speech, there is nothing else that you need to do for me.’ At this, the king spoke to the brahmana. ‘What kind of rite needs to be undertaken to remove this dumbness?’ The brahmana replied to the lord of the earth. ‘O lord of the earth! Paying heed to your words, I shall perform the Sarasvati sacrifice. When she gets her power of speech back, your wife will be freed from her debt.’ For this purpose, the excellent brahmana performed the Sarasvati sacrifice. He controlled himself and chanted suktas to Sarasvati. She got her



power of speech and Garga <sup>722</sup> spoke to her in Rasatala. ‘Your friend’s husband has accomplished this extremely difficult task for you.’ On getting to know this, Nanda speedily came to the city. The naga’s daughter embraced her own friend, the queen. Having repeatedly praised the lord of the earth and pronounced benedictions, the naga lady took her seat and spoke in these sweet words. ‘O brave one! You have now done me a good deed. Therefore, my heart has been drawn towards you. Listen to my words. O lord of the earth! You will have an extremely valiant son. His wheel will never be restricted on earth. He will know the purport of all the sacred texts and their truth. He will be devoted to rites of dharma. He will be intelligent. He will be a Manu, the lord of a manvantara.’ O sage! Having bestowed this boon on him, the daughter of the king of the nagas embraced her friend and left for Patala.

“‘With his wife, the lord of the earth spent a very long period of time finding pleasure and ruling over the subjects. The great-souled king had a son through her. He was as beautiful as the full lunar disc on the night of the full moon. When he was born, all the subjects were delighted, and so were the immortals. The drums of the gods were sounded and flowers were showered down. On seeing his beautiful form and realizing his future good conduct, the assembled sages named him Uttama. <sup>723</sup> ‘This child has been born in Uttama’s lineage and at an excellent time. His form is also excellent. Therefore, he will be known as Uttama.’ Thus, Uttama’s son came to be known by the name of Uttama. He became a powerful Manu. O Bhaguri! <sup>724</sup> Hear about him from me. Every day, if a person hears about Uttama’s account and everything about Uttama’s birth, then he never suffers from any enmity. If a man hears it and reads it, he is never separated from his beloved wife, sons and relatives. O brahmana! I will tell you about this manvantara in detail. Hear about it, and about the Indra, the gods and the rishis.’”

## Chapter 70

‘Markandeya said, “In the third manvantara, the Prajapati was Uttama. I will tell you about the gods, Indra, the rishis and the kings. Listen. The first category of gods was the Svadhamas and they acted in accordance with their name. <sup>725</sup> The second category of gods consisted of the Satyas. O excellent sage! The third category of gods was the Shivas and their nature was auspicious. <sup>726</sup> Hearing about them leads to the destruction of sin. O excellent sage! During the manvantara when Uttama was the Manu, a fourth category of gods, known as the Pratardanas, is spoken about. O brahmana! The fifth category of gods were the Vashavartinas. O great sage! All of them possessed natures that corresponded with their names. These five categories of gods are spoken about as the ones who enjoyed shares in sacrifices. In this manvantara, with the best among Manus, within each of these categories, there were twelve gods. Their immensely fortunate Indra was the lord of the three worlds. Having performed one hundred sacrifices, he had the name of Shatakratu. <sup>727</sup> That apart, he also had the name of Sushanti. To destroy evil portents, even today, men on earth sing a chant embellished with the syllables of his name. ‘Sushanti, king of the gods, is beautiful in form. Along with Shivas, Satyas, Vashavartinas and the others, may he grant us excellent serenity.’ This Manu had immensely strong and valiant sons—Aja, Parashuchi and Divya. They were the equals of the gods. During the manvantara of the energetic Uttama Manu, his descendants ruled over the earth and were the lords of men. I have already spoken to you about the cycle of four yugas, krita, treta and the others. There are seventy-one and a half of these in a manvantara. <sup>728</sup> The great-souled one had seven sons who were supreme in their austerities and own energy. They were the saptarshis during this period. I have spoken to you about the third

manvantara. The fourth Manu is spoken of as Tamasa. He was born in an inferior womb, but his fame illuminated the world. O brahmana! Listen to my words about this Manu's birth. The conduct of these Manus is beyond the comprehension of the senses. Such is known to be the birth and power of these great-souled ones.'"

## Chapter 71

‘Markandeya said, “There was a valiant king on earth and he was famous by the name of Svarashtra. The wise one performed many sacrifices and he was unvanquished in battle. O brahmana! Earlier, the illustrious sun god had been worshipped by his ministers. Therefore, the extremely resplendent one bestowed on him an extremely long lifespan. O brahmana! He had one hundred fortunate wives. O sage! Though he possessed a long lifespan, his wives did not have long lifespans. In the course of time, they died, and so did his servants, ministers and other people. He was thus separated from his wives, servants and the others he had been born with. He therefore became anxious in his mind and, day and night, his energy was diminished. His energy was diminished. He was abandoned by his servants. He was extremely miserable. Thereafter, a person named Vimarda <sup>729</sup> dislodged him from his kingdom. Having been dislodged from his kingdom, his mind became detached and he went to the forest. Stationed on the banks of the Vitasta, the immensely fortunate one tormented himself through austerities. During summer, he observed the austerities of the five fires. <sup>730</sup> During the monsoon, he was naked and exposed himself to the rains. During the winter, he lay down in the water. He fasted and controlled himself through his vows.

“While he was practicing these austerities, during the monsoon, there was a great flood. For days on end, water incessantly showered down from the clouds. The directions, east, south, west and north, could no longer be discerned. Everything was enveloped in darkness. Because the river was overflowing, though he tried to, the king could not reach the bank. He was borne along by that extremely strong flow of water. The lord of the earth was borne a long distance away by that flood of water. He managed to reach

a *rouha* <sup>731</sup> doe that was in the water and caught hold of her tail. In the darkness, he was dragged around here and there by the flood of water and over the ground. Eventually, he managed to reach the bank. There was an extremely extensive stretch of mud that was very difficult to cross. The king managed to cross it with great difficulty and reached a beautiful forest. In the darkness, the *rouha* doe dragged the lord of the earth along, clinging onto her tail. The immensely fortunate one was lean and seemed to consist only of veins. <sup>732</sup> Her touch filled him with great joy. As the lord of the earth roamed around in this way, his mind was filled with desire. When he touched her on the back, the doe realized this and spoke to him. ‘O lord of men! Why are you touching my back with a hand that is trembling? O king! This indicates that you are following a contrary course. However, it is not as if I cannot be approached by you. Therefore, your mind has not turned towards an unworthy object. O lord! But Lola creates an impediment in my being united with you.’

“Hearing the words of the doe, the lord of the earth was filled with curiosity. He addressed the *rouha* doe in these words. ‘O doe! Who are you? How can you speak like a human? Tell me. Who is Lola who creates an impediment in your union with me?’ The doe replied, ‘O lord of the earth! Earlier, I used to be your beloved Utpalavati. Among your one hundred wives, I used to be the chief queen. I was the daughter of Dridhadhanva.’ The king asked, ‘What did you do to have taken birth in such a species? She was devoted to her husband and devoted to dharma. How could she be reduced to such a state?’ The doe said, ‘When I was a child in my father’s house, I went to the forest with my friends to amuse myself. There, I saw a buck having intercourse with a doe. I approached and struck the doe. Scared by me, the doe went away elsewhere. Angry, the buck spoke to me. “O foolish one! Why are you mad? Why have you exhibited this wicked conduct? You have rendered this period of impregnation unsuccessful.” Hearing the buck speak to me in a human voice, I was terrified. I asked, “Who are you? Why have you taken birth as such a species?” At this, he replied, “I am the son of rishi Nivritichakshusha. My name is Sutapa. Because I was attracted to this doe, I became a buck. She was also attracted

to me, and following her, I came to this forest. O wicked one! However, you have separated us. Therefore, I will curse you.” I replied, “O sage! I committed this crime in my ignorance. You should show me your favours. You should not curse me.” O lord of the earth! Thus addressed, the sage spoke to me. “If you give yourself to me, I will not curse you.” I told him, “You are in the form of a deer in this forest and I am not a doe. You should desire another doe. Control your desire for me.” When he was spoken to in this way, his eyes turned red with rage and his lips quivered. “O foolish one! You have said that you are not a doe. But you will become a doe.” Extremely distressed, I bowed down before the sage, who had regained his own form, but was still extremely angry. I tried to repeatedly placate him. “I am a child and inexperienced in the choice of words. That is the reason I spoke to you in that way. When the father is still there, how can a maiden choose her husband herself? O supreme sage! When my father exists, how can I possibly have chosen you? Even if I have committed a crime, you should show me your favours. I am prostrating myself at your feet. Show me your favours. O immensely intelligent one! I am prostrating myself before you. Show me your favours.” Entreated in this way, the bull among sages replied, “The words I have uttered can never be rendered false. You will become a doe in this forest, but after your death, in your next birth. In your form as a deer, you will bear in your womb the mighty-armed Lola, the son of the sage Siddhavirya. O beautiful one! As soon as you conceive, you will remember your last life. When you get your memory back, you will speak in a human voice. When he has been born, you will be freed from your state of being a deer and will be honoured by your husband. You will obtain worlds that cannot be obtained by those who perform wicked deeds. The immensely valiant Lola will destroy his father’s enemies. He will conquer the entire world and become a Manu.” Cursed in this way, I was born as inferior species after death. I conceived because of his touch and there is a foetus in my womb. <sup>733</sup> That is the reason I told you, it is not as if I cannot be approached by you. Your mind has not turned towards an unworthy object. However, because Lola is in the womb, there is an impediment.’ Thus addressed, the king was filled with great delight. ‘My

son will conquer the enemies on earth and become a Manu.’ The doe gave birth to a son who possessed all the auspicious signs. As soon as he was born, all the creatures were delighted. The king was especially delighted when his son was born in that great forest. Freed from her curse, the doe attained the supreme worlds.

“O supreme sage! All the rishis assembled. They considered his future prosperity and gave the great-souled one a name. ‘He was born when his mother was covered in tamas and the world was also covered in tamas. <sup>734</sup> Therefore, he will be known as Tamasa.’ Tamasa was reared by his father in that forest. O supreme sage! When his intelligence developed, he spoke to his father. ‘O father! Who are you and how am I your son? Who is my mother? Why have you come here? Tell me the truth.’ The mighty-armed father, the lord of the world, told his son everything about how he had been dislodged from the kingdom and about how he had come to the forest. Having heard everything, he worshipped the sun god and obtained all the divine weapons, techniques of releasing, controlling and withdrawing them. Having obtained weapons, he conquered the enemies and brought them to his father’s presence. With his father’s permission, he established them in their own dharma and released them. Because of his austerities and sacrifices, his father conquered worlds for himself. He was happy at seeing his son’s face. When he gave up his body, he went to those worlds. The king known as Tamasa conquered the entire earth. Since the Manu was Tamasa, hear about the manvantara known as Tamasa, the gods, the lord and Indra of the gods, the rishis and the sons of Manu who protected the earth. O sage! There were twenty-seven categories of gods, Satyas, Sudhis, Surupas, Haris and others. The lord of the gods, the Indra, was the immensely strong and immensely valiant Shikhi, the performer of one hundred sacrifices. O brahmana! The saptarshis were Jyotidharma, Prithu, Kavya, Chaitra, Agni, Balaka and Pivara. The extremely strong sons of Tamasa were Nara, Kshanti, Shanta, Danta, Janu, Jangha and others. O brahmana! I have thus described Tamasa manvantara. A person who reads about Tamasa, or hears it, is never obstructed.”

## Chapter 72

‘Markandeya said, “O brahmana! The fifth Manu is known as Raivata. Hear about his origin. I will describe it to you in detail. There was an immensely fortunate rishi and he was known by the name of Ritavak. The great-souled one had no son. However, when Revati nakshatra was about to set, a son was born to him. Following the ordinances, the sage performed all the rites, jatakarma, upanayana and all the others. Nevertheless, he turned out to be evil in conduct. O sage! Ever since he was born, the bull among sages started to suffer from a lingering disease. His mother also started to suffer a lot, from leprosy and other diseases. Extremely unhappy, his father started to think. ‘Why has this occurred?’ Meanwhile, his evil-minded son met the wife of another sage’s son and seized her. At this, distressed in his mind, Ritavak said, ‘Men who have no sons are better off than men who have wicked sons. A wicked son always strikes at the hearts of his father and his mother and leads to the downfall of all the ancestors who are in heaven. He brings no benefit to his well-wishers and the ancestors aren’t satisfied. He brings grief to his father. Shame on the birth of such an evildoer. Blessed are those whose sons are respected by all the worlds. They <sup>735</sup> benefit others, are tranquil and always practise virtuous deeds.

Depending on a wicked son, who does not refrain from evil, we have turned our face away from the world hereafter and towards hell. We will not achieve a good destination. He causes hardships to well-wishers and brings delight to those who wish us harm. There is no doubt that his parents have suffered from this untimely old age because of a wicked son.’ The mind of the sage was tormented in this way by the conduct of this exceedingly wicked son.



“He told Garga everything and questioned him. Ritavak said, ‘Earlier, I have followed good vows and have learnt the Vedas according to the norms. After studying the Vedas, I followed the rites and took a wife. With my wife, I performed the vashatkara and other rites of the shruti and smriti texts. O great sage! Till today, there is nothing that I have not performed. The conception did not happen because I was driven by desire. O sage! I did it for the sake of a son, since I was scared of the hell named *pum*.<sup>736</sup> O sage! Has there been a sin on his part? Has there been a sin on my part? Why has a son who is wicked in conduct been born? He brings grief to us and causes misery to his relatives.’ Garga replied, ‘O best among sages! Your son was born when Revati was about to set. This misery is because he was born at an evil time. There has been no transgression by you, his mother, or by your lineage. The reason behind his wicked conduct is that Revati was about to set.’ Ritavak said, ‘I have only one son and he was born when Revati was about to set. That is the reason behind his wicked conduct. Therefore, let Revati quickly fall down.’<sup>737</sup> As soon as he said this, because of that curse, the nakshatra Revati fell down. All the worlds looked on, their minds numb with wonder. As Revati nakshatra fell down, all the sides of Mount Kumuda, the forests, caverns and springs, were suddenly illuminated by that radiance. Because of this fall, Mount Kumuda came to be known as Raivataka. Among all the mountains on earth, it is the most beautiful. The beauty of the nakshatra led to the creation of Lake Pankajini. A maiden was born from this and she was exceedingly beautiful. Her beauty was like that of Revati and the sage Pramucha saw her. O Bhaguri! He therefore gave her the name of Revati. She was born near his own hermitage on that great mountain and the immensely fortunate Pramucha reared her. He saw that the extremely beautiful maiden attained youth. The sage wondered, ‘Who will be her husband?’ The great sage wondered in this way and a long period of time elapsed. The great sage did not find a groom who was her equal. The sage Pramucha decided to ask Agni about an appropriate groom for her. He entered the place where the sacrificial fire was kept and asked. The bearer of oblations replied, ‘There is a lord of the earth named Durmada. He is immensely strong and immensely valiant. He is pleasant in

speech and devoted to dharma. He will be her husband.’ O sage! After some time, the intelligent King Durmada went out on a hunt and came to the hermitage. He was born in Priyavrata’s lineage and was immensely strong and valiant. He was the son of Vikramashila and was born in Kalindi’s womb.

“‘The lord of the earth entered the hermitage and addressed the slender-limbed one as ‘beloved’. Unable to see the rishi, he questioned her. ‘The illustrious bull among sages is not in his hermitage. Where has he gone? O beautiful one! I wish to bow down before him. Tell me the truth.’ The brahmana had gone to the place where the sacrificial fire was kept. Hearing his words and hearing the word ‘beloved’ uttered, he emerged quickly. The sage saw the great-souled King Durmada. He was marked with the signs of being an Indra among men and was bent down before him in humility. On seeing him, he spoke to his disciple, Goutama. ‘O Goutama! Swiftly bring arghya for this lord of the earth. In the first place, the lord of the earth has come here after a long time. That apart, since he is a son-in-law, he deserves arghya.’ The king wondered why he was being spoken of as a son-in-law. Since he did not know, he kept silent, though he accepted the arghya. Once he had accepted the arghya and had taken his seat, the brahmana, the great sage, welcomed him. He said, ‘O Indra among kings! Is everything well in your home? O lord of men! How about your treasury, army, friends, servants and advisers? O mighty-armed one! All of them have a foundation in you. Your wife, who is here, is well and I will not ask about her. But are the other women well?’ The king replied, ‘Because of your favours, everyone is well. O one who is excellent in vows! O sage! But I am curious. Who is my wife who happens to be here?’ The rishi said, ‘The immensely fortunate Revati is most beautiful in the three worlds. She is beautiful and she is your wife. O king! Do you not know her?’ The king replied, ‘O brahmana! I know the wives who are in my home—Subhadra, Shanta’s daughter; Kaveri’s daughter; Sujata, born in Surashtra; Kadamba, Varutha’s daughter; Vipatha; and Nandini. They are there. O illustrious one! But I do not know Revati. Who is she?’ The rishi said, ‘You have just addressed the one with the beautiful complexion as “beloved”. O lord of the earth! Have

you forgotten? This wife of yours is praiseworthy.’ The king replied, ‘O sage! It is true that I addressed her in that way, but I had no evil thoughts in mind. In this case, you should not be angry with me. I seek your favours.’ The rishi said, ‘O lord of the earth! You said that you had no evil thoughts in mind. O king! You spoke in that way because you were urged by Agni. O lord of the earth! I asked the bearer of oblations who might be her husband. He said that you were the one and that you would become her groom today. O lord of men! I am bestowing this maiden on you. Please accept her. You have already addressed her as “beloved”. Why are you thinking?’ Though he was spoken to in this way, the lord of the earth kept silent. The rishi got ready to complete the marriage rites. O great sage! As her father got ready to complete the marriage rites, the maiden spoke, her face lowered a little in modesty. ‘O father! If you love me, you should show me a favour. Since you are pleased with me, undertake my marriage when Revati nakshatra is in the ascendant.’ The rishi replied, ‘O fortunate one! Revati nakshatra does not have a conjunction with the moon. O one with the excellent eyebrows! Other nakshatras are more appropriate for marriage.’ The maiden said, ‘O father! Without it, <sup>738</sup> it seems to be that this time will be unsuccessful. How can the marriage of a maiden like me be conducted at a time that is futile?’ The rishi replied, ‘The famous ascetic, Ritavak, became angry with Revati. In his rage, he brought down that nakshatra. O one with the maddening eyes! I promised him that you would become this one’s wife. If you do not wish to get married, a difficulty presents itself.’ The maiden asked, ‘O father! What kind of austerities did the sage Ritavak practise? O father! Have you not also not undertaken austerities? Am I the daughter of a *brahma-bandhu*?’ <sup>739</sup> The rishi replied, ‘You are not the daughter of a *brahma-bandhu*. Nor are you the child of a mere ascetic. If I am so inclined, I can create gods.’ The maiden asked, ‘If my father is an ascetic, why is that nakshatra not in the firmament? Why are you not arranging my marriage with the nakshatra established there?’ The rishi replied, ‘O fortunate one! May you be fortunate and happy. For your sake, I will establish Revati nakshatra in the moon’s path.’ O supreme among brahmanas! Using the power of his austerities, the great sage established Revati nakshatra where it

had been earlier, so that there was a conjunction with the moon. Using mantras, he followed the ordinances and completed his daughter's marriage rites.

“Delighted, he again spoke to his son-in-law. The rishi asked, ‘O lord of the earth! Tell me. What will I give you as a wedding gift? I will give it to you, even if it is difficult to obtain. The power of my austerities is unrestricted.’ The king replied, ‘O sage! I have been born as a descendant of Svayambhuva Manu. Through your favours, I seek the boon that my son may be the lord of a manvantara.’ The rishi said, ‘It shall be as you wish. O lord of the earth! Your son will be a Manu who will enjoy the entire earth. He will know about dharma.’ Taking her with him, the lord of the earth went to his own city. Through Revati, he had Raivata Manu as a son. He was knowledgeable about all dharma and could not be defeated by any men. He possessed the learning of all the sacred texts. He knew the purport of the Vedas and all the sacred texts. O brahmana! I will tell you about the gods, sages, Indra of the gods and lords of the earth during his manvantara. Listen attentively. O brahmana! The gods were the Sumedhas, Bhutanas, Vaikunthas and Amitabhas. There were fourteen within each of these categories. The lord of these four categories of gods was named Vibhu. He was the Indra, known for having performed one hundred sacrifices. During the manvantara of Raivata Manu, the saptarshis were Hiranyaloma, Vedashri, Urddhabahu, Vedabahu, Sudhama, the great sage Parjanya and the immensely fortunate Vasishtha, accomplished in the Vedas and the Vedangas.

The sons of Raivata Manu were the immensely valiant Balabandhu, Suyashtavya, Satyaka and others. I have spoken to you up to Raivata Manu. With the exception of Svarochisha Manu, they were all descended from Svayambhuva Manu. People who always listen to this excellent account, or read it, are cleansed from all sins and obtain the desired worlds.”

## Chapter 73

‘Markandeya said, “I have thus described five manvantaras to you. Next hear about the sixth, that of Chakshusha Manu. In another life, he was born from Parameshthi’s eye. <sup>740</sup> O brahmana! In this life, he was therefore known as Chakshusha. The great-souled royal sage, Anamitra, had a wife named Bhadra and she gave birth to this extremely learned son. The lord was pure and remembered his earlier birth. When he was born, his mother placed him on her lap and repeatedly talked to him. She happily embraced him and continued to talk to him. When he was born, he remembered his earlier lives. Lying on his mother’s lap, he laughed. At this, his mother angrily addressed him in these words. ‘I am scared. O child! Why is there this smile on your lips? Have you developed intelligence ahead of time? Have you seen something beautiful?’ Hearing his mother’s words, he laughed and spoke. The son replied, ‘O mother! Do you not see the cat in front of you? It desires to devour me. There is a second one who is invisible. She steals newborn babies. <sup>741</sup> Because of love for your son, you are glancing at me with affection. You are talking a lot to me and are embracing me. Your eyes are full of tears of love and your body hair is standing up. That is the reason I started to laugh. Listen to the reason. Because of its selfish reasons, the cat is glancing at me with attachment. There is a second one who is invisible. She is Jataharini. Their hearts are full of affection towards me because of their own selfish reasons. It seems to me that you are also acting in this way because of selfish reasons. The cat and Jataharini wish to enjoy me now. However, you desire to enjoy the fruits gradually. You do not know who I am. There is no good deed that I have done to you. The association between us is not of long duration. It has been a matter of five or seven days. Even then, you are full of affection

towards me and are embracing me with tears in your eyes. Without any deceit, you are addressing me in words like “O child! O son!”” The mother replied, ‘O child! I have not affectionately embraced you with the motive of your doing a good turn to me. If this does not cause any delight to you, then let me be abandoned by you. I give up whatever selfish motive I may have in you.’ Saying this, she abandoned him and left the delivery chamber. His body and limbs still couldn’t move, though his heart was pure. When she abandoned him, Jataharini stole him. King Vikranta’s wife had just delivered and was lying down in her delivery chamber. Jataharini stole her child and left him <sup>742</sup> there instead. She took this child <sup>743</sup> to another house, replacing the son from that house with this child. Thus, in due course, Jataharini devoured this third child. This is what this cruel demoness does. Every day, she replaces one newborn child with another and eats up the third child. <sup>744</sup>

“King Vikranta performed all the samskaras that should be performed for a royal son. Following the norms, his father gave him the name of Ananda. Vikranta, the lord of men, was filled with great delight. When the upanayana ceremony had been performed, the guru told the prince, ‘You should first go and prostrate yourself before your mother.’ Hearing his guru’s words, he laughed and spoke. Ananda asked, ‘Which mother shall I show obeisance to, the one who gave me birth, or the one who reared me?’ The guru responded, ‘O immensely fortunate one! The mother who gave you birth is Jaruja’s daughter. She is known by the name of Haimini and she is the chief among Vikranta’s queens.’ Ananda said, ‘She is the mother of Chaitra, who resides in the village of Vishala and is the son of Bodha, a foremost brahmana. She gave birth to him. I have been born from someone else.’ The guru asked, ‘O Ananda! Where have you come from? Who is the Chaitra you have spoken about? It is evident that there is a great difficulty. Where were you born? What are you saying?’ Ananda replied, ‘O brahmana! I was born in the house of the Kshatriya Anamitra, through his wife Giribhadra. <sup>745</sup> Jataharini abducted me. She left me here and seized Haimini’s son. She then took him to the house of Bodha, foremost among brahmanas and devoured the son who had been born in the home of the

brahmana Bodha. Haimini's son is there, initiated into the samskaras of brahmanas. O immensely fortunate one! Because of my samskara, you are my guru and I must follow your commands. O guru! But which mother shall I go to?' The guru said, 'O child! This is an extremely intricate and grave difficulty. I do not know at all. My mind is whirling around in confusion.' Ananda asked, 'When the universe is established in this way, how can there be a reason for confusion? O brahmana rishi! Who is whose son? Who is whose relative? All these human relationships begin with birth. O brahmana! With death, all relationships with others are terminated. These relationships with others originate here, with birth. These are severed with the end of the body. That is the way of everything. Therefore, I say—while I am in samsara, who is a relative? Who is a permanent friend? Why is your intelligence confounded? In this birth itself, I have had two fathers and two mothers. What can be more wonderful in this act of taking birth? I will now perform austerities. From Vishala village, please have the king's son, Chaitra, brought here.' The king, his wife and relatives were amazed at this. Withdrawing all sense of ownership in him, he gave him permission to leave for the forest. He brought his son Chaitra and made him fit for the kingdom. He honoured the brahmana who had reared him, taking him to be his own son.

“Though he was a mere child, Ananda engaged in austerities in the great forest. He sought to destroy all the karma that was an impediment in the path towards emancipation. While he was performing austerities, the god Prajapati spoke to him. 'O child! Why are you tormenting yourself through these fierce austerities? Tell me.' Ananda replied, 'O illustrious one! I am performing austerities so that I can purify myself. I am eager to destroy all the karma that creates bonds.' Brahma said, 'Only those who have no rights are fit for emancipation, not those who engage in karma. You have rights over other creatures. Nevertheless, you desire emancipation. You will be the sixth Manu. Go and act accordingly. Enough of austerities for the sake of obtaining emancipation.' When Brahma spoke in this way, the immensely intelligent one agreed to this. He ceased the austerities that turned him away from karma. When he had stopped the austerities, Brahma addressed him as

Chakshusha, the name that he had been known by earlier. He became famous as Chakshusha Manu. He married Vidarbha, the daughter of King Ugra. Through her, he had famous and valiant sons. O brahmana! Hear about the gods, rishis, Indra and sons during his manvantara. One category of gods was named Apyas and there were eight in this category. O brahmana! They were famous for their deeds and they ate the oblations offered at sacrifices. They were famous for their strength and valour and because of their resplendent halos, they were difficult to look at. A second category of gods was known as Prasutas and there were eight in this category too. In that way, there was another category of gods known as Bhavyas and they were also eight in number. A fourth category of gods was Yuthagas and this also numbered eight. O brahmana! In this manvantara, there was a fifth category of gods known as Lekhas and they subsisted on amrita. Their lord performed one hundred sacrifices. This Indra was known as Manojava and he had a share in sacrificial offerings. Sumedha, Viraja, Havishmat, Unnata, Madhu, Atinama and Sahishnu—these were the saptarshis. The lords of the earth were Chakshusha Manu's extremely strong sons—Uru, Puru and Shatadyumna being the foremost. O brahmana! I have thus told you about the sixth manvantara and about Chakshusha's birth and conduct. The Manu who is now present is named Vaivasvata. I will tell you about the gods and others in this seventh manvantara. Listen. If an intelligent person chants about Chakshusha manvantara, or hears about it, he obtains sons, women, freedom from disease, happiness and prosperity on earth.””



## Chapter 74

‘Markandeya said, “Martanda Ravi’s wife was Vishvakarma’s daughter. The immensely fortunate one’s name was Samjna and through her, Bhanu had a son.<sup>746</sup> The illustrious one obtained fame as a Manu and he was accomplished in all forms of knowledge. Since he was Vivasvat’s son, he was known as Vaivasvata. Whenever Samjna saw Ravi, she used to close her eyes. At this, Arka addressed her in cruel words. ‘O foolish one! Since you close your eyes on seeing me, you will give birth to Yama, the one who restrains subjects.’ Hearing this, the eyes of the goddess were filled with fear and they flickered. Seeing that her eyes were agitated, Ravi spoke to her yet again. ‘Now your eyes have become agitated on seeing me. Therefore, you will give birth to the Vilola river.’<sup>747</sup> Thus cursed by her husband, Samjna gave birth to Yama and the famous and great river, Yamuna. In great misery, the beautiful Samjna had tolerated Ravi’s energy. However, unable to tolerate this energy, she started to think. ‘What will I do? Where will I go? Where can I go and get some relief? How is it possible for my husband, Arka, to not fall prey to rage?’ Prajapati’s<sup>748</sup> daughter thought thus, in many different kinds of ways. The immensely fortunate one then thought of taking refuge with her father. The illustrious one made up her mind to go to her father’s house. But from her own body, loved by Ravi, she fashioned Chhaya.<sup>749</sup> She told her, ‘Remain in Bhanu’s house, as if you are me. Behave properly towards Ravi and towards my offspring. Even if you are asked, you should not speak about my departure. “I am the one who is named Samjna.” Address him in these words.’ Chhaya replied, ‘O queen! I will do what you have said, but only as long as I am not cursed, or dragged by my hair. If I am cursed or dragged by the hair, I will

recount the facts.’ Having been thus addressed, the goddess went to her father’s house.

“‘There, she saw that Tvashta <sup>750</sup> had cleansed all his sins through austerities. Vishvakarma honoured her with a great deal of respect. The unblemished one remained in her father’s house for some time. Thereafter, though she hadn’t lived there for a long time, her father spoke to the one with the beautiful limbs. But before that, he praised his daughter and spoke to her with a great deal of love and respect. ‘O child! When I see you, even a large number of days seem to pass like half a muhurta. However, dharma may suffer. If a woman lives with her relatives for a long time, that is not regarded as praiseworthy. It is the wish of relatives that women should reside in the houses of their husbands. In particular, you have been married to Surya, the lord of the three worlds. O daughter! It is not proper for you to live in your father’s house for a long time. Therefore, go to your husband’s house. I am pleased with you and am honouring you. O fortunate one! Come again and see me.’ O sage! Thus addressed by her father, she agreed. Having worshipped her father, she went to Uttarakuru. She was scared and did not wish to face Surya’s heat and radiance. Assuming the form of a mare, she performed austerities there.

“‘Taking the second Samjna to be the real one, through her, the lord of the day <sup>751</sup> had two sons and a beautiful daughter. Chhaya-Samjna was excessively affectionate towards her two sons and daughter, but did not love Samjna’s two sons and daughter to the same degree. <sup>752</sup> There were differences in rearing them and in the objects of pleasure that were given to them. Manu was not agitated by this. Indeed, Manu tolerated this. However, Yama could not tolerate it. In his rage, he raised his foot, so as to kick her. But he forgave her and did not let his foot strike her body. O brahmana! Nevertheless, in rage, Chhaya-Samjna cursed Yama. Her lips quivered a little and her delicate hands shook. ‘I am your father’s wife and should be respected. But you have sought to strike me with your foot. Therefore, that foot of yours will fall down on the ground today.’ Hearing the curse his mother had invoked on him, Yama was filled with fear. Scared, he approached his father and prostrated himself before him. Yama said, ‘O

father! This is a great wonder and I have never seen anything like this before. A mother has cast aside her affection and has invoked a curse on her son. Just as Manu says, I do not think she is our mother. Even if a son doesn't possess the qualities, a mother is never bereft of qualities.' Hearing Yama's words, the illustrious dispeller of darkness summoned Chhaya-Samjna and asked, 'Where has she gone?' She replied, 'O Vibhavasus! <sup>753</sup> I am Samjna, Tvashta's daughter. I am your wife and these offspring have been born through me.' Vivasvat questioned her several times, but she did not tell him. Angry, the sun god got ready to curse her. Thereupon, she told Vivasvat exactly what had happened. Knowing the truth, the illustrious one went to Tvashta's house. The sun god is worshipped by the three worlds. Since the sun god had himself come to his house, Tvashta honoured him with great devotion. Asked about Samjna, Vishvakarma told him, 'She had come to my house, but I sent her back to you.' The sun god meditated and saw her, roaming around in Uttarakuru in the form of a mare and performing austerities. The sun god discerned the reason behind her austerities. 'May my husband have a gentle body and auspicious form.' O brahmana! At this, the sun god spoke to Samjna's father. 'Reduce my fierce energy a bit.' Ravi takes an entire year to revolve. Vishvakarma placed him on his wheel and reduced his energy somewhat, while the gods uttered words of praise.'"

## Chapter 75

‘Markandeya said, “After this, all the assembled gods and the divine rishis used words of praise to show honour to Ravi, revered by the three worlds. The gods said, ‘We bow down to the one whose form is the hymns of the Rig Veda. We bow down to the one whose form is the hymns of the Sama Veda. We bow down to the one whose form is the hymns of the Yajur Veda. We bow down to the one whose resplendence is in the hymns. We bow down to the one who alone is the reservoir of knowledge, the one who destroys darkness. Your form is pure radiance. Your atman is pure and sparkling. You are the one who holds the chakra, the conch shell, the Sharnga bow and the lotus. We bow down to the refuge. You are the best. You are the one to be worshipped. You are the supreme paramatman. We bow down to the one who is the origin of the universe, the embodied form of the atman. You are the origin behind all creation. For those whose intelligence has knowledge, you are faith. We bow down to the one whose form is Surya. We bow down to the one whose form is light. We bow down to Bhaskara. <sup>754</sup> We bow down to the one who creates day. We bow down to the one who causes night. We bow down to the one who causes sandhya and moonlight. You are the illustrious one. You are the one who makes the entire universe whirl around. You are the one who makes the entire universe, with its mobile and immobile objects, revolve. By being touched with your rays, everything becomes pure. It is through the touch of your rays that water and everything else becomes pure. Without you, oblations and other acts of dharma bring no benefit. Without being united with your rays, none of this exists in the universe. You are all the hymns of the Rig Veda. You are all the hymns of the Yajur Veda. All the hymns of the Sama Veda descend from your body. O lord of the universe! You are full of the

hymns of the Rig Veda. You are full of the hymns of the Yajur Veda. You are full of the hymns of the Sama Veda. O lord! Therefore, all three are in you. You are Brahma's form. You are supreme. You are also what is not supreme. You are embodied and you are not embodied. You are established in your subtle and gross forms. You are in the form of nimesha and kashtha. You are in the form of time. You are the form of destruction. Be pleased. Through your own wishes, reduce the energy of your own form.' This supreme and beautiful hymn should only be heard by men who are full of faith. A guru must only reveal it to someone who becomes a disciple and meditates. The undecaying one was thus praised by the gods and the divine rishis. He shed a bit from the mass of his rays. The energy that consisted of hymns from the Rig Veda became the earth. The energy that consisted of hymns from the Yajur Veda became the firmament. Ravi's energy that consisted of hymns from the Sama Veda became heaven. Tvashta shaved off fifteen parts of his energy.<sup>755</sup> With these, Tvashta fashioned Sharva's trident, Vishnu's chakra, extremely terrible javelins for the Vasus, the fire god's spear, Dhanada's palanquin and other fierce weapons for asuras, yakshas and vidyadharas. Vishvakarma did that and the radiant and illustrious lord only retained one-sixteenth of his original lustre. Vishvakarma shaved off fifteen parts of the energy.

“After this, Bhanu assumed the form of a horse and went to the Uttarakuru region. He saw Samjna there, in the form of a mare. On seeing him approach, she suspected that this was someone else's husband.<sup>756</sup> Intent on protecting her rear, she faced him when she approached. They united with each other by joining their noses. As a result, through the mare's nose, Nasatya and Dasra were born as sons. From the rest of the semen, a son named Revanta was born, holding a sword and a shield and clad in armour. He was born astride a horse, with a quiver full of arrows. Thereafter, Bhanu displayed his unmatched form. On seeing his own form, she happily assumed her own form. He honoured her and brought her to his hermitage. Bhaskara, the one who steals water, brought his own loving wife, Samjna, back. The eldest among her sons was Vaivasvata Manu. The second son was Yama. Because of the curse, he came to possess insight about dharma.

His father himself devised a means for bringing an end to the curse. ‘The worms will take flesh from his foot and fall down on the ground.’ Since he possessed insight about dharma and was impartial between friend and enemy, the dispeller of darkness appointed him lord of the southern direction. <sup>757</sup> River Yamuna started to flow within the Kalinda region. The great-souled father made the two Ashvins <sup>758</sup> physicians of the gods. Revanta was appointed the lord of the guhyakas. Now hear about how Chhaya-Samjna’s sons were engaged. The eldest of Chhaya-Samjna’s sons was just like the eldest, the Manu. Therefore, this son of Ravi’s was given the name of Savarnika. <sup>759</sup> He will be the Manu when Bali becomes Indra. The father appointed the son in the middle, Shanaishchara, as a planet. <sup>760</sup> The third, the daughter, was Tapati. Through King Samvarana, she had a son named Kuru. <sup>761</sup> I will now tell you about the seventh manvantara, that of Vaivasvata. I will tell you about his sons, the kings, the rishis, the gods and the lord of the gods.””

## Chapter 76

‘Markandeya said, “The eight categories of gods are said to be the Adityas, Vasus, Rudras, Sadhyas, Vishvadevas, the large number of Marus, the Bhrigus and the Angirases. The Adityas, Vasus and Rudras are known as the sons of Kashyapa. The Sadhyas, Vasus<sup>762</sup> and Vishvadevas—these three categories are the sons of Dharma. The gods who are the Bhrigus are the sons of Bhrigu and the gods who are the Angirases are the sons of Angiras. But right now, the lord of this category is known as Maricha.<sup>763</sup> The great-souled Urjjasvi is Indra and he enjoys a share in sacrifices. There were Indras of the gods in the past, there are Indras now and there will be Indras in the future. All of them are known to possess similar characteristics. All of them possess one thousand eyes. All of them wield the vajra and all of them are the destroyers of enemy cities. All of them are munificent and like bulls. All of them ride tusked elephants. All of them are performers of one hundred sacrifices. All of them overcome creatures with their energy. All of them are pure and place dharma at the forefront. They thus possess the traits of lordship. They are the protectors of the past, the present and the future. O brahmana! Hear about the three worlds. The earth is known as bhuloka. The firmament is held to be bhuvarloka. Heaven is said to be svarloka. These are said to be the three worlds. Atri, Vasishtha, the great rishi Kashyapa, Goutama, Bharadvaja, Koushika Vishvamitra and the illustrious Jamadagni, the son of the great-souled Richika—these are said to be the seven sages in this manvantara. The nine sons of Vaivasvata Manu are said to be Ikshvaku, Nabhaga, Dhrishta, Sharyati, Narishyanta, Nabghaga-dishta, Karusha, Prishadhra and Vasuman, famous in the worlds. O brahmana! I have spoken to you about Vaisvasvata manvantara. O

excellent one! If a man hears this, or reads it, he is instantly cleansed from all sins and obtains great merits.””



## Chapter 77

‘Kroushtuki said, “You have spoken to me about seven Manus, beginning with Svayambhuva and you have also told me about the gods, kings and sages in those manvantaras. O great sage! But there will be seven other manvantaras in this kalpa. Please tell me about the Manus, gods and others in these.”

‘Markandeya replied, “I have told you about Savarni, <sup>764</sup> Samjna’s son. He was the equal of his elder brother, the Manu. <sup>765</sup> He will be the eighth Manu. The saptarshis will be Rama, Vyasa, Galava, Diptimat, Kripa, Rishyashringa and Drona. The three categories of gods will be Sutapas, Amitabhas and Mukhyas. Each of these categories has twenty gods and since there are three categories, the total number is sixty. Tapa, Tapas, Shakra, Dyuti, Jyoti, Prabhakara, Prabhasa, Dayita, Dharma, Tejas, Rashmi, Vakratu and so on are the twenty in the category of gods who are Sutapas. Prabhu, Vibhu, Vibhasa and others are the twenty in the category of gods who are Amitabhas. Now hear about the third category—Dama, Danta, Rita, Soma, Vinta and others constitute the twenty. These are the gods who are known as the Mukhyas. They are the sons of Maricha and Prajapati Kashyapa and will be the lords of the manvantara during the manvantara of Savarni Manu. O sage! Their Indra will be Bali, Virochana’s son. That daitya is in Patala now, bound by the noose of time. Viraja, Arvavira, Nirmoha, Satyavak, Kriti, Vishnu and others—these sons of Savarni Manu will be kings.”’

## Chapter 78 <sup>766</sup>

‘Markandeya said, “I have spoken to you about Surya’s son, Savarni. He is referred to as the eighth Manu. Now hear about his origin in detail. Listen. Ravi’s son, the immensely fortunate Savarni, became the lord of a manvantara because of the favours of Mahamaya. In the preceding manvantara of Svarochisha, the king named Suratha was born in Chaitra’s lineage. He was the king of the entire earth and he protected his subjects properly, treating them like his own sons. There were kings who did not destroy the Kolas <sup>767</sup> and they became his enemies. Though he wielded an extremely powerful staff, he had a battle with them. In that battle, the kings who did not destroy the Kolas defeated him. After this, he returned to his own city and ruled over his kingdom alone. <sup>768</sup> Nevertheless, the immensely fortunate one was attacked by his powerful enemies. He was weak in strength and wicked and evil-souled advisers conspired against him. Even though he was in his own city, they robbed him of his treasury and army. Having lost all his possessions, the lord of the earth pretended to go out on a hunt. Alone, he rode a horse and went to the desolate forest. There, he saw the hermitage of the noble brahmana, Sumedha. The place was adorned with the sage’s disciples and with predatory creatures that behaved in a serene way. Honoured by the sage, he resided there for some time. In the sage’s excellent hermitage, he roamed around, here and there. With his mind still attracted to thoughts of ‘mine’, he thought. ‘I used to rule over that city earlier, but it has been lost to me now. Are my wicked servants following dharma when they rule over it? My brave elephant, Supradhana, was always in musth. Having come under the control of my enemies, is it enjoying objects of pleasure? There were those who were always devoted to me, giving me food, riches and vessels. They must certainly be the

followers of other kings now. My treasury was accumulated with a great deal of difficulty. There is no doubt that it is now being frittered away in evil pursuits, through wicked conduct.’ In this way, the king thought about various things.

“‘He saw a vaishya in that brahmana’s hermitage and asked him, ‘Who are you? Why have you come here? Why are you grieving? It is evident that you are in a distressed frame of mind.’ The vaishya heard these affectionate words spoken by the king and replied humbly to the king. The vaishya said, ‘I am a vaishya named Samadhi. I was born in a wealthy family. My wicked wife and sons were greedy about my riches. I have been deprived of my relatives, wife and sons. Thus deceived by my relatives and friends, who have taken away my riches, I have come to this forest, miserable. Right now, I do not know if everything at home is well or not. Are my sons behaving in a virtuous way or are they behaving in a wicked way?’ The king asked, ‘You have been deprived of your riches by your greedy wife and sons. Hence, why is your mind still tied to them in bonds of love?’ The vaishya replied, ‘Your words are certainly true. But what can I possibly do? My mind is not drawn to cruelty. Because of their greed for the riches, they have deceived me and have cast aside the love for a father. The love for a husband has been cast aside. The love for a relative has been cast aside. However, my mind is still affectionate towards them. O immensely intelligent one! I do not comprehend this. I do not know the reason. Though my relatives are devoid of qualities, my mind is full of affection towards them. I sigh on their account. My mind is distressed because of them. What can I possibly do? My mind is not cruel and I cannot hate them.’ Both of them presented themselves before the brahmana sage, the vaishya named Samadhi and the excellent king. As is proper, they showed him the due respect. Having seated themselves, the vaishya and the king started to converse with him. The king said, ‘O illustrious one! I wish to ask you about something. Please tell me. My mind is miserable and I cannot control myself. My kingdom has been lost. Yet, I have a sense of ownership over my kingdom. O excellent sage! Though I know the truth, it is as if I am ignorant. What is the reason for this? This one has been deceived by his

wife, sons and servants. They have cast him aside. Nevertheless, he is full of affection towards them. In this way, both he and I are extremely miserable. Though we can see the taint in being attached to material objects, our minds are affected by a sense of “mine”. O immensely fortunate one! Why is it like this? Though we know, we are overwhelmed with delusion. Because of this sense of “mine”, our discrimination is destroyed and we are foolish.’

“The rishi replied, ‘O immensely fortunate one! All creatures possess this knowledge about association with material objects. But material objects affect them in different ways. Some creatures are blind during the day. Other creatures are blind during the night. There are also creatures to whom night and day appear as identical. But it is not true that only humans possess knowledge. Indeed, all wild animals, domestic animals and birds also possess knowledge. The knowledge of humans is like that of birds and animals. The knowledge that they and humans possess is similar. Behold the knowledge of those birds. Though they are suffering from hunger themselves, they suffer from delusion and are dropping grains into the beaks of their young ones. O tiger among men! Humans also hanker after their sons. Do you not perceive that this is greed, because of the expectation of getting something back in return? Nevertheless, they are whirled around in a sense of “mine” and fall down in the whirlpool of delusion. The power of Mahamaya <sup>769</sup> is the reason why they are established in this state of samsara. There is no reason to be surprised at this. When the lord of the universe was immersed in yoga and asleep, Mahamaya originated from Hari and confounded the entire universe. The illustrious goddess, Mahamaya, forcibly seizes the minds of even those who are learned and thrusts them into this delusion. She created the entire universe and its mobile and immobile objects. She is the one who confers boons and it is through her favours that men obtain emancipation. She is supreme knowledge. She is the eternal cause behind emancipation. She is the lord of all lords. She is the reason behind the bondage of samsara.’ The king asked, ‘O illustrious one! Who is the goddess Mahamaya that you spoke about? O brahmana! Where did she originate? What is the nature of her work? Tell us. What are her

powers? What is her nature? Where did she come from? O supreme among those who know about the brahman! I wish to hear the truth about everything.’

“The rishi replied, ‘She is eternally embodied in everything in this universe. However, she has originated in many different ways. Listen to me. She appears to accomplish the tasks of the gods. Though she exists eternally, the worlds say that she has originated. When the entire universe was deluged in a single ocean of water, Vishnu was asleep, immersed in yoga. At the end of the kalpa, the eternal lord was lying down on Shesha. At that time, two terrible asuras, known as Madhu and Kaitabha, manifested themselves from the wax in Vishnu’s ears and got ready to kill Brahma. At the time, Prajapati Brahma was seated on the lotus in Vishnu’s navel. He saw the two terrible asuras and that Janardana was asleep. He sought to awake Yoganidra, <sup>770</sup> the one who makes her abode in Hari and Hara’s eyes. <sup>771</sup> He praised her with single-minded devotion in his heart.’

“Brahma said, <sup>772</sup> ‘You are the supreme goddess of the universe. <sup>773</sup> You are the cause behind the creation, preservation and destruction of the universe. I praise the illustrious Nidra. You are Vishnu’s unmatched energy. You are Svaha. You are Svadha. You are Vashatkara. Sound is your atman. Your sweet form eternally exists in aksharas. You are established in the three matras. In particular, you are always established in the half a matra that cannot be pronounced. <sup>774</sup> You are Sandhya. You are Savitri. O goddess! You are the supreme mother. You are the one who sustains the universe. You are the one who creates the universe. You are the one who protects it. O goddess! At the end, you are the one who always devours. At the time of creation, you are the one who is in the form of creation. At the time of preservation, you are the one who exists in the form of protection. Like that, at the time of the destruction of the universe, you are the form of destruction. You pervade the entire universe. You are Mahavidya. <sup>775</sup> You are Mahamaya. You are Mahamedha. <sup>776</sup> You are Mahasmriti. <sup>777</sup> You are Mahamoha. <sup>778</sup> You are Bhagavati. <sup>779</sup> You are Mahadevi. <sup>780</sup> You are Maheshvari. <sup>781</sup> You are everything in Prakriti. You are the one who creates the three gunas. You are Kalaratri. <sup>782</sup> You are Maharatri. <sup>783</sup> You are the

terrible Moharatri. <sup>784</sup> You are Shri. You are Ishvari. You are modesty. You are intelligence. You are characterized by understanding. You are shame. You are nourishment. You are contentment. You are tranquility. You are patience. You wield a sword. You wield a trident. You wield a club. You wield a chakra. Your form is terrible. You hold a conch shell. You hold a bow and arrows. Your weapons are a *bhushundi* <sup>785</sup> and a bludgeon. You are gentle. You are gentler than that. Your gentleness is unlimited. You are exceedingly beautiful. You are the best. You are superior to the best. Indeed, you are the supreme goddess. You are everything that exists and you are everything that does not exist. Your atman is in everything. You are the power in everything. How can I possibly extol someone like you? You are the one who creates the universe. You are the one who preserves the universe. You are the one who destroys the universe. You have brought the great lord under the subjugation of sleep. Who can possibly praise you? You have made Vishnu, Isha and me assume bodies. Who possesses the capacity to extol you? O goddess! Thus praised, please use your pervasive powers to confound these two unassailable asuras, Madhu and Kaitabha. Gently bring Achyuta, the lord of the universe, back to consciousness. For the sake of killing the two giant asuras, wake him up.'

“The rishi continued, ‘Brahma, whose birth is not manifest, praised the goddess, full of tamas in her intelligence, in this way. The intention was to wake Vishnu up and kill Madhu and Kaitabha. She emerged from Vishnu’s eyes, nose, arms, heart and chest and stood there. Freed from her, Janardana, the lord of the universe, woke up. He had been lying down on that single ocean and saw the evil-souled Madhu and Kaitabha, extremely energetic and valiant. In their attempt to kill Brahma, their eyes were red with rage. The illustrious Hari awoke and fought with them. Using his arms as weapons, the lord wrestled with them for five thousand years. They were extremely strong and intoxicated and were confounded by Mahamaya. Therefore, they told Keshava, “Seek a boon from us.” The illustrious one replied, “If you are satisfied, let it be such that you are killed by me. What other boon can I ask for now? This is what I want.” Having been deceived in this way, they glanced at the universe. Everything was covered in water.

They looked at the illustrious lotus-eyed one and said, “We are pleased at having fought with you. You should be praised. But let our deaths come about this way. Kill us in a place that is not flooded with water.” The illustrious one, holding the conch shell, chakra and mace, agreed to this. He placed them on his thighs and sliced off their heads with his chakra. Thus praised by Brahma, she herself arose. I will tell you again about the powers of the goddess. Listen.’”

## Chapter 79

““The rishi continued, ‘In earlier times, there was a battle between the gods and the asuras and it lasted for one hundred years. The leader of the asuras was Mahishasura and the leader of the gods was Purandara. The asura was immensely valiant and the soldiers of the gods were defeated. Mahishasura defeated all the gods and became Indra. Having been defeated, all the gods, headed by the lotus-born Prajapati,<sup>786</sup> went to the place where Isha and the one with Garuda on his banner were.<sup>787</sup> They told them in great detail about everything Mahishasura had done and about how the gods had been worsted. “He has usurped the positions of Surya, Indra, Agni, Anila,<sup>788</sup> Indu,<sup>789</sup> Yama, Varuna and the others and taken them over himself. Because of the evil-souled Mahisha, all the gods have been thrown out of heaven and are roaming around on earth, like mortals. We have thus told you what the enemy of the immortals has done. We have sought refuge with you. Please think about how he can be killed.” Madhusudana heard the words of the gods. Shambhu furrowed his forehead in rage. The face of the one who wields the chakra was also full of anger.

“““Great masses of energy emerged from the bodies of Brahma, Shankara and all the other gods, Shakra and the others. All of this energy came together and united. This energy was so fierce that it blazed like the summit of a mountain. The gods saw it blazing in all the directions. This unmatched energy emerged from the bodies of all the gods. It pervaded the three worlds and united in the form of a woman. Her face was formed out of Bhava’s<sup>790</sup> energy. Her hair was formed out of Yama’s energy. Vishnu’s energy formed her arms. Soma’s energy formed her two breasts and the space between them was formed by Indra’s energy. Varuna’s energy formed her hips and thighs, her buttocks were formed out of the earth’s energy.



Brahma's energy formed her feet and Arka's energy formed her toes. Her fingers were formed out of the energy of the Vasus and Kubera's energy formed her nose. Her teeth were formed out of Prajapati's energy. Her three eyes originated in Pavaka's energy. Her eyebrows were formed out of Sandhya's energy. Her ears were from Anila's energy. All the other gods contributed their energies to form the auspicious one. She was fashioned out of that mass of energy contributed by the gods and on seeing her, the immortals, suffering from Mahisha, were delighted. All the gods gave her their own respective weapons. Desiring victory, they exclaimed "victory" in Jayanti's <sup>791</sup> name. The wielder of Pinaka created a trident out of his trident and gave it to her. Krishna created a chakra out of his own chakra and gave it to her. Varuna gave her a conch shell and Hutashana <sup>792</sup> gave her a spear. Maruta gave her a bow and a quiver filled with arrows. Indra, lord of the immortals, created a vajra out of his own vajra and gave it to her. The one with one thousand eyes <sup>793</sup> also took the bell from the elephant Airavata and gave it to her. Yama gave her the staff of destiny and the lord of the oceans <sup>794</sup> gave her a noose. Prajapati Brahma gave her a string of *aksha* beads and a waterpot. The creator of the day <sup>795</sup> permeated all the pores in her body with his rays. Kala <sup>796</sup> gave her a sword and a sparkling shield. The ocean of milk gave her a sparkling necklace and garments that do not decay. Vishvakarma gave her a divine jewel for her head, earrings, bracelets, half-moon-shaped sparkling armlets for all her arms, sparkling anklets, an excellent necklace, rings and jewels for all her fingers, an extremely polished battleaxe, many different kinds of weapons and impenetrable armour. For her head and for her breasts, the ocean gave her garlands made of lotuses that do not fade and an extremely beautiful lotus. The Himalayas gave her a lion as a mount and many kinds of gems. The lord of riches gave her a drinking vessel that was never emptied of liquor. Shesha, the lord of serpents who holds up the entire earth, gave her a necklace made out of serpents <sup>797</sup> and ornamented with magnificent jewels. All the other gods gave the goddess ornaments and weapons. Thus honoured by the gods, she repeatedly roared and laughed loudly. The sound of that terrible roar filled the entire firmament. The loud sound echoed everywhere. All the worlds

were agitated and the oceans quivered. The earth quaked and all the mountains started to move. Delighted, the gods exclaimed, “Victory to the one who is astride a lion.” The sages devotedly bent their bodies down and praised her.

“““On seeing that the three worlds were agitated, the enemies of the immortals roused themselves and armoured and armed their soldiers. Enraged, Mahishasura shouted, “What is this?” Surrounded by a large number of asuras, he rushed towards that sound. He saw the goddess there, pervading the three worlds with her energy. The earth was indented from her feet pressing down. Her crown etched the sky. The sound of her bow twanging agitated all the nether regions. She stood there, enveloping all the directions with her one thousand arms. After this, a battle commenced between the goddess and the enemies of the gods. Many kinds of astras and *shastras* were unleashed and the directions blazed.<sup>798</sup> The great asura known as Chikshura was Mahishasura’s general and he fought with her. There was another asura named Chamara, armed with the four kinds of forces.<sup>799</sup> Another great asura named Ugra fought with sixty thousand soldiers. Mahahanu fought with one crore soldiers. The great asura, Asiloma, fought with five crore soldiers. In that battle, Bashkala fought with six million soldiers. In that battle, Ugradarshana fought with elephants and horses, surrounding himself with crores of chariots. There was the great daitya known as Bidala. In that battle, he surrounded himself with chariots and fought with fifty thousand chariots. There were others who surrounded themselves with hundreds of thousands of chariots, horses and elephants. In that battle, those gigantic asuras fought with the goddess. In the battle, Mahishasura surrounded himself with thousands of crores of chariots, tuskers and horses. Using iron clubs, javelins, spears, bludgeons, swords, battleaxes and double-edged swords, they fought against the goddess in that battle. Some hurled spears, others hurled nooses. They tried to kill the goddess by striking her with swords. The goddess Chandika seemed to toy with them, as she severed their astras and shastras with showers of her own astras and shastras. There were no signs of exertion on her face and the gods and the rishis praised her. Thereafter, Ishvari released her astras and

shastras on the bodies of the asuras. The maned mount of the goddess angrily shook its mane. Like a conflagration raging in the forest, it roamed around amidst the asura soldiers. As she fought in the battle, Ambika breathed heavily and from those breaths, hundreds and thousands of *ganas* <sup>800</sup> were created. The powers of the goddess enhanced their powers. With battleaxes, spears, swords and double-edged swords, they killed large numbers of asuras. They treated that battle like a great festival and sounded large drums. Other *ganas* blew on conch shells and still others sounded drums. Showering clubs and arrows and using swords, the goddess slaughtered hundreds of large asuras. Others were confounded by the sound of the bell and were brought down. She bound other asuras with the noose and dragged them along the ground. With the sharp sword, some were severed into two. Others were brought down. Some were uprooted and struck with the club and lay down on the ground. Struck severely with the club, some vomited blood. Others lay down on the ground, their chests shattered with the trident. With the incessant torrent of arrows, some were sliced in that field of battle and resembled mountains. Those who had afflicted the gods started to give up their lives. Some had their arms severed. Others had their necks sliced off. Some lost their heads, others were torn apart in the middle. With legs severed, some giant asuras fell down on the ground. Sliced by the goddess, some had only an arm left. Others had only one leg left. With head severed, some fell down and the headless torsos rose up again. Seizing excellent weapons, these headless torsos fought against the goddess. To the sound of the blaring of trumpets, some started to dance in the field of battle. With heads severed, headless torsos held swords, javelins and spikes in their hands. Other giant asuras told the goddess, “Wait! Wait!” In the battle that made the body hair stand up, their limbs overflowed with torrents of blood. Chariots, horses, elephants and asuras fell down on the ground. The great field of battle was such that it could no longer be passed. Instantly, those torrents of blood led to a great river being formed and it flowed between the asura soldiers, through the horses, elephants and asuras. In a short while, Ambika conveyed that large army of asuras to its destruction, like the fire

consuming a large pile of grass and wood. Shaking its mane, the lion emitted a loud roar. It seemed to rob the breath of life from the bodies of the enemies of the immortals. Like that, the ganas of the goddess fought with the giant asuras. The gods praised them and released showers of flowers from the firmament.”””

## Chapter 80

““The rishi said, ‘The giant asura, Chikshura, the commander of the army, saw that the soldiers were being killed. Filled with rage, he started to fight against Ambika. In the battle, the asura showered down floods of arrows on the goddess. It was just as if a cloud was showering down rain on the summit of Mount Meru. As if in sport, the goddess severed those arrows. With her arrows, she slaughtered the horse riders and the horses. She instantly severed his bow and the standard that rose up high. When his bow was severed, she pierced his limbs with her arrows. His bow was severed. He was without a chariot. His horses were killed. His charioteer was killed. Wielding a sword and a shield, the asura rushed towards the goddess. With the sword, sharp at the edges, he struck the lion on the head. With a great deal of force, he struck the goddess on her left arm. O son of a king!’<sup>801</sup> As soon as the sword touched the arm, it shattered into fragments. His eyes turned red with rage and he seized a trident. The giant asura hurled this towards Bhadrakali. It blazed in its energy, like the solar disc in the sky. When she saw that the trident was descending, the goddess hurled her own trident and it shattered the trident and the giant asura into one hundred fragments.

“““The general of Mahisha’s army was Chamara, the afflicter of the gods. When he saw that the immensely valiant one was dead, he advanced astride an elephant. He quickly hurled a spear towards the goddess Ambika. When she uttered *humkara*,<sup>802</sup> that spear fell down on the ground, losing all splendour. Seeing that his spear had been brought down, Chamara was filled with rage and hurled a javelin. But she severed it with her arrows. The enemy of the gods was seated on the elephant’s shoulder. Leaping up, the lion grabbed him and started to wrestle with him. While they fought, both

of them fell down from atop the elephant onto the ground. Extremely angry, they fought and struck each other extremely terrible blows. The enemy of the deer struck him with force and brought him down. With a blow of its paw, it severed Chamara's head.

“““In the battle, the goddess killed Udagra with boulders and trees. She brought down Karala with her teeth, fists and palms. The goddess angrily crushed Uddhvata by bringing down her mace on him. She killed Baskhala with a javelin and Tamra and Andhaka with arrows. With her trident, the three-eyed Parameshvari killed Ugrasya, Ugravirya and Mahahanu. With her sword, she severed Bidala's head from his body. She used her arrows to convey Durdhara and Durmukha to Yama's eternal abode. Kalaratri brought down Kala with Destiny's staff. She struck Ugradarshana with a fierce blow of her sword. In the battle that was like a festival, she severed Asiloma with her sword. At this act of the goddess, the ganas and the lion started festivities, exclaimed “victory” and exultantly slapped themselves.

“““When his own soldiers were being destroyed in this fashion, Mahishasura assumed the form of a buffalo <sup>803</sup> and terrified the ganas. He bit some and struck some with his hooves. He lashed some with his tail and drove others away with his horns. Some were brought down through his force, others were confounded by his roars. The gust of his breath brought others down on the ground. The asura attacked the army of *pramathas* <sup>804</sup> and brought them down. When he struck the lion, the great goddess, Ambika, was enraged. The immensely valiant one was also enraged and tore up the ground with his hooves. He flung mountains down with his horns and roared. As he roamed around with great force, the earth was agitated and shattered. Struck by his tail, the ocean overflowed in every direction. The clouds were struck by his horns and torn to shreds. The gust raised from his breathing brought down hundreds of mountains from the sky. The great asura descended in great rage. When she saw this, the angry Chandika got ready to bring about his death. She flung her noose and bound the great asura in this. When he was bound in this way in that great battle, he abandoned his form of a buffalo and instantly assumed the form of a lion. When Ambika severed its head, he was seen to be in the form of a

man, holding a sword in his hand. When the goddess quickly cut down the man who was wielding a sword and a shield, he assumed the form of a gigantic elephant. The elephant dragged the large lion with its trunk and roared. When it was dragging in this way, the goddess used her sword to slice off the trunk. At this, the giant asura again assumed the form of a buffalo and agitated the three worlds, with all the mobile and immobile objects. Chandika, the mother of the universe, was enraged and repeatedly drank some excellent liquor. With her eyes red in rage, she laughed out aloud. Intoxicated with strength and valour, the asura also roared. Using its horns, it flung mountains towards Chandika. She countered and pulverized them with torrents of arrows. When she spoke to him, because she was intoxicated, the syllables that emerged from her mouth were not clearly articulated and were slurred. The goddess said, “O foolish one! Roar for a short while. Roar until I have finished drinking this liquor. You will soon be slain by me and all the gods will roar.” Having said this, she climbed astride that giant asura. She pressed down on his throat with her foot and struck him with the trident. Restrained by the valour of the goddess, who was pressing down on the buffalo’s throat with her foot, he could only half emerge from the buffalo’s mouth. Though only half of his body could emerge, the giant asura continued to fight. With a large sword, the goddess severed his head and brought it down. The one named Mahisha and his large number of soldiers and well-wishers had confounded the three worlds. But he was killed by the goddess. When Mahisha’s soldiers were slaughtered in this way, the three worlds, the gods, the asuras <sup>805</sup> and humans, uttered words of victory. When he was slain, all the daitya soldiers uttered words of lamentation. All the large number of gods were filled with great delight. The gods and the divine maharshis praised the goddess. The lords among the gandharvas sang and large numbers of apsaras danced.””



## Chapter 81

““The rishi said, ‘When Mahishasura was killed, with Indra at the forefront, all the gods bent down and praised the goddess. The evil-souled and extremely valiant one was an enemy of the gods. When he was killed and his army destroyed, the large number of gods, Shakra and the others, praised the goddess with lowered heads, necks and shoulders. When their body hair stood up in delight, their bodies were beautiful. The gods said in eloquent words, “O goddess! Everything in this universe, the large number of gods, embodied beings and their powers, were created through your own powers. O Ambika! You are worshipped by all the gods and maharshis. We are bowing down faithfully before you. Please ensure what is beneficial for us. Your powers are unmatched. The illustrious Ananta, Brahma and Hara lack the powers to describe them. O Chandika! Please turn your mind towards protecting the entire universe and destroying everything that is inauspicious. You are Shri for the performers of good deeds. For those who are evil-souled, you are Alakshmi. <sup>806</sup> For those who possess understanding, you are the intelligence in their hearts. You are faith for the virtuous. For those who possess the power of noble birth, you are modesty. Therefore, we are bowing down before you. O goddess! Protect the universe. Your form cannot be comprehended. How can we describe it? You are the immensely valiant one. You are the one who repeatedly destroys asuras. O goddess! Among the large number of gods and asuras, who can describe your extraordinary conduct in battles? O goddess! Though you possess the three gunas, you are the cause behind the entire universe. You cannot be comprehended by Hari, Hara and the others. You are the refuge for everything. Everything in the universe has originated from your parts. You are the original one. You are supreme Prakriti, without any form. O



goddess! When your name is uttered in all the sacrifices, all the gods are satisfied. You are Svaha. People pronounced you as Svadha, when they seek the satisfaction of the large number of ancestors. You are the unthinkable cause behind emancipation. You are the great vow. You are studies. You are the objective of attentive self-control. You are the essence of truth. You are the knowledge sought by sages who cleanse all their taints for the sake of emancipation. O goddess! You are the supreme and illustrious one. Sound is your atman. You are the spotless hymns of Rig Veda and Yajur Veda. You are the reservoir of the beautiful songs and chanting of hymns of the Sama Veda. O goddess! You are all three. You are the illustrious one who is responsible for the creation and preservation of the entire universe. O goddess! You are intelligence. You know about the essence of all the sacred texts. You are Durga. You are like a boat that enables one to cross the ocean of samsara, which is so very difficult to cross. You are unattached. You are Shri, the only one who resides in the heart of Kaitabha's killer.<sup>807</sup> You are Gouri, the only one who has created a residence with the one who has the moon on his forehead.<sup>808</sup> Your face, with the trace of a sparkling smile, resembles the disc of the full moon. Your complexion possesses the beauty of excellent gold. It is extraordinary that the angry Mahishasura could even glance towards you with eyes of violence. O goddess! Your wrathful and furrowed face was terrible to behold, but was like the moon when it has just arisen. It is extremely extraordinary that on glancing at that face, Mahishasura did not immediately give up his life. After beholding the enraged Destroyer, who is capable of remaining alive? O goddess! Please show your favours. You are the supreme one who is created for the universe. When you are angered, you destroy lineages. Since you destroyed Mahishasura's extremely large army, this is now known. When you are pleased with people, they are always blessed with prosperity and respected in habitations. They possess riches and fame. The various classes of their relatives do not suffer. They always have devoted sons, servants and wives. O goddess! It is through your favours that a man who is devoted to dharma, performing good deeds every day, goes to heaven. O goddess! It is indeed through your favours that fruits are reaped in the three worlds. O Durga!

When you are remembered, you take away the fears of all creatures. When you are remembered, you bestow health, excellent intelligence and everything auspicious. You are the one who takes away the fear of poverty and misery. Who else brings every kind of benefit? Who else is always worshipped? ‘When they were killed, there was happiness everywhere in the universe. Because of their sins, let them reside in hell for a long time. Because they died in the field of battle, they should go to heaven.’ O goddess! You are the one who decides this before killing them. When you looked at them, were you not capable of reducing all the enemies of the gods to ashes? Nevertheless, you used weapons. ‘Purified by weapons, let these enemies obtain superior worlds.’ O virtuous one! For the sake of their welfare, perhaps that is what you decided. When the asuras glanced at the fierce radiance emanating from your sword, or the dazzle from the point of your trident, they did not perish. That must have been because they also looked at the cool radiance of your moon-like face. O goddess! Your conduct is that of pacifying those who are wicked in conduct. Your pleasant form is unthinkable and is unmatched by anyone else. They robbed the valour of the gods and you manifested your form to take away the energy of the enemy. This is nothing but an act of compassion. Who can your valour be compared with? Your form creates fear in the enemy. Where else is there such a form? O goddess! In the three worlds, there is no one else who exhibits cruelty in battle and is also one who bestows boons. In the field of battle, you slay the enemy and save all the three worlds. You conveyed large numbers of the enemy to heaven. For us, you removed the fear that emanated from the enemies of the gods. We bow down to you. O goddess! Use your trident to save us. O Ambika! Use your sword to save us. Use the sound of your bell and the twang of your bowstring to save us. O Chandika! Save us in the east. Save us in the west. Save us in the south. O Ishvari! Use your whirling trident to save us in the north. Your amiable form wanders around in the three worlds. There are also extremely terrible forms. Use all these to protect the world. O Ambika! Your delicate hands hold a sword, a trident, a mace and many other weapons. Use those to protect us from every direction.” The gods praised her in this way. They used divine flowers that

grew in the grove of Nandana, fragrances and unguents to worship the mother of the universe. All the gods devotedly worshipped her with divine and fragrant incense.

““Pleased, the one with the excellent face spoke to all the gods who were prostrate before her. The goddess said, “O gods! I am extremely pleased with the praise and the worship. I will give you everything that you desire and everything that you have asked for. I do not know which other extremely difficult task remains to be accomplished.” Hearing the words of the goddess, the residents of heaven replied. The gods said, “O illustrious one! You have accomplished everything and nothing else remains to be done. You have killed Mahishasura, our enemy. O Maheshvari! However, whenever we remember you, please take away whatever is causing us a great hardship. O one with the unblemished face! If there is a mortal person who tries to satisfy you with the hymn we have uttered, please confer on him wealth, prosperity, wives and enhancement of riches. O Ambika! You are the one who can always confer these on those who seek refuge with you.” O king! Thus propitiated by the gods for the sake of the universe and for their own selves, Bhadrakali agreed and vanished. O king! I have thus described to you how the goddess manifested herself in earlier times from the bodies of the gods, for the sake of the welfare of the three worlds. For the sake of slaying wicked daityas like Shumbha and Nishumbha, for the sake of protecting the worlds and for the sake of showing compassion to the gods, she manifested herself again from Gouri’s body. I will recount this to you exactly. Listen.””

## Chapter 82

““The rishi said, ‘In earlier times, the two asuras, Shumbha and Nishumbha, were intoxicated by their strength. They took away the shares of sacrifices and the three worlds from Shachi’s consort.<sup>809</sup> In that way, they took away the rights of Surya, Chandra, Kubera, Yama, Varuna, Pavana and Agni and started to perform their tasks themselves. This is what they did to the rights of other gods too. The gods were dispersed, deprived of their kingdom and defeated. When all the gods were routed and deprived of their rights by the great asuras, they remembered the goddess who cannot be defeated. “You conferred a boon on us. Whenever we face a calamity and remember you, you will destroy all our great hardships.” Having turned their minds towards the goddess, they went to the Himalayas, lord of mountains. There, they praised the goddess, Vishnumaya.

“““The gods said, “We bow down before the goddess, before Mahadevi.<sup>810</sup> We always bow down to Shiva.<sup>811</sup> We bow down to Prakriti, to Bhadra.<sup>812</sup> We control ourselves and prostrate ourselves before her. We bow down to Roudra.<sup>813</sup> We bow down to Nitya.<sup>814</sup> We bow down before Gouri.<sup>815</sup> We bow down before Dhatri.<sup>816</sup> We prostrate ourselves before her. We bow down before the one in whom the universe is established. We bow down before the goddess who is Kritya.<sup>817</sup> We prostrate ourselves before her. We bow down before the one whose form is moonlight. We bow down before the one whose form is the moon. We always prostrate ourselves before the one who is happiness. We bow down before the one who grants good fortune. We prostrate ourselves before the one who brings prosperity and success. We prostrate ourselves before the one whose form is the tortoise. We bow down before you. We bow down before Nairriti. We bow down before the one who holds up the earth. We bow down before Lakshmi. We

bow down before Sharvani. We prostrate ourselves before you. We bow down before Durga. <sup>818</sup> We bow down before the shore that is difficult to reach. We bow down before the one who is the essence. We bow down before the one who is the cause of all action. We bow down before the one who is fame. We bow down before the one who is dark. We always prostrate ourselves before the one who is smoky in complexion. We bow down before the one who is exceedingly gentle. We bow down before the one who is exceedingly terrible. We bow down before her. We bow down. We prostrate ourselves. We bow down before the one in whom the universe is established. We bow down before the goddess who is Kritya. We prostrate ourselves before her. The goddess is in all beings and is spoken of as Vishnumaya. We bow down before her. We bow down before her. We bow down. We prostrate ourselves. <sup>819</sup> The goddess is in all beings and is spoken of as consciousness. We bow down before her. We bow down before her. We bow down. We prostrate ourselves. The goddess is in all beings in the form of intellect. We bow down before her. We bow down before her. We bow down. We prostrate ourselves. The goddess is in all beings in the form of sleep. We bow down before her. We bow down before her. We bow down. We prostrate ourselves. The goddess is in all beings in the form of hunger. We bow down before her. We bow down before her. We bow down. We prostrate ourselves. The goddess is in all beings in the form of a shadow. We bow down before her. We bow down before her. We bow down. We prostrate ourselves. The goddess is in all beings in the form of strength. We bow down before her. We bow down before her. We bow down. We prostrate ourselves. The goddess is all beings in the form of thirst. We bow down before her. We bow down before her. We bow down. We prostrate ourselves. The goddess is in all beings in the form of patience. We bow down before her. We bow down before her. We bow down. We prostrate ourselves. The goddess is in all beings in the form of existence. <sup>820</sup> We bow down before her. We bow down before her. We bow down. We prostrate ourselves. The goddess is in all beings in the form of modesty. We bow down before her. We bow down before her. We bow down. We prostrate ourselves. The goddess is in all beings in the form of peace. We

bow down before her. We bow down before her. We bow down. We prostrate ourselves. The goddess is in all beings in the form of faith. We bow down before her. We bow down before her. We bow down. We prostrate ourselves. The goddess is in all beings in the form of beauty. We bow down before her. We bow down before her. We bow down. We prostrate ourselves. The goddess is in all beings in the form of prosperity. We bow down before her. We bow down before her. We bow down. We prostrate ourselves. The goddess is in all beings in the form of fortitude. We bow down before her. We bow down before her. We bow down. We prostrate ourselves. The goddess is in all beings in the form of subsistence. We bow down before her. We bow down before her. We bow down. We prostrate ourselves. The goddess is in all beings in the form of memory. We bow down before her. We bow down before her. We bow down. We prostrate ourselves. The goddess is in all beings in the form of mercy. We bow down before her. We bow down before her. We bow down. We prostrate ourselves. The goddess is in all beings in the form of good policy. We bow down before her. We bow down before her. We bow down. We prostrate ourselves. The goddess is in all beings in the form of contentment. We bow down before her. We bow down before her. We bow down. We prostrate ourselves. The goddess is in all beings in the form of nourishment. We bow down before her. We bow down before her. We bow down. We prostrate ourselves. The goddess is in all beings in the form of a mother. The goddess is in all beings in the form of confusion. We bow down before her. We bow down before her. We bow down. We prostrate ourselves. She is the one who presides over the senses of all beings. She is the one who always pervades all beings. We bow down before her. We prostrate ourselves before her. She is the one who exists in the form of consciousness, pervading the entire universe. We bow down before her. We bow down before her. We bow down. We prostrate ourselves. Earlier, to obtain their wishes, the gods praised her and sought refuge with her. Indra of the gods, Isha and Dinesha <sup>821</sup> served her. She is the one who brings what is auspicious to us. She is the Ishvari who is the cause behind everything auspicious. She is the fortunate one who destroys all calamities. We are now

being tormented by the insolent daityas. Full of faith and in forms filled with humility, the gods are prostrating themselves before you. She is the Ishvari. Remembered in this way, may she instantly destroy all our calamities.””””

““The rishi continued, ‘O son of a king! While the gods were praising and addressing her in this way, Parvati arrived there, to bathe in the waters of the Jahnavi. The one with the excellent eyebrows asked the gods, “Whom are you praising?” Shivaa manifested herself from the sheaths of her body <sup>822</sup> and said, “They uttered this hymn to me, because they have been routed by the daitya Shumbha. In a battle, all the gods have been defeated by Nishumbha.” Since Ambika issued from the sheaths in Parvati’s body, all the worlds used the name Koushiki to sing about her. <sup>823</sup> When she had emerged, Parvati turned dark. She resides in the Himalayas and is known as Kalika. <sup>824</sup> After this, Ambika assumed a supremely radiant and extremely beautiful form. Chanda and Munda, Shumbha and Nishumbha’s servants, saw her. They went and told Shumbha, “O great king! There is a woman, captivating in form, who is illuminating the Himalayas. No one has ever beheld such extraordinary beauty. O lord of asuras! You should find out who that beautiful woman is and accept her as your queen. She is a jewel among women and her limbs are exceedingly beautiful. She is illuminating the directions. O Indra among daityas! She is standing there. You should go and see her. O lord! You have already gathered all the jewels, gems, elephants and horses from the three worlds in your house. From Purandara, you took away Airavata, jewel among elephants, the Parijata tree and the horse, Uchchaihshrava. The creator <sup>825</sup> possessed an extraordinary vimana, made out of jewels and yoked to swans. You have brought that to your house too. You have brought the nidhi Mahapadma from the lord of riches. <sup>826</sup> The ocean gave you Kinjalika, the garland made out of lotus flowers that do not fade. Varuna’s umbrella, with golden tassels, is in your house. The supreme chariot, which used to belong to Prajapati, is also there. You have taken away Mrityu’s javelin, known as Utkrantida. <sup>827</sup> Your brother has seized the noose of the lord of the waters. <sup>828</sup> Nishumbha has taken away all the riches that originate in the ocean. Vahni has given

you two garments that have been purified by the fire. O Indra among daityas! In this way, you have seized all the jewels. This auspicious one is a gem among women. Why aren't you seizing her?" Shumbha heard the words spoken by Chanda and Munda.

““The great asura sent a messenger named Sugriva to the goddess. Shumbha said, “Go to her and tell her my words, conveying my message. Speak so that she is pleased with me and quickly does what she has to do.” He went there and saw the extremely beautiful one on the slope of the mountain. He addressed the goddess in sweet and gentle words. The messenger said, “O goddess! Shumbha, the lord of the daityas, is the supreme lord of the three worlds. He has sent me as a messenger to your presence. Those who are born in the lineages of the gods can never afford to ignore his words. He has vanquished all the enemies of the daityas. I will tell you what he has said. Listen. ‘All the gods in the three worlds have come under my subjugation. I now enjoy all the separate shares of sacrifices. All the supreme jewels in the three worlds are now under my control. Similarly, I have seized the jewel among elephants that used to be the mount of Indra of the gods. An extraordinary jewel among horses, known as Uchchaihshrava, arose from the churning of the ocean. The immortals prostrated themselves before me and handed it over to me. O beautiful one! All the riches that belonged to the other gods, gandharvas, serpents and other beings now belong to me. O goddess! In all the worlds, we think that you are a jewel among women. Since we are the ones who enjoy all the jewels now, you should follow me. O one with the flickering glances! You are a jewel. Therefore, choose me or my younger brother, Nishumbha. He is supreme in valour. Through my favours, you will obtain supreme and unmatched riches. Hence, use your intelligence to reflect on this. Come to me and serve me.’” Addressed in this way, the goddess Durga Bhadra, the illustrious one who sustains the universe, smiled in a mysterious way. She replied, “You have spoken the truth. There is nothing false in what you have said. Shumbha is the lord of the three worlds and Nishumbha is just like him. However, I took a pledge earlier. How can I act so as to render it false? I was limited in intelligence earlier. Listen to the



pledge I took then. In this world, whoever can defeat me in battle, whoever can destroy my insolence and whoever can equal my strength, will be my husband. Let the great asura Shumbha come here, or let it be Nishumbha. Let him defeat me. What is the need to delay? Let him quickly accept my hand.” The messenger responded, “O goddess! Do not utter such words in my presence. You are being insulting. Which man in the three worlds can stand before Shumbha and Nishumbha? O goddess! All the other daityas and gods were unable to stand in front of them in battle. You are a woman and you are alone. Indra and all the other gods were unable to stand before Shumbha and Nishumbha in a battle. How can a mere woman advance in front of them? Listen to my words and go to Shumbha and Nishumbha. Let it not be so that you are dragged there by the hair, with all your pride shattered.” The goddess replied, “Such indeed is the powerful Shumbha and such indeed is the valiant Nishumbha. But what can I possibly do? Without thinking, I took a pledge earlier. Therefore, go there and report everything that I have said. Tell the Indra among asuras this and let him do whatever is appropriate.””””

## Chapter 83

““The rishi said, ‘Hearing these words of the goddess, the messenger was filled with intolerance. The king of the asuras heard the messenger’s words. He angrily spoke to Dhumralochana, lord of the daityas. “O Dhumralochana! Quickly surround yourself with your own soldiers. Forcibly disable that wicked woman and bring her here, dragging her by her hair. If there is anyone else there who wishes to save her, an immortal, a yaksha or a gandharva, he deserves to be killed.” Hearing this command, Dhumralochana quickly surrounded himself with sixty thousand asuras and swiftly left. He saw the goddess on that snow-clad mountain and loudly shouted, “Come before Shumbha and Nishumbha. If you do not cheerfully come and serve my master, I will disable you and forcibly take you there, dragging you by your hair.” The goddess replied, “The lord of daityas has sent a powerful person, surrounded by an army. If you take me there forcibly, what is it possible for me to do?” O amiable one! Thus addressed, the asura Dhumralochana rushed towards her. However, with a humkara, Ambika reduced him to ashes. After this, Ambika angrily showered down sharp arrows, spears and battleaxes on the large army of asuras. The lion, the mount of the goddess, shook its mane in rage and roared extremely fiercely. It descended on the asura soldiers. Some daityas were slain with a blow from the paw, others by biting with the mouth. It slew some large asuras by striking them with its hind feet. The maned lion brought some down and tore their entrails apart with its nails. With a blow from its paws, it severed the heads of others. There were others who had their arms and heads severed, while the maned lion drank the blood from the entrails of others. In a short while, driven by great rage, the goddess’s great-souled maned mount destroyed that entire army. Shumbha, the lord of the daityas,

heard that the asura Dhumralochana had been killed by the goddess and that the entire army had been destroyed by the goddess's lion. His lips quivered in rage and he commanded the two great asuras, Chanda and Munda. "O Chanda! O Munda! Surround yourselves with many forces. You should go there. Having gone there, swiftly bring her here. Drag her here by her hair, or bind her. In the course of the battle, if there is some uncertainty about this and you find that all the asuras are being killed with all manner of weapons, then kill her. Alternatively, when the wicked Ambika's lion has been killed, seize and bind her and quickly return here."""

## Chapter 84

““The rishi said, ‘Commanded in this way, with the daityas Chanda and Munda at the forefront, an army with the four kinds of forces departed, raising up their weapons. They saw the goddess on that large and golden summit of that Indra among mountains. She was astride the lion and seemed to be smiling slightly. On seeing her, they got ready to set about their task. Some drew their bows. Others held swords and approached her. Ambika became very angry with the enemy. Because of her rage, her face turned as black as ink. When she furrowed her brows, Kali, terrible to behold, emerged from the base of her forehead, wielding a sword and a noose. She was adorned in a garland made out of human skulls and she held a colourful *khatvanga*.<sup>829</sup> She was clad in tiger skin and because her flesh was dried up, she was extremely terrible. Her mouth was exceedingly large and a fierce tongue lolled out. Her red eyes were sunken and her roar filled with the directions. She descended with great force and slew the large asuras. She devoured the soldiers in the army of the enemies of the gods. With one hand, she seized the elephants and flung them into her mouth, along with the riders who guarded the flanks, the drivers with the goads, the warriors and the bells. Similarly, she flung warriors, horses, chariots and charioteers into her mouth and used her teeth to chew them up in the most terrible fashion. One was seized by the hair, another by the throat. Some were kicked by the foot, others were pressed against her chest. The asuras released shastras and great astras. She angrily seized some with her mouth and crushed others with her teeth. Among all these evil-souled asuras, there were some who were the strongest of the strong. She devoured some of these and crushed others. There were others that were struck. Some were slain with swords, others were struck with the *khatvanga*. In that battle,

struck by the tips of her teeth, the asuras headed towards destruction. In a short while, that giant army of asuras was brought down. On seeing the extremely terrible Kali, Chanda rushed towards her. Her eyes were terrible to behold and the giant asura showered down extremely terrible arrows on her. Munda hurled thousands of chakras and enveloped her. As these many chakras entered her mouth, it seemed as if many solar discs were entering into a cloud. The terrible one laughed in rage and her roar was fierce. Kali's blazing teeth could be seen inside her cruel mouth and were impossible to behold. Astride the giant lion, the goddess rushed towards Chanda. She seized him by the hair and severed his head with her sword. Having severed the head of the Indra among daityas, she emitted an exceedingly terrible roar. The three worlds were terrified at this loud roar. On seeing that Chanda had been brought down, Munda rushed forward. She angrily struck him with the khatvanga and brought him down on the ground. The remaining soldiers saw that Chanda and the extremely valiant Munda had been brought down. Afflicted by fear, they fled in different directions. Kali seized the heads of Chanda and Munda. She laughed loudly and approached Chandika. She said, "I have brought the large animals, Chanda and Munda, here to you. In the battle that is a sacrifice, you will yourself kill Shumbha and Nishumbha." Seeing that Kali had brought the two large asuras, Chanda and Munda, the fortunate Chandika addressed her in these beautiful words. The goddess said, "O goddess! Since you have seized the giant asuras, Chanda and Munda, and have come, you will be famous in the world as Chamunda."""

## Chapter 85

““The rishi said, ‘Chanda was killed and the daitya Munda was brought down. Many soldiers were slaughtered. Shumbha, the powerful lord of the asuras, succumbed to great rage. He instructed that all the soldiers of the daityas should be got ready. “Let the eighty-six Udayudha<sup>830</sup> daityas march forth with all their forces now. Let the eighty-four Kambus<sup>831</sup> emerge, surrounding themselves with their own forces. Following my commands, let fifty lineages of Kotivirya<sup>832</sup> asuras and one hundred from the Dhumra<sup>833</sup> lineage emerge. Following my commands, let Kalaka, Dourhrida, Mourya and Kalakeya asuras ready themselves for battle and emerge.” Having instructed this, Shumbha, the lord of the asuras who was terrible in his rule, also emerged, surrounding himself with a large army consisting of many thousands of soldiers. Chandika saw this extremely dreadful army advance. She twanged her bowstring and filled the space between the earth and the firmament with that sound. O king! The lion also emitted an extremely loud roar. Ambika enhanced that sound with the sound of her bell. All the directions were filled with the sound of the twanging of the bow, the roaring of the lion and the sound of the bell. With a mouth gaping wide, Kali let out a terrible roar of victory. That sound filled the four directions. Hearing this, the daitya soldiers surrounded the goddess Kali and the lion with torrents of arrows. O lord of the earth! Meanwhile, so as to destroy the enemies of the gods and ensure the lion’s welfare, extremely strong and valiant energies separately issued from the bodies of Brahma, Isha, Guha,<sup>834</sup> Vishnu, Rudra and the other immortals and went in those forms to Chandika. The form of the energy was exactly like that of the respective god, with identical ornaments and mounts. These forms advanced, so as to fight with the asuras. Brahma’s energy arrived in the form of Brahmani. She was astride a

vimana drawn by swans and held a waterpot and a string of aksha beads. Maheshvara's energy arrived in the form of Maheshvari. She was astride a bull and held an excellent trident. A giant serpent was her bangle and her ornament was a digit of the moon. Kumara's energy was in the form of Koumari. She was astride an excellent peacock. In Guha's form, she arrived before Ambika, so as to fight with the daityas. Vishnu's energy was in the form of Vaishnavi. She was stationed astride Garuda and advanced with a conch shell, a chakra, a mace, the Sharnga bow and a sword in her hands. Hari's <sup>835</sup> energy was resplendent in the form of Varahi, an unmatched form fashioned from Varaha. She advanced in that dazzling form. Similarly, Nrisimha led to the radiant form of Narasimhi. As she arrived, the shaking of her mane scattered away clusters of nakshatras. Indra's energy was in the form of Aindri, wielding a vajra in her hand and astride a king among elephants. She possessed one thousand eyes, just like Shakra. When she was surrounded by all those energies of the gods, Ishana told Chandika, "To please me, quickly slay the asuras." At this, an extremely fierce energy emerged from Chandika's body, howling like one hundred jackals together. The unvanquished one spoke to Ishana, whose hair was matted and smoky. "O illustrious one! As my messenger, please go to Shumbha and Nishumbha's presence. Speak to Shumbha and Nishumbha, those two extremely insolent danavas, and to all the other danavas who have arrived here to fight. Indra will regain the three worlds and the gods will get back their shares in sacrifices. If you wish to live, leave for Patala. However, if you are proud of your strength and wish to fight, come before me. My jackals will be satisfied with your flesh." Thus, the goddess appointed Shiva himself as her messenger. Thereafter, she became famous in the worlds by the name of Shivaduti. <sup>836</sup>

““Hearing the words of the goddess, as recounted by Sharva, the great asuras were filled with intolerance and went to the place where Katyayani was. At first, the enemies of the immortals tried to counter the goddess by raining down showers of arrows, javelins and swords. She countered them with arrows, tridents, javelins and battleaxes. As if toying, she severed their weapons with large arrows released from her bow. Kali was in front, driving

them away with blows from her trident. She roamed around, uprooting them with her khatvanga. Wherever the enemy ran, Brahmani pursued them and sprinkled water from the waterpot on them, taking away their strength and energy. Maheshvari killed daityas with her trident, Vaishnavi with her chakra and the extremely angry Koumari with her spear. Aindri used blows of the vajra to shatter hundreds of daityas and danavas. She flung them down, showering the earth with torrents of blood. The form of Varahi used her snout and the tips of her tusks to shatter their chests. She mangled them with her chakra. Narasimhi roamed around, filling the directions with her roars. She used her nails to tear apart the giant asuras and devoured the others. Shivaduti taunted the asuras with her loud and fierce laughter. They fell down on the ground and when they had fallen down, she ate them. Enraged, the large number of *matris*<sup>837</sup> crushed the giant asuras, using many different kinds of means to oppress the enemies of the gods. Seeing that they were thus afflicted by the large number of *matris*, the other daityas started to flee.

“““Angry, the giant asura, Raktabija, advanced to fight. When a drop of his blood fell down on the ground from his body, another giant asura, just like him in appearance, arose from the ground.<sup>838</sup> With a club in his hand, the giant asura started to fight with Aindri. Aindri struck Raktabija with her own vajra. Struck by the vajra, many streams of blood instantly started to flow. However, other warriors immediately arose, just like him in form and strength. As long as drops of blood from his body continued to fall down, men who were identical to him in valour, strength and bravery arose. Those men, created from the blood, continued to fight. Just like him in form, they fiercely fought with the large number of *matris*, showering down terrible weapons. He was once again wounded in the head with a blow from the vajra. However, when the blood flowed, thousands of men were born from this. In the battle, Vaishnavi struck him with the chakra. Aindri struck the lord among asuras with a club. Mangled by Vaishnavi's chakra, there were flows of blood. However, thousands of asuras who were just like him in size were created and covered the earth. Koumari struck him with a spear and Varahi with a sword. Maheshvari struck the giant asura, Raktabija, with



a trident. The daitya struck each of the matris back with a club. Raktabija, the giant asura, was engulfed with rage. He was struck with many spears, tridents and other weapons. However, when the blood fell down on the ground, hundreds and hundreds of other asuras were created. The asuras created from the asura covered the entire universe. When everything was covered, the gods were filled with great fear. On seeing that the gods were distressed, Chandika spoke quickly. She said, “O Kali! O Chamunda! Stretch out your gaping mouths. When I strike Raktabija with weapons, great asuras are generated from the drops of his blood. Roam around in the field of battle, receive the drops in your mouths and devour the great asuras as soon as they are generated. In this way, as his blood is exhausted, the daitya will head towards destruction. When you devour those fierce ones, no others will be generated.” Saying this, the goddess struck him with a trident and Kali received Raktabija’s blood in her mouth. At this, he struck Chandika with his club. However, despite the blow of the club, she did not feel the slightest bit of pain. Struck by her, a lot of blood started to flow from his body. But all of this was received by Chamunda in her mouth. From the flow of blood, large asuras were generated inside her mouth. But Chamunda devoured them and drank up the blood. The goddess struck Raktabija with her trident, chakra, arrows, sword and double-edged sword and Chamunda drank up the blood. O lord of the earth! Struck by those weapons, Raktabija, the giant asura, became bereft of blood and lay down on the ground, lifeless. O king! The gods were filled with unmatched delight. Having drunk the blood, the large number of matris were intoxicated and danced around.””

## Chapter 86

““The king said, ‘O illustrious one! You have told me a wonderful account about the goddess’s conduct and greatness,<sup>839</sup> based on the slaying of Raktabija. I now want to know what Shumbha did. What about the extremely wrathful Nishumbha?’

““The rishi replied, ‘Hearing that Raktabija had been brought down and that others had been killed in the battle, the asura Shumbha, and Nishumbha, were filled with unsurpassed rage. On seeing that the large army had been slaughtered, Nishumbha was filled with great intolerance and rushed forward, with the best among the asura soldiers. Giant asuras were in front of him, behind him and to his sides. They angrily bit their lips in rage and advanced to kill the goddess. The immensely valiant Shumbha arrived, surrounded by his own soldiers. He was filled with rage. To kill Chandika, he fought with the matrix. There was a terrible battle between the goddess and Shumbha and Nishumbha. They showered down fierce arrows, like clouds showering down rain. Chandika shot her own arrows and severed those arrows. She used torrents of weapons to strike the two lords among asuras on their limbs. Nishumbha seized a sharp sword and an extremely radiant shield. He struck the lion, the goddess’s excellent mount, on the head. When her mount was struck, the goddess used a *kshurapra* arrow<sup>840</sup> to swiftly cut down Nishumbha’s sword. She also severed his shield, with the marks of eight moons inscribed on it. When the sword and shield were severed, the asura hurled a spear. However, as it descended, she sliced it into two with her chakra. Filled with rage, the danava Nishumbha seized a trident. But as it descended, the goddess shattered it into fragments with a blow of her fists. After this, he seized a club and hurled it towards Chandika. But the goddess shattered this with her trident and reduced it to

ashes. The bull among daityas then advanced with a battleaxe in his hand. The goddess struck him with a torrent of arrows and brought him down on the ground.

““When Nishumbha, terrible in valour was brought down on the ground, his brother was filled with great rage and advanced, so as to kill Ambika. He was on his chariot and seized excellent weapons in his eight arms, which were so unmatched that they seemed to stretch up and cover the firmament. Seeing that he was advancing, the goddess blew on her conch shell. She twanged her bowstring and that sound was impossible to tolerate. She filled the directions with the sound of her bell and this sapped the energy of all the daitya soldiers. The lion filled the earth, the sky and the ten directions with its loud roar and this vanquished the musth. <sup>841</sup> Kali leapt up and struck the earth and the sky with her hands, this sound eclipsing all the previous sounds. Shivaduti laughed out aloud, in an inauspicious tone. <sup>842</sup> The asuras were terrified at this sound and Shumbha was filled with great rage. Ambika told the evil-souled one, “Wait. Wait.” Stationed in the sky, the gods uttered benedictions of victory. As Shumbha advanced, he hurled an extremely terrible and blazing spear. It descended like a mass of fire. But she repulsed it with her great fire. <sup>843</sup> O lord of the earth! Shumbha roared like a lion and filled the three worlds. But the terrible sound of thunder originating in the sky surpassed this. The goddess countered the arrows Shumbha shot and Shumbha countered the arrows the goddess shot. In this way, they respectively severed hundreds and thousands of such fierce arrows with their own arrows. After this, Chandika angrily struck him with her trident. Struck in this way, he fell down on the ground, senseless.’

‘By then, Nishumbha had regained his senses. He seized a bow and struck the goddess Kali and the lion with his arrows. Diti’s descendant, the lord of the danavas, then used his ten thousand arms to shroud Chandika with ten thousand chakras. The illustrious Durga, the destroyer of all hardships, became enraged. Using her own arrows, she severed those chakras and arrows. Nishumbha seized a club and rushed towards Chandika with great force, surrounding himself with daitya soldiers and desiring to kill her. As he descended, Chandika quickly severed the club with her sharp

sword. He seized a spear. With that spear in his hand, Nishumbha, the afflicter of the immortals, rushed forward. However, Chandika powerfully pierced him in the heart with her trident. When his heart was shattered, another man emerged from inside it. He was immensely strong and immensely valiant. “Wait,” he exclaimed. But as he was emerging, the goddess laughed out loud. She severed his head with her sword and it fell down on the ground. With its sharp teeth, the lion tore apart the necks of other asuras and ate them. Kali and Shivaduti devoured others. Koumari shattered other great asuras with her spear. Brahmani repulsed others with her pure mantras. Maheshvari shattered and brought down others with her trident. With blows from her snout, Varahi shattered others and brought them down on the ground. Vaishnavi used her chakra to slice danavas into fragments. Releasing the vajra from her hand, Aindri struck others. Some brave asuras were destroyed in this way. Some perished in the course of the great battle. Others were devoured by Kali, Shivaduti and the king of deer.’”

## Chapter 87

““The rishi said, ‘Shumbha saw that his brother, whom he loved as much as his own life, had been killed and that his army had been destroyed. He angrily spoke these words. “O Durga! O wicked one! You are surviving on the strength of others. Forget your pride. You are proud because you are fighting on the basis of the strengths of others.” The goddess replied, “I am alone in this universe. Other than me, where is the second one who exists? O wicked one! Behold. All these manifestations of mine are entering my own form.” All the other goddesses, Brahmani and the others, entered into the breasts of the goddess and Ambika remained there, alone. The goddess said, “I manifest myself in many different forms. All of them have been drawn into me and I alone remain. Be steady.” An extremely terrible battle then commenced between Shumbha and the goddess, while all the gods and the asuras looked on.

“““There were showers of sharp arrows. Extremely dreadful astras and shastras were used. The battle that raged between them caused great fear to the worlds. Ambika released hundreds of divine and other weapons. The Indra among daityas countered them with his own weapons. He too unleashed many divine weapons. As if she was toying, Parameshvari shattered them by uttering humkara. The asura enveloped the goddess with hundreds of arrows. Enraged, the goddess used her arrows to sever his bow. When his bow was severed, the Indra among daityas seized a spear. However, while it was still in his hand, the goddess used her chakra to sever this. The king of lords among the daityas then seized a sword and a shield as resplendent as the sun, decorated with the marks of one hundred moons. He rushed forward to kill her. As he descended, Chandika used sharp arrows released from her bow to swiftly sever the sword and the shield that

sparkled like the sun. She brought down his horses and his chariot, along with the charioteer. The daitya's horses were slain. His bow was severed and he was without a chariot. Preparing to kill Ambika, he grabbed a terrible bludgeon. As it descended, she used her sharp arrows to sever the bludgeon. Nevertheless, he rushed forward powerfully, raising his fists. The bull among daityas brought down his fist on the goddess's chest. However, the goddess struck him with a blow from her palm. With that slap of the palm, he fell down on the ground. But the king of daityas suddenly arose again. He seized the goddess and leapt up into the sky. Without any support, Chandika fought with him there. The daitya and Chandika wrestled with each other there. At first, <sup>844</sup> this caused great amazement among the Siddhas and the sages. For a very long time, he wrestled in this way with Ambika. After this, she picked him up, whirled him around and flung him down on the ground. Though he was flung down on the ground in this way, the evil-souled one rose up. He raised his fists and rushed forward, desiring to kill Chandika. The lord of all the daitya subjects advanced. But the goddess pierced him in the chest with her trident and felled him on the ground. Mangled by the points of the goddess's trident, he lost his life and fell down on the ground. When that evil-souled one was killed, the entire earth, along with its oceans, dvipas and mountains, turned pleasant. The world turned exceedingly beneficial. The sky became clear and sparkling. When he died, the clouds and meteors that had arisen were pacified. When Shumbha was slain, the rivers began to flow along their courses. The minds of all the large number of gods were filled with joy. When he was killed, the gandharvas sang in melodious voices. Other musical instruments were sounded. Large numbers of apsaras danced. An auspicious breeze started to blow. The rays of the sun turned radiant. Sacrificial fires that had been pacified blazed again. Tranquil sounds were heard in all the directions.''''

## Chapter 88

““The rishi said, ‘When the great Indra of the asuras was killed by the goddess, the desires of the gods were satisfied. Their auspicious faces bloomed like lotuses and illuminated the directions. With Indra and Agni at the forefront, they praised the goddess.

“““The gods said, <sup>845</sup> “O goddess! Show us your favours. You are the one who removes the afflictions of those who seek refuge with you. Show us your favours. You are the mother of the entire universe. O Vishveshvari! Show us your favours. Save the universe. O goddess! You are the Ishvari of everything that is mobile and immobile. You alone are the support for the entire universe. You are the one who exists in the form of the earth. It is your own form that exists in the water. O one whose valour cannot be transgressed! You are the one who pervades everything. You are the Vaishnavi power. You are infinite in your valour. You are the seed of the universe. You are the supreme maya. O goddess! Everything is confounded by you. When you are pleased, you are the cause behind liberation from the earth. You are all kinds of knowledge. O goddess! All the different women in the universe are but your forms. O mother! You alone fill everything up. How can one praise you? You are beyond praise. You are superior to the best of words. O goddess! You exist in every being. You are the one who grants enjoyment <sup>846</sup> and emancipation. You are the one who should be praised. But which are the supreme words that can be used to praise you? You are the one who exists in the hearts of all beings in the form of intelligence. You are the one who grants heaven and emancipation. O goddess! O Narayani! I prostrate myself before you. You exist in the form of kala, kashtha and the others. You are the one who grants consequences. You are the power that leads to the destruction of the universe. O Narayani!

I prostrate myself before you. O beneficial one! O one who brings about every kind of benefit! O auspicious one! O one who ensures every kind of success! O one who is a refuge! O three-eyed one! O Gouri! O Narayani! I prostrate myself before you. O eternal power who is behind creation, preservation and destruction! O refuge of all the gunas! O one who is full of gunas! O Narayani! I prostrate myself before you. O one who is devoted to saving the distressed and the afflicted who seek refuge with you! O one who removes the afflictions of everyone! O goddess! O Narayani! I prostrate myself before you. In the form of Brahmani, you are on a vimana that is yoked to swans. You are the one who sprinkles water mixed with kusha grass. O goddess! O Narayani! I prostrate myself before you. In the form of Maheshvari, you are astride a large bull, holding a trident, the moon and a serpent. O Narayani! I prostrate myself before you. O unblemished one! In the form of Koumari, you are surrounded by peacocks and cocks and wield a large spear. O Narayani! I prostrate myself before you. In the form of Vaishnavi, you hold a conch shell, a chakra, a mace and the Sharnga bow. Show us your favours. O Narayani! I prostrate myself before you. In the form of Varahi, you wielded a large chakra and raised up the earth on the tip of your tusks. O auspicious one! O Narayani! I prostrate myself before you. In the form of the fierce Narasimhi, you made efforts to destroy the daityas. You are the one who is associated with saving the three worlds. O Narayani! I prostrate myself before you. In the form of Aindri, you wear a diadem and wield a giant vajra. You possess one thousand dazzling eyes. You are the one who took away Vritra's life. O Narayani! I prostrate myself before you. In the form of Shivaduti, you slew the immensely strong daityas. O one whose form is terrible! O one whose roar is loud! O Narayani! I prostrate myself before you. You crushed Munda in the form of Chamunda. Your face has cruel fangs and your ornament is a necklace of skulls. O Narayani! I prostrate myself before you. O Lakshmi! O Lajja! <sup>847</sup> O great *vidya*! <sup>848</sup> O Shraddha! <sup>849</sup> O Pushti! <sup>850</sup> O Svadha! O Dhruva! <sup>851</sup> O Maharatri! <sup>852</sup> O Mahamaya! O Narayani! I prostrate myself before you. O intellect! <sup>853</sup> O Sarasvati! O supreme one! O prosperity! O Babhravi! <sup>854</sup> O dark one! O one who restrains! Show us your favours. O



Narayani! I prostrate myself before you. O one whose hands and feet are everywhere! O one whose eyes, heads and mouths are in every direction! O one whose senses of hearing and smell are in every direction! O Narayani! I prostrate myself before you. O one whose form is in everything! O one who is the lord of everything! O one who possesses all the powers! Save us from all fear. O goddess! O Durga! I prostrate myself before you. Your face, adorned with three eyes, is amiable. Save us from all kinds of fear. O Katyayani! I prostrate myself before you. Your trident is fierce, dreadful and blazing. It is the destroyer of asuras! Use it to save us from fear. O Bhadrakali! I prostrate myself before you. Your bell filled the universe with its sound and robbed the daityas of their energy. O goddess! We are like your sons. Use it to protect us from all kinds of sin. O Chandika! The sword glistens in your hand and is smeared with mud created by the blood and fat of asuras. We are bowing down before you. Use it to bring us what is auspicious. When you are satisfied, you take away all kinds of disease and grant all the objects of desire that are wished for. But when dissatisfied, you take these away. Men who seek refuge with you never suffer. Those who seek refuge with you become refuges for others. O goddess! You have now caused a great carnage among the giant asuras who hated dharma. Though you are one, you created many kinds of forms. O Ambika! Who other than you can do something like that? In knowledge, in the sacred texts, in the lamp of discrimination and in all the worlds, there is no one other than you. This sense of 'mine' is a great darkness. Other than you, who else can whirl the universe around in this way? You are established and save the universe wherever there are rakshasas, terrible and virulent nagas, enemies, powerful bandits, forest conflagrations and ocean depths. O Vishveshvari! You are the one who saves the universe. You are the one whose atman is the universe. You are the one who holds up the universe. The lords of the universe bow down devotedly before you. You are the refuge of the universe. O goddess! Just as you have instantly saved us from miseries now, always protect us from all kinds of fear. Pacify all the sins and evil portents in the universe and deliver us from the mire of all great calamities. We are prostrating ourselves before you. Show us your favours. O goddess! O one

who removes the afflictions of the universe! O one who deserves to be worshipped by everyone who resides in the three worlds! Bestow boons on the worlds.”

“““The goddess replied, “O large number of gods! I will confer a boon. Ask for the boon that is in your minds. For the sake of the welfare of the universe, I will grant whatever you ask for.”

“““The gods said, “O one who is the lord of everything! Let it be such that all the impediments in the three worlds are pacified. You should act so that all our enemies are destroyed.”

“““The goddess replied, “When the twenty-eighth yuga <sup>855</sup> of Vaivasvata manvantara arrives, there will be two other great asuras named Shumbha and Nishumbha. At that time, I will reside on the slopes of the Vindhya mountains. Born through Yashoda’s womb in Nanda’s lineage, I will then destroy them. After that, I will again descend on earth in an extremely fierce form and destroy the danavas born in Viprachitti’s lineage. I will devour the fierce danavas born in Viprachitti’s lineage. Like the flower of a pomegranate, my teeth will turn red. Therefore, the gods in heaven and men in the mortal world will praise me and speak of me as Raktadantika. <sup>856</sup> Thereafter, for one hundred years, it will not shower down from the clouds. Praised by the sages, I will appear on earth, but will not be born from a womb. Since I will glance at the sages with one hundred eyes, men will use the word Shatakshi <sup>857</sup> to chant about me. At that time, I will sustain all the worlds with vegetables that will grow from my body. O gods! When it does not rain, those vegetables will sustain life. At that time, I will be famous on earth under the name of Shakambhari. <sup>858</sup> At that time, I will slay the giant asura known as Durgama. Therefore, I will be famous under the name of the goddess Durga. Next, I will assume a terrible form in the Himalayas, to devour the rakshasas and save the sages. At that time, all the sages will respectfully lower their bodies and praise me. I will be famous under the name of the goddess Bhima. <sup>859</sup> Later, the asura known as Arunaksha will create great obstructions in the three worlds. For the welfare of the three worlds, I will assume the form of a bee and with innumerable other bees, will slay him. All the worlds will then praise me under the name of

Bhramari. <sup>860</sup> In this way, whenever danavas cause impediments, I will descend on earth and destroy the enemy.””””

## Chapter 89

“““The goddess continued, “If a man controls himself and praises me through this hymn, there is no doubt that I will always remove all his impediments. This is an account of the destruction of Madhu and Kaitabha, the slaying of Mahishasura and the death of Shumbha and Nishumbha. With single-minded attention, this should be chanted on the eighth, ninth and fourteenth lunar tithis. If a person devotedly satisfies me through this excellent mahatmya, no evildoer will be able to do the slightest bit of evil to him. Nor will he suffer from any calamity. He will not face penury, or separation from those he loves. He will face no fear from enemies, bandits or kings. Nor will there be any fear from weapons, fire or water. Therefore, this mahatmya of mine must be read with a controlled mind. If one desires great benedictions, one must always listen to it with supreme devotion. This mahatmya of mine pacifies all the evil portents, great epidemics and the three kinds of calamities. <sup>861</sup> If this is properly read in a place, that becomes my abode and I never leave it. My presence there is assured. At the time of offering sacrifices, performing worship, tending to fire rites, or during great festivals—at all these, my conduct must be recited and heard. Knowingly or inadvertently, if a person offers sacrifices to me, worships me, or renders fire rites to me, I accept it happily. During the great annual festival at autumn, if a person faithfully listens to my mahatmya, he is freed from all impediments, he becomes the possessor of riches and grain. There is no doubt that such a man receives my favours. If a man listens to my mahatmya, or separately to the auspicious account of my origin and valour in battle, he conquers fear. His enemies head towards destruction and he obtains benefit. If a man listens to my mahatmya, his lineage is delighted. Whenever there are rites to ensure peace, when nightmares are seen and

when there is terrible oppression from the planets, let my mahatmya be heard. Evil portents and the terrible suffering due to planets will be pacified. Men who see nightmares will see happy dreams instead. This brings peace to children who have been grasped by demons that seize children. When men suffer from conflict and dissension, it brings about excellent friendly relations. When it is read, there is the destruction of all the evildoers, rakshasas, bhutas and pishachas. Their great strength is destroyed. Everything in my mahatmya gives a person the right to be near me. There are ways to please me through offering excellent animals, flowers, arghya, incense, fragrances and lamps, by feeding brahmanas, offering oblations, sprinkling water day and night and giving many kinds of objects of pleasure throughout the year. But all this good merit can be obtained by listening to my conduct. Hearing about this destroys all sins and grants freedom from disease. Reciting the account of my origin, my conduct in battle and the destruction of the wicked daityas, protects all beings. A man who hears this does not suffer from any fear caused by the enemy. The praises uttered by you, the praises uttered by the brahmana rishis and the praises uttered by Brahma grant an auspicious destination. If a man remembers my conduct, he is freed from hardships—in forests and desolate regions, when surrounded by a forest conflagration, when surrounded by bandits in a lonely spot, when seized by enemies, when followed in the forest by lions, tigers and wild elephants, when a king is angry and has commanded that the man be killed or bound, when his boat is in a large ocean and is whirled around by a storm, when extremely fierce weapons descend in the course of a battle and when he is severely afflicted by pain from all manner of dreadful obstructions. When he remembers my conduct, because of my powers, lions and others, bandits and enemies flee a long distance away.”

“The rishi said, ‘The illustrious Chandi, terrible in her valour, said this. While the gods looked on, she instantly vanished. The gods were freed from fear and regained their former rights. With their enemies slain, they enjoyed their shares of the sacrifices. The daityas were killed by the goddess in battle. The immensely fierce Shumbha was unmatched in valour and had brought destruction to the world. Nishumbha was immensely valiant. Both

of them went to Patala. O lord of the earth! In this way, the illustrious goddess repeatedly manifests herself to protect the world. She is the one who confounds the universe. She is the one from whom the universe originates. When entreated, she grants vijnana. When satisfied, she confers prosperity. O lord of men! She pervades the entire *brahmanda*.<sup>862</sup> She is Mahakali. At the time of the great destruction, she is the great epidemic. She is the great epidemic at the time of destruction.<sup>863</sup> She is the origin of creation. She is without birth. She is the eternal one who ensures the preservation of beings when the time for that arrives. At the appropriate time, she resides in the homes of men in the form of Lakshmi and bestows prosperity. When she is not present, she is in the form of Alakshmi and brings about destruction. When she is praised and worshipped with flowers, fragrances, incense and other things, she bestows wealth, sons, inclination towards dharma and an auspicious end.”””

## Chapter 90

““The rishi said, ‘O lord of the earth! I have thus described the excellent *Devi Mahatmya* to you. It is through such powers that the goddess holds up the universe. She is the illustrious Vishnu’s maya and acts so as to grant knowledge. However, she also confounds you, this vaishya and others who are discriminating. When they are confounded, they confound others too. O great king! Therefore, go and seek refuge with Parameshvari. When she is worshipped, she grants men objects of pleasure, heaven and emancipation.’”

‘Markandeya continued, “Hearing his words, King Suratha bowed down before the immensely fortunate rishi who was firm in his vows. He had been distressed because of his sense of ‘mine’ and because he had been deprived of his kingdom. O great sage! He immediately went off to perform austerities, and so did the vaishya. So as to see Amba, the vaishya tormented himself through austerities along the banks of a river and meditated on the supreme hymn to the goddess. On the banks of the river, the two of them fashioned an earthen image of the goddess. Having done this, they rendered her offerings of flowers, incense, fire and water oblations. They fasted, controlled themselves and fixed their minds on her. They rendered her offerings sprinkled with blood drawn from their own bodies. In this way, they controlled their atmans and worshipped her for three years. After this, Chandika, who holds up the universe, was satisfied and manifested herself before them. The goddess said, ‘O king! O delight of the lineage! <sup>864</sup> I am satisfied with you. Therefore, through my favours, you will get everything that you wish for.’ In his next life, the king asked for a kingdom that would not be destroyed. In this life, he asked that he might be able to use force to kill the enemy and get his own kingdom back. The

vaishya's mind was detached and he asked for jnana, so that he might possess the wisdom to get rid of notions of 'me' and 'mine', the causes of deviation and attachment. The goddess replied, 'O lord of men! You will get back your own kingdom within a few days. That will happen after you have slain all your enemies. When you die, you will be born through the god Vivasvat. Your name will be Savarnika and you will be a Manu on earth. O noble vaishya! I will grant you the boon you have desired. I will grant you success in obtaining jnana.' Thus, the goddess granted them the boons they wished for. She was devotedly worshipped by them and immediately vanished. In this way, Suratha, bull among kshatriyas, obtained a boon from the goddess. Having been born through Surya, he will be Savarni Manu.'” <sup>865</sup>



## Chapter 91

‘Markandeya said, “I have described Savarnika manvantara completely to you. I have also told you about *Devi Mahatmya*, the killing of Mahishasura, the origin of the goddess and the matris in the great battle, the origin and existence of the goddess Chamunda, the greatness of Shivaduti, the slaying of Shumbha and Nishumbha and the killing of Raktabija. O tiger among sages! After this, hear about another Savarnika. Datta’s son will be Savarni and he will be the ninth Manu. I will tell you about the gods, sages and kings during this Manu. The gods will be the Paras, the Marichibhargas and the Sudharmans. Each of these three categories will have twelve subcategories. Their Indra will be the immensely strong Sahasraksha. <sup>866</sup> Right now, he is the six-faced Kartikeya, Vahni’s son. During the manvantara of that Manu, he will be the Shakra, under the name of Adbhuta. The saptarshis will be Medhatithi, Vasu, Satya, Jyotishmat, Dyutimat, Sabala and Havyavahana. The sons of the king will be Dhrishtaketu, Barhaketu, Khadgahasta, Niramaya, Prithushrava, Archishmat, Bhuridyumna and Brihadbhaya. These sons of Datta will be the kings.

“O brahmana! Now hear about another manvantara and Manu—the tenth. In this manvantara, the intelligent Brahma’s sons, Sukhasinas, Niruddhas and Dviprakaras are said to be the gods. During this future Manu, the number of gods will be one hundred. <sup>867</sup> Since the number of sons will be one hundred, the number of gods will also be one hundred. With all the qualities appropriate for Indra, Shanti will be the Indra then. Listen to the names of these who will be saptarshis then—Apomurti, Havishmat, Sukriti, Satya, Nabhaga, Apratima and Vasishtha as the seventh. Sukshetra, Uttamouja, the valiant Bhurishena, Shatanika, Vrishabha,

Anamitra, Jayadratha, Bhuridyumna and Suparva—these will be the Manu's sons.

“Now hear about the future manvantara of Dharma's son, Savarni. There will be three categories—Vihangamas, Kamagas and Nirmanapatis. <sup>868</sup> Each of these categories, will have thirty within it. The Nirmanapatis will preside over months, seasons and days. The Vihangamas will preside over nights and the Kamagas will preside over muhurtas. The Indra will be Vrishakhya, famous for his valour. The saptarshis during this manvantara will be Havishmat, Varishtha, the rishi Aruni, Nishchara, Anagha, the great sage Vishti and Agniteja as the seventh. The sons who will be kings will be Sarvatraga, Susharma, Devanika, Purudvaha, Hemadhanva and Dridhayu.

“Rudra's son, known as Savarni, will be the Manu when the twelfth manvantara arrives. Hear about the gods and sages then. The five categories of gods will be Sudharmans, Sumanasas, Haritas, Rohitas and Suvarnas. Each will have ten subcategories. It should be known that the immensely strong Ritadhama will be the Indra. He will possess all the qualities befitting Indra. Hear about the saptarshis—Dyuti, Tapasvi, Sutapa, Tapomurti, Taponidhi, Taporati and Tapodhriti as the seventh. The sons who will be kings will be Devavan, Upadeva, Devashreshtha, Viduratha, Mitravan and Mitravinda.

“For the thirteenth era, the Manu will be Rouchya. I will tell you about the gods, the saptarshis and the kings. Listen. O supreme among sages! All the gods then will be the Sudharmans, Sukarmans and Susharmans. The immensely strong and immensely valiant Divaspati will be their Indra. Listen. I will tell you about the future saptarshis—Dhritiman, Avyaya, Tattvadarshi, Nirutsaka, Nirmoha, Sutapa and Nishprakampa as the seventh. The sons will be Chitrasena, Vichitra, Niyati, Nirbhaya, Dridha, Sunetra, Kshatrabuddhi and Suvrata.”

## Chapter 92

‘Markandeya said, “In earlier times, Ruchi Prajapati was without a sense of ‘mine’ and without a sense of ahamkara. He roamed around the earth, sleeping wherever he was when the sun set. He did not have a sacrificial fire. He did not have a house. He ate at day and he possessed no hermitage. He was free from any attachment. On seeing him in that state, his ancestors spoke to the sage. The ancestors said, ‘O child! Why are you not going through the auspicious act of taking a wife? This is the cause behind heaven and emancipation. Without a wife, everything is a bond. By rendering what they deserve to all the gods, ancestors, rishis and guests and acting accordingly, a householder obtains all the worlds. By uttering “Svaha”, one offers to the gods. By uttering “Svadha”, one offers to the ancestors. One shares and gives food to living beings and guests. You are bound by a debt due to the gods. You are bound by a debt due to us. From one day to another day, you are also accumulating a debt to humans and living beings. You have not had sons. You have not satisfied the gods and the ancestors. Nor have you satisfied living beings. Behaving in this foolish way, how do you wish to attain a desirable end? O son! We think that you will suffer hardships in this world. After death, you will suffer hardships in hell and in another birth.’ Ruchi replied, ‘Marriage leads to great misery. It is a sin that leads to one’s downfall. That is the reason I have not taken a wife so far. One must control one’s atman by restraining one’s eyes from roaming around. It cannot be that marriage is the cause for emancipation. The atman is smeared by the mire of “mine”. Every day, a person who has not married uses the water of his consciousness to cleanse it. That is the best. There is the mire of karma that has resulted from many births. Controlling the senses, the learned use the water of good wishes to cleanse the atman.’ The

ancestors said, 'It is logical that one should restrain the senses and cleanse the atman. O son! However, will the path you are following lead to emancipation? Gifts donated without any motive destroy anything inauspicious. In that way, earlier karma, good or bad, can only be exhausted by enjoying the fruits. O child! Men must exhaust the consequences of auspicious and inauspicious deeds by enduring the resultant happiness and misery. This is the way the wise cleanse their atmans and prevent any bondage. Without this sense of discrimination, one gets smeared by the mire of sin.' Ruchi replied, 'O ancestors! The Vedas have interpreted the path of karma as one characterized by ignorance. That being the case, why do you want to yoke me to the path of karma?' The ancestors said, 'It is indeed true that karma results from ignorance. There is nothing false in these words. But there is also no doubt that karma is the cause behind the acquisition of knowledge. If a man does not undertake what he is supposed to do, because he thinks such restraint is virtuous, there is no emancipation for him. On the contrary, this leads to his downfall. You think that you are cleansing your atman. But simultaneously, you are getting smeared with sin because you are not undertaking what you are supposed to do. Just as poison causes injury to men, so does wrong perception of knowledge. The undertaking of ordained action does not lead to bondage. O child! Therefore, follow the norms and act so as to take a wife. Because the customary rites have not been undertaken, let your birth not be unsuccessful.' Ruchi replied, 'I am old now. Which father will bestow a wife on me? That apart, I am poor. It will be extremely difficult for me to get a wife.' The ancestors said, 'O child! If you do not accept and honour our words, there is no doubt that our downfall, and your downfall too, is ensured.' O excellent sage! Having said this, while he looked on, the ancestors suddenly vanished, like a lamp that has been snuffed out by the wind.'"

## Chapter 93

‘Markandeya said, “He became extremely anxious at the words spoken by his ancestors. Desiring a maiden, the brahmana rishi roamed around the earth. He couldn’t find a maiden and his ancestors’ words inflamed him, like a fire. Extremely anxious in his mind, he started to think. ‘What will I do? Where will I go? How will I get a wife? How will I quickly ensure the upliftment of my ancestors?’ Thinking in this way, the great-souled one made up his mind. ‘I will perform austerities and worship Brahma, who emerged from a lotus.’ For one hundred divine years, he tormented himself through austerities. For an extremely long period of time, he resorted to supreme rituals, offered to the creator. After this, Brahma, the grandfather of the worlds, showed himself before him and said, ‘I am pleased with you. Ask for your desired boon.’ He prostrated himself before Brahma, the destination of the universe. He told him about the words of his ancestors and about what he wished to do. Brahma heard the brahmana Ruchi’s words and about his desires. He spoke to him. Brahma said, ‘You will be a Prajapati. You will have offspring. O brahmana! Having obtained sons and offspring, you will perform all the rites. Having done this and having accomplished all your responsibilities, you will obtain success. Your ancestors were right. You must indeed take a wife. After you have acted so as to accomplish the desires of your ancestors and after you have worshipped them, the satisfied ancestors will grant you what you wish for—wives, son. When they are satisfied, what don’t the ancestors bestow?’ The rishi heard the words spoken by Brahma, whose birth is not manifest. On the banks of that secluded river, he offered oblations of water to the ancestors. The brahmana respectfully satisfied the ancestors with words of

praise. He controlled himself in single-minded fashion and bent his shoulders down in devotion.

“Ruchi said, ‘I bow down before the ancestors who reside as divinities during a shraddha ceremony. In shraddha ceremonies, the gods also satisfy them by uttering the word “Svadha”. I bow down to the ancestors, who are satisfied in heaven by the maharshis. Those who desire enjoyment and emancipation satisfy them in shraddha ceremonies, with devotion in their minds. I bow down to the ancestors, who are satisfied in heaven by the Siddhas. In shraddha ceremonies, they are given all the excellent and divine gifts. I bow down to the ancestors, who are worshipped with devotion by the guhyakas. Completely absorbed, they are worshipped with supreme devotion, so that prosperity may be obtained. I bow down to the ancestors, who are always worshipped on earth. In shraddha ceremonies, they are worshipped with devotion, so that the desired worlds may be obtained. I bow down to the ancestors, who are always worshipped on earth. They are the ones who grant what is desired. They are the ones who make a person a Prajapati. I bow down to the ancestors, who are worshipped by the residents of the forests. In shraddha ceremonies, those who live in the forest cleanse their sins by being restrained in diet and by observing austerities. I bow down to the ancestors. Brahmanas who are faithful in observing their vows satisfy them by being self-controlled and through meditation. I bow down to the ancestors. The royalty satisfies them in shraddha ceremonies by offering them all the stipulated kavya, so that the three worlds can be obtained as fruits. I bow down to the ancestors. The vaishyas on earth always worship them by always remaining devoted to their own tasks and through flowers, incense, food and water. I bow down to the ancestors. In shraddha ceremonies, the shudras in this world devotedly satisfy the ones who are known by the name of Sukalina.<sup>869</sup> I bow down to the ancestors. In shraddha ceremonies in Patala, the great asuras satisfy them by offering food with “Svadha” and by always giving up pride and intoxication. I bow down to the ancestors. In shraddha ceremonies in Rasatala, nagas who want objects of desire satisfy them with many kinds of objects of pleasure. I bow down to the ancestors. In shraddha ceremonies, the serpents who possess

objects of pleasure and prosperity always satisfy them through the recommended mantras. I bow down to the ancestors who reside directly in the world of heaven, the firmament and on earth and are worshipped by the gods and others. Let them accept my offerings. I bow down to the ancestors who are the embodied form of the paramatman and reside in vimanas. So that they may have unblemished minds and be free from all causes of hardship, the lords of yoga worship them. I bow down to the ancestors who are in embodied form in heaven. They devour oblations of Svadha so that they can grant all the wishes as fruits. They are capable of granting everything one wishes for. They grant emancipation to those who are not attached. Let all these ancestors be satisfied, so that they grant every desire one wishes for—the state of being a god, the state of being Indra, or even better, sons, animals, possessions, strength and homes. Let the ancestors who always reside in the moon's beams, the sun's rays and in white vimanas be satisfied. Let these ancestors obtain nourishment through this food, water, fragrances and other things. Let the ancestors be satisfied through oblations into the fire. Let ancestors who reside in the bodies of brahmanas enjoy them. Let the ancestors be delighted through the offering of pinda. Let these ancestors be satisfied with the food and the water. There are those whom the gods please by offering rhinoceros flesh and black, divine and pleasant sesamum. There are those whom the maharshis please with the herb known as kalashaka. Let all of them be delighted at these offerings. The immortals worship them with kavya and I have used the same flowers, fragrances, food and objects of pleasure. Let them be present here. There are ancestors who are worshipped every day. There are ancestors who are worshipped on earth at the end of every month. There are ancestors who are worshipped during ashtaka. <sup>870</sup> There are ancestors who are worshipped at the beginning of the year and those who are worshipped at the end of the year. Let all those ancestors come to my worship and be satisfied. The brahmanas worship those who are as radiant as the moon. The kshatriyas worship those with the complexion of the rising sun. The vaishyas worship those who are as resplendent as gold. The shudras worship those who are blue in complexion. Let all of them be satisfied with

my rendering of flowers, fragrances, incense and water. I bow down before the ancestors who are satisfied with the rendering of oblations into the fire. There are those who accept the pure oblations of kavya before the gods accept their shares and are satisfied. When satisfied, they are the ones who confer prosperity. I bow down before them. Let them be satisfied. There are those who destroy rakshasas, bhutas, fierce asuras and everything that is inauspicious for subjects. There are those who came before the gods and are worshipped by the lord of the immortals. I bow down before them. Let them be satisfied. There are the Agnishvattas, Barhishads, Ajyapas and Somapas.<sup>871</sup> Let them be delighted at this shraddha ceremony. All these ancestors have been worshipped by him. Let all the Agnishvatta ancestors protect me in the eastern direction. Let all the ancestors known as the Barhishads protect me in the southern direction. Let the Ajyapas protect me in the western direction and let the Somapas protect me in the northern direction. Let me be protected from rakshasas, bhutas, pishachas, asuras and taints that result from them. Let Yama, the lord of the ancestors, protect me in every direction. There are nine categories of ancestors—Vishva, Vishvabhuja, Aradhya, Dharma, Dhanya, Shubhanana, Bhutida, Bhutikrit and Bhuti. There are said to be six other categories too—Kalyana, Kalyatakarta, Kalya, Kalyatarashraya, Kalyatahetu and Anagha. There are seven other categories too—Vara, Varenya, Varada, Pushtida, Tushtida, Vishvapata and Dhata. There are five other categories of ancestors who destroy all sins—Mahan, Mahatman, Mahita, Mahimavan and Mahabala. There are said to be four other categories of ancestors too—Sukhada, Dhanada, Dharmada and Bhutida.<sup>872</sup> These thirty-one categories of ancestors pervade the entire universe. Let them be satisfied. Let them be content. Let them always grant me what is beneficial.”””



## Chapter 94

‘Markandeya said, “While he was praising in this way, a lofty mass of energy suddenly manifested itself and covered the entire sky. This great mass of energy was stationary and covered the entire universe. Seeing this, Ruchi sank down on his knees on the ground and recited this *stotram*.<sup>873</sup> Ruchi said, ‘I always prostrate myself before ancestors who are not manifest; those who are manifest in the form of this blazing energy; those who meditate; those who are divine in insight; Daksha, Marichi and the others who are the leaders of Indra and the others; and the other saptarshis. I prostrate myself before the Kamadas and all those who are the ancestors of Manu and the others, the Indras among sages, Surya and Chandra. I prostrate myself before those who are in the ocean. I prostrate myself before the nakshatras and planets, Vayu, Agni and the sky. I join my hands in salutation and prostrate myself before heaven and earth. I bow down to the devarshis and planets,<sup>874</sup> revered by all the worlds. I join my hands in salutation and prostrate myself before those who grant freedom from decay. I always join my hands in salutation and prostrate myself before Prajapati Kashyapa, Soma, Varuna and the lords of yoga. I bow down to the seven categories of ancestors who dwell in the seven worlds. I prostrate myself before Svayambhu Brahma, who has yoga as his sight. I prostrate myself before the ancestors who yield the flows of soma and before the ancestors who are the embodied form of yoga. I prostrate myself before the ancestors of Soma and those who are the ancestors of the world. I prostrate myself before the other ancestors who have the form of Agni. This entire world consists of nothing other than Agni and soma. Soma, Surya and Agni represent the embodied form of this energy. This is the essence of the universe. This is the essence of the brahman. With a controlled mind, I bow

down to all the ancestors who are yogis. I prostrate myself. I bow down. I prostrate myself before them. Let those who accept Svadha be pleased with me.’ O supreme sage! Thus praised, they emerged from that energy, illuminating the ten directions. He saw them standing in front of him, decorated with the flowers, fragrances and unguents he had offered.

“Full of devotion, he prostrated himself before them again. He again joined his hands in salutation. Reverentially, he separately addressed each of them with the words, ‘I prostrate myself before you. I bow down before you.’ The ancestors were pleased at this and spoke to the excellent sage. ‘Ask for a boon.’ Bending his shoulders down, Ruchi said, ‘Brahma has now instructed me to be the originator of a creation. Therefore, I desire a blessed and divine maiden who will have sons and offspring.’ The ancestors replied, ‘You will instantly have a beautiful wife. Through her, you will have a son who will be an excellent Manu. The intelligent one will be the lord of a manvantara. O Ruchi! Because of your name, he will be distinguished by the name of Rouchya. He will be famous in the three worlds. He will have many sons who will be immensely strong and valiant. The great-souled one will be a protector of the earth. You will become a Prajapati and will create four categories of subjects. O one who knows about dharma! You will obtain success when your responsibilities become extinguished. If a man faithfully satisfies us with this stotram, we will be content and grant him objects of pleasure, excellent jnana, freedom from disease, wealth, sons, grandsons and other things. There is no doubt that we will grant him many other things that are desired. In this world, if men constantly desire auspicious fruits and if they desire the perennial satisfaction of the ancestors, men must praise us with this stotram. Those who wish for our pleasure must always praise us with this stotram at shraddha ceremonies. This praise brings us great pleasure. When the best among brahmanas eat, stationing oneself in front of them, one must read this. Others who are nearby and hear this stotram will be delighted. Even if a shraddha ceremony is performed without a learned brahmana, if it is polluted in any other way, if it is undertaken with riches earned in an unjust way, if there are other transgressions, if something else is done so that it no

longer qualifies as a shraddha ceremony, if it is performed in the wrong place or at the wrong time, if the ordinances are not followed, if it is performed without faith, or if it is undertaken by a man full of insolence—as long as this stotram is uttered, we will be satisfied with the shraddha. There is no doubt that for us, that shraddha will be eternal. If a person reads this stotram at a shraddha, that brings us happiness and we remain satisfied for twelve years. When it is chanted in the cold season, <sup>875</sup> it gives us satisfaction for twelve years. When this auspicious stotram is recited in *shishira*, we are satisfied for double that number of years. When it is recited in *vasanta* in the course of a shraddha ritual, we are satisfied for sixteen years. If it is read during *grishma*, that is reason for satisfaction for sixteen years. O Ruchi! During *varsha*, if a shraddha ceremony is not undertaken properly, but this stotram is recited, eternal satisfaction is ensured for us. During *sharad*, if a man reads this while donating at a shraddha ceremony, we are satisfied for fifteen years. If this is written in a house, we will always be present there during a shraddha ceremony. O immensely fortunate one! Therefore, in the course of a shraddha ceremony, stand before the brahmanas and make them hear it while they are eating. It provides us nourishment.’ O excellent sage! Having said this, the ancestors left for heaven.”

## Chapter 95

‘Markandeya said, “After this, a beautiful woman arose from the middle of the river. This slender-limbed one was an excellent apsara named Pramlocha and she presented herself before him. She addressed the great-souled Ruchi in extremely sweet syllables. Pramlocha was a supreme apsara, with excellent eyebrows. As she spoke, she bent down in humility. ‘O supreme among ascetics! My daughter is an extremely beautiful maiden. She has been born through the great-souled Pushkara, Varuna’s son. I will bestow the beautiful-complexioned one on you as a wife. Please accept her. Through her, you will have a son who will be an extremely intelligent Manu.’ When he agreed, she brought out this beautiful-limbed maiden from the water. Her name was Malini. On the banks of the river, Ruchi, supreme among sages, invited the great sages and following the rites, accepted her hand. Through her was born a son who was extremely valiant and immensely intelligent. Following his father’s name, he became known as Rouchya on earth. I will properly tell you about the gods, the saptarshis and his sons, the kings, during his manvantara. If men hear the account of this manvantara, there is an increase in dharma, freedom from disease and generation of riches, grain and sons. O great sage! If one hears about the hymn to the ancestors and the various categories of ancestors, through their favours, one obtains all the objects of desire.’”

## Chapter 96

‘Markandeya said, “After this, hear about the origin of Bhoutya, the gods, the rishis and the sons who will be lords of the earth. Angiras had a disciple named Bhuti who was extremely prone to anger. For the most trifling of reasons, he spoke in harsh words and invoked terrible curses. Vayu did not blow too severely in his hermitage. Ravi did not generate excessive heat and Parjanya did not produce too much of mud. The full moon ensured that its beams were not excessively cold. They were terrified of the rage of that extremely energetic one. The seasons deviated from their normal behaviour and trees that were born in his hermitage followed his commands and yielded the flowers and fruits of all the seasons. The water was scared as soon as it approached the great-souled one’s hermitage and easily entered his water pot. The brahmana was incapable of tolerating a great deal of hardship and was prone to succumb to severe anger. The immensely fortunate one did not have a son and made up his mind to undertake austerities. Desiring a son, he thought and made up his mind to perform austerities, controlling his diet and suffering from the cold, the wind and the fire. However, the moon wasn’t excessively cool. The sun did not heat too much. O great sage! The wind did not blow too strongly. Bhuti, supreme among sages, did not suffer from the opposite pair of feelings. <sup>876</sup> His wishes were not accomplished and he refrained from austerities.

“He had a brother named Suvarcha, who invited him to a sacrifice. Wishing to go, he spoke to his immensely intelligent disciple, Shanti, who was serene and humble and always devoted to his guru’s tasks. He was an excellent sage who was unmatched and did not deviate. He was generous and always engaged in auspicious conduct. Bhuti said, ‘O Shanti! I will go to my brother Suvarcha’s sacrifice. I have been invited by him. You remain

here. Listen to what you must do. Your task is to ensure that the fire is always burning in my hermitage. You must make efforts so that the fire is not extinguished.’ Thus addressed, the disciple Shanti agreed and the guru went off to the sacrifice his younger brother had invited him to attend. For the sake of his great-souled guru Bhuti, Shanti went to the forest to collect flowers, fruits, kindling and other things. Devoted in his faith towards his guru, he engaged in other tasks. Meanwhile, the fire Bhuti had carefully tended to, got extinguished. On seeing that the fire had got extinguished, Shanti became extremely miserable. He was scared of Bhuti. The immensely intelligent one thought in many kinds of ways. ‘What will I do? When the guru left, how has this happened? What will I do now? What will bring the most benefit? If my guru sees that the fire has got extinguished in its sacrificial hearth, there is no doubt that he will unleash a terrible calamity on me. He is capable of seeing everything. If I kindle another fire in place of the fire that has got extinguished, there is no doubt that he will reduce me to ashes. I am wicked and will be the cause of the guru’s rage and curse. I am not sorrowing for myself, but for the sin I have committed towards the guru. On seeing that the fire has got extinguished, there is no doubt that my guru will curse me. That brahmana’s energy is like that of an angry fire. It is because of those powers that the gods are scared and remain under his command. Since I have committed a crime, it is logical that he will make me suffer.’ Always scared of his guru, he thought in many kinds of ways.

“Then the best among intelligent ones decided to seek refuge with Jatavedas. <sup>877</sup> He composed his mind and knelt down on the ground on his knees. He joined his hands in salutation and single-mindedly chanted a stotram to the one with the seven flames.

“Shanti said, ‘I bow down to the great-souled one who ensures the success of all creatures. He has one, two and five sacrificial hearths. At a rajasuya sacrifice, he has six forms. I bow down to the extremely radiant one who ensures subsistence for all the gods. In the form of a seed, he provides a foundation to the entire universe. You are the mouth of all the gods. O illustrious one! All the oblations are received through your mouth.

You provide the breath of life to all the gods. O Anala! You are the one who turns the oblations into the forms of clouds. After that, the result is your assuming the form of water. All the herbs are born from that. O one whose charioteer is Anila! <sup>878</sup> It is because of all the herbs that creatures live happily. Men use the herbs created by you to perform sacrifices. O Pavaka! The gods, the daityas and the rakshasas are welcomed through these sacrifices. O Hutashana! You are the foundation for these sacrifices. O Vahni! Thus, you are the seed of everything and you are in everything. O Pavaka! Gods, danavas, yakshas, daityas, gandharvas, rakshasas, humans, domestic animals, trees, wild animals, birds and reptiles—all of them obtain subsistence and sustenance through you. It is from you that they originate. It is in you that they obtain their destruction. O god! You are the one who creates water. You are the one who again destroys it. You are the one who cooks living beings and ensures their nourishment. You exist in the gods in the form of energy. You exist in the Siddhas in the form of loveliness. You exist in the nagas in the form of poison. You exist in the birds in the form of the wind. You exist in humans in the form of rage. You exist in birds and animals in the form of delusion. You exist in trees in the form of stability. You exist in the earth in the form of hardness. O illustrious one! You exist in water in the form of fluidity. You exist in the wind in the form of speed. O Agni! You are established in the sky in the form of expanse. O Agni! You roam around in all beings and protect them. The wise speak of you as one. But they also speak of you as three in form. <sup>879</sup> When they invoke you at a sacrifice, they think of you as possessing eight forms. The supreme rishis say that the universe has been created by you. O Hutashana! In your absence, the entire universe will instantly be destroyed. The brahmanas worship you, offer havya and kavya and utter “Svaha” and “Svadha”. Having thus performed their own tasks, they obtain their intended ends. Your energy is the essence behind all consequences. You are worshipped by beings and the immortals. You are the source of the flames that emerge and consume all creatures. O Jatavedas! O immensely radiant one! You are the one who has created this universe. The rites of the Vedas are based on you. All beings and the universe have you in them. O Anala! O one with the

tawny eyes! I bow down before you. O Hutashana! I bow down before you. O Pavaka! I bow down before you now. O Havyavahana! I bow down before you. You are the one who purifies all beings.<sup>880</sup> You are the one who purifies the universe. O one who cooks the universe! You are the one who cooks everything that is eaten and everything that is drunk. You are the one who cooks the crops. You are the one who nourishes the universe. You are the essence of the cloud. You are the essence of the wind. You are the seed. You are the reason behind crops. You are the one who nourishes all beings—from the past, the present and the future. You are the radiance in all creatures. You are Aditya. You are Vibhavasū. You are day and night. You are both the sandhyas. O Vahni! You are Hiranyareta. You are the cause behind the origin of gold.<sup>881</sup> You are Hiranyagarbha. You are like gold in your complexion. O lord of the universe! Your forms exist as muhurta, kshana, *truti*, lava, kala, kashtha, nimesha and other things.<sup>882</sup> You are time and all its transformation is your nature. O lord! You follow the dictate of destiny and your tongue is Kali. Use that to save us from all sins and from all the great fears in this world. Your tongue is Karali and is the cause behind the great destruction. Use that to save us from all sins and from all the great fears in this world. Your tongue is Manojava and has the quality of being extremely light. Use that to save us from all sins and from all the great fears in this world. Your tongue is Sulohita and accomplishes desire for beings. Use that to save us from all sins and from all the great fears in this world. Your tongue is Sudhumravarna and brings disease for beings. Use that to save us from all sins and from all the great fears in this world. Your tongue is Sphulingini, handsome in form. Use that to save us from all sins and from all the great fears in this world. Your tongue is Vishvasrija, which provides peace to living beings. Use that to save us from all sins and from all the great fears in this world.<sup>883</sup> O one with the tawny eyes! O one with the red throat! O one with the black trail! O devourer of oblations!<sup>884</sup> Save me from all kinds of sins. Save me from samsara. O Vahni! Show me your favours. O one with the seven flames! O Krishanu! O Havyavahana!<sup>885</sup> O one who is addressed in eight names—Agni, Pavaka, Shukra and the others! O Agni! O one who was created before all beings! O Vibhavasū!



Show me your favours. O Havyavahana! O one without decay! You are being praised by me. O Vahni! You are without destruction. Your form cannot be imagined. You are full of prosperity. You are extremely fierce and impossible to behold. You are without decay. You are infinite in your valour. You are terrible and destroy all the worlds. Your nature is excellent. You are full of sattva. You are infinite in your powers and exist in the lotus that is in all hearts. O Hutashana! You are one. But in many forms, you pervade everything in this universe, mobile and immobile. You are without decay. You are the earth, with its mountains, forests and sky. You are the great firmament, with the sun and the moon. You are the great ocean, with the subterranean fire in its stomach. O lord! O Pavaka! You drink up the waters. You are the Hutashana who is always worshipped in the rituals observed by maharshis in great sacrifices. For the sake of prosperity, when you are praised with utterances of vashatkara, you drink the soma offered in sacrifices. For the sake of fruits, the brahmanas always sacrifice to you. All the Vedas and Vedangas chant about you. It is for your sake that the Indras among brahmanas perform sacrifices and study the Vedangas at all times. You are the Brahma who is devoted to sacrifices. You are Vishnu. You the lord of the bhutas. <sup>886</sup> You are the lord of the gods. You are Aryama. You are the lord of the water. You are Surya. You are Indu. <sup>887</sup> All the gods and asuras satisfy you through oblations and obtain their desired fruits. Everything that has been tainted by a great pollutant is purified as soon as it touches your rays. Among all kinds of bathing, bathing with ashes is the best. That is the reason sages do this during sandhya. Having done this, they obtain the world of heaven. Controlled and devoted, they obtain all the destinations filled with joy. O Vahni! Be pleased. You are known as the one who purifies. Show me your favours in your blazing form. Show me your favours in your sparkling form of Vayu. Be pleased. O fire who emerges from lightning! O Havyavahana! Be pleased. Save me. O Vahni! You possess seven auspicious flames. Use those to save us. O god! We are praising you. Save us, like a father saving his son.”””

## Chapter 97

‘Markandeya said, “O sage! The illustrious Havyavahana was praised in this way. Engulfed in a garland of flames, he appeared before him. O brahmana! The god Vibhavasus was delighted with the stotram. Shanti was prostrate before him and he spoke to him in a voice that deeply rumbled like the clouds. Agni said, ‘O brahmana! I am pleased with your devotion and your praise. I will grant you a boon. Ask what you wish for.’ Shanti replied, ‘O illustrious one! Since I have seen your form, everything that I wish for has been accomplished. Nevertheless, I bow down before you with devotion. Listen to my words. O god! My preceptor has left his hermitage to go to his brother’s sacrifice. When he returns to the hermitage, may he see you established on your hearth. O Vibhavasus! Because of a transgression I committed, you have left the hearth. May the brahmana now see you established there, as you used to be. O god! My guru is without a son. If you wish to show me your favours, let him have a distinguished son. Just as my guru will be friendly towards his son, let his mind become mild towards all beings. O one without decay! You have been satisfied with me. As a favour towards me, if anyone pleases you with this stotram, may you also bestow a boon on him.’ Pavaka heard the words spoken by the one who had worshipped him with the stotram, driven by devotion towards his guru. He spoke to that excellent brahmana. Agni said, ‘O brahmana! You have asked for two boons for your guru. <sup>888</sup> You have not asked for anything for yourself. O great sage! Therefore, I am pleased with you. Everything that you have asked for your guru will happen. He will have a son and he will be friendly towards all beings. His son will be named Bhoutya and he will be the lord of a manvantara. O one who praises his guru! He will be immensely strong, immensely valiant and immensely wise. If a person

controls himself and satisfies me with this stotram, he will obtain all the auspicious things he desires. For the sake of dharma, if a person reads this during sacrifices, on auspicious occasions, in tirthas and during rites when oblations are offered, he will obtain supreme nourishment. O brahmana! If a person listens to this, there is no doubt that the sins that he commits during day and night will be destroyed. This brings me supreme pleasure. If one listens to this, all sins caused by offering oblations at the wrong time, the wrong day or by the wrong person who has sinned, will be destroyed immediately. When mortals hear this praise to me on the day of the full moon, the day of the new moon or on special auspicious occasions, all sins will be destroyed.’ Having said this, while the sage looked on, the illustrious Agni instantly vanished, like a lamp that has just gone out.

“‘When Vahni disappeared, Shanti’s mind was content. His body hair stood up and he entered his guru’s hermitage. He saw the fire blazing in his guru’s hearth, just as it used to earlier. On seeing this, he was filled with great delight. Meanwhile, his great-souled guru returned from his younger brother’s sacrifice to his own hermitage. Seeing him in front of him, the disciple prostrated himself at his feet. After he had been worshipped, his guru accepted his seat and spoke to him. ‘O child! I find that I am loving towards you and towards other creatures. I don’t know how this has happened. If you know, quickly tell me.’ O great sage! At this, the brahmana Shanti told his preceptor everything, exactly as it had occurred, beginning with the fire getting extinguished. O great sage! Hearing this, with his eyes wet with tears of affection, the guru embraced his disciple and gave him all the Vedas, the Vedangas and the ancillary texts.

“‘A son was born to Bhuti, the Manu named Bhoutya. I will tell you about the future gods, rishis and kings during his future manvantara. Listen. I will tell you in detail. Listen. Then, the Indra of the gods will be famous for his deeds. The five categories of gods are said to be Chakshushas, Kanishthas, Pavitras, Bhrajiras and Dharavrikas. The Indra of the gods will then be Shuchi. He will be immensely strong and immensely valiant, possessing all the qualities befitting an Indra. The seven saptarshis are said to be Agnidhra, Agnibahu, Shuchi, Mukta, Madhava, Shukra and Ajita.

Bhoutya Manu's sons will be Guru, Gabhira, Bradhna, Bharata, Anugraha, Shrimani, Pratira, Vishnu, Sankrandana, Tejashvi and Subala. I have described the fourteenth manvantara to you. O supreme among sages! If a man hears about these manvantaras in the due order, he obtains all that is auspicious and descendants who do not die out. If a man hears about the first manvantara, he obtains dharma. If he hears about Svarochisha, he obtains all the objects of desire. If he hears about Uttama, he obtains wealth. If he hears about Tamasa, he obtains knowledge. If he hears about Raivata, he obtains intelligence and an extremely beautiful wife. If he hears about Chakshusha, he obtains freedom from disease. If a man hears about Vaivasvata, he obtains strength. If he hears about Surya-Savarnika, he has sons and grandsons who possess qualities. If he hears about Brahma-Savarni, he obtains greatness. If a man hears about Dharma-Savarnika, he obtains auspicious intelligence. If he hears about Rudra-Savarnika, he obtains victory. If he hears about Daksha-Savarnika, he has the best of kin, possessing all the qualities. O best among men! If he hears about Rouchya, the strength of his enemies is destroyed. If he hears about Rouchya manvantara, he obtains the favours of the gods. He also obtains the agnihotra fire and sons with qualities. O supreme among sages! If a person hears about all the manvantaras in the due order, he obtains excellent fruits. O brahmana! If a person hears about the gods, the rishis, the Indras, the Manus and the sons who will be kings and their lineages, he is freed from all sins. The gods, the rishis, the Indras and the lords of the manvantaras are pleased with him. Because they are pleased, they grant him auspicious intelligence. Having obtained auspicious intelligence, he performs auspicious deeds. He obtains an auspicious end for a period that is as long as the tenure of fourteen Indras. For him, all the seasons are pleasant. All the planets are favourable. This is certainly what happens when one listens to the manvantaras in the due order.”

## Chapter 98

‘Kroushtuki said, “O illustrious one! You have properly told me about the manvantaras and I have heard about them from you, in due order. O supreme among brahmanas! Beginning with Brahma, I wish to hear about the lineages of all the kings. O illustrious one! Please tell me.”

‘Markandeya replied, “O child! Hear about the origin and conduct of all the kings, created by Prajapati, the root cause of the universe. In this lineage of kings, there are many who performed sacrifices and triumphed in battles. This lineage is ornamented with hundreds who knew about dharma. If a man listens to the conduct of these great-souled Indras among men and their origins, he is cleansed from all sins. There were Manu, Ikshvaku, Anaranya, Bhagiratha and hundreds of other kings who ruled the earth properly. They knew about dharma. They were brave and knew about the supreme truth. O brahmana! If a man hears about this lineage, he is cleansed of sin.

Therefore, hear about this lineage. Like the branches that descend from a banyan tree, there were thousands of Indras among men in this lineage. In the beginning, Brahma Prajapati desired to create many kinds of subjects. O supreme among brahmanas! He created Daksha from his right thumb. The lord who is the creator of the universe created a wife for him, from his left thumb. The illustrious Brahma, the supreme cause behind the universe, created them. A beautiful daughter, Aditi, was born to Daksha. Through her and Kashyapa, the god Martanda was born. He was Brahma’s own form. He <sup>889</sup> is the one who bestows boons on the entire universe. He is the beginning, middle and end of all acts connected with creation, preservation and destruction. O brahmana! Everything that exists is based on him. This universe is his form, with its gods, asuras and humans. He is in all

creatures. He is in all atmans. He is the eternal paramatman. Surya was born in Aditi's womb because she had worshipped him earlier."

'Kroushtuki said, "O illustrious one! I wish to hear about Vivasvat's nature. Why was that original god born as Kashyapa's son? How was he worshipped by the goddess Aditi and Kashyapa? When he was worshipped, what did the god Surya say? O supreme among sages! When he descended, what were his powers like? Please tell me properly. I wish to hear about everything in detail."

'Markandeya replied, "Clearness, supremacy, vidya, light, radiance, eternal existence, diffusion, exclusivity, jnana, manifestation, irresistible will, comprehension, understanding, memory and vijnana—these are the forms of that radiant form. O immensely fortunate one! I will tell you about this in detail. Listen to what you asked me about, how the radiant Ravi originated. This world lacked light and illumination. Everything was enveloped in darkness. From the supreme cause that is without decay, a giant egg manifested itself. When it split open, the illustrious grandfather was inside it. Brahma, the lord who is himself the creator of the universe, was manifested in a lotus. O great sage! A great sound originated from his mouth and this was followed by *bhu, bhuva, sva*.<sup>890</sup> These three sounds express Vivasvat's true nature. OUM is his true form, but this is Ravi's supreme and subtle form. Mahah is a gross form and Jana is a form that is grosser than that. After that come Tapah and Satya. These are the seven forms.<sup>891</sup> But there is also no doubt that these forms exist and simultaneously do not exist, since their existence or non-existence depends on his inclination and sentiment. At the beginning of creation and after destruction, he is established in a supreme and subtle form. O brahmana! I have referred to it as OUM. That is the supreme brahman and that is his form."

## Chapter 99

‘Markandeya said, “O sage! The egg split and Brahma, whose origin is not manifest, emerged from inside it. The Rig hymns emerged first, from his first mouth. <sup>892</sup> They had the complexion of *japa* flowers <sup>893</sup> and they were endowed with energy and form. They were not connected. Instead, they were disparate and had separate forms, based on rajas. Without the slightest bit of obstruction, the Yajur hymns emerged from his mouth facing the south. They had the complexion of gold. Their complexions and forms weren’t identical, but separate. From Brahma Parameshthi’s mouth that faced the west, emerged the Sama hymns. All of them possessed chhanda. <sup>894</sup> All the Atharva hymns manifested themselves from the creator’s mouth facing the north. Their complexion was like that of a mass of black bees or collyrium. Whether they are used for evil purposes, <sup>895</sup> or whether they are used to ensure peace, their forms are terrible. Those used for happiness, possessed sattva, but generally they were full of tamas. Their nature was both amiable and harsh. O sage! The Rig hymns possessed the guna of rajas, while the Yajur hymns possessed the guna of sattva. The Sama hymns possessed the guna of tamas, while the Atharva hymns had both sattva and tamas. They blazed and their energy was unmatched. They blazed, as they had earlier, and each of them occupied a separate position. There is the original energy, which is uttered in the sound of OUM. This energy is the true nature and it was established there, covering everything. O great sage! There is energy in the form of the Yajur hymns and there is energy in the form of the Sama hymns. They come together and lead to a supreme energy. O brahmana! These hymns are used for three purposes—peace, nourishment and *abhichara*. These three find their destinations in the three, Rig and the others, and thereby have three ends. When the darkness was

destroyed, the universe began to sparkle. O brahmana rishi! The directions, up, down and diagonal, manifested themselves. The excellent energy of the metres was in the form of a circle. O brahmana! All of this supreme energy came together and came to be known as Aditya because it was the first. <sup>896</sup> O immensely fortunate one! This is the unmanifest reason behind the creation of the universe. Known by the names of Rig, Yajur or Sama, these scorch at three times of the day. O best among sages! The Rig hymns heat in the forenoon, the Yajur hymns at mid day and the Sama hymns in the afternoon. In the forenoon, the Rig hymns ensure peace. At mid day, the Yajur hymns ensure nourishment. In the afternoon, the Sama hymns are for abhichara rites. The abhichara rites can be equally performed at mid day and in the afternoon. However, all Sama rites for the ancestors must be undertaken in the afternoon. In the course of creation, the Rig hymns are established in Brahma and the Yajur hymns in Vishnu. The Sama hymns are in Rudra and because he brings about destruction, their sound is inauspicious. The Vedas are in the radiant Surya's atman. The Vedas are established in him. The knowledge of the Vedas exists in his atman and he is spoken of as the supreme being. For the cause of creation, preservation and destruction, he assumes the gunas of sattva, rajas and tamas. This eternal one thus assumes the name of Brahma, Vishnu and the others. He is the embodied form of the Vedas and he is worshipped by the gods. His form is embodied in all mortals. The universe finds a refuge in him. He is the radiance. He is the dharma that is to be known. He is the supreme one who is beyond Vedanta. He is the supreme lord.”



## Chapter 100

‘Markandeya said, “His energy heated it <sup>897</sup> from above and from below. Desiring to create, the grandfather, who originated from the lotus, started to think. ‘As soon as I create, that will be destroyed by the radiant Surya’s great energy. That great-souled one is the reason behind creation, preservation and destruction. Since he will dry up all the water with his energy, all living creatures will be deprived of their lives. The creation of the universe cannot happen without water.’ Thinking this, the illustrious one, Brahma, the grandfather of the worlds, fixed his mind on the illustrious Ravi and chanted a stotram to him. Brahma said, ‘I bow down to the one who is in everything. I bow down to the one who is in the form of everything. The universe is his embodied form. He is the supreme radiance yogis meditate about. The Rig hymns are in him. He is the reservoir for the Yajur hymns. He is the source of the Sama hymns. His powers are unthinkable. He is the manifest form of the three and the half matras. <sup>898</sup> His nature is supreme. He is worthy of the gunas, but he is beyond them. He is the supreme cause behind everything. He is the original one who should be known. He is the supreme radiance. His form cannot be known. His gross form is in the gods. I bow down to the radiance that existed in the beginning. He is supreme and beyond the supreme. I will create on the basis of your original power. That power assumes the form of water, earth, wind and fire. O god! The gods, the regions and everything else, the sound of OUM included, are urged by you at the time of creation and destruction. It is not because of what I wish. You are the fire. When you suck up water from the earth, this is when I undertake creation. This can be regarded as the first round of cooking. O illustrious one! You cover everything in the form of the sky. The five <sup>899</sup> are your own form and thus do you protect the

universe. Those who know about the paramatman worship you with sacrifices. O Vivasvat! Vishnu, who exists in all sacrifices, is but your own form. You are the lord of everything. You are the paramatman. Mendicants who desire emancipation control themselves and meditate on you. I bow down before the one whose form is divine. I bow down before the one whose form is the sacrifice. Your own form is the supreme brahman that yogis think about. O lord! I am about to create. Control your energy, since your energy is an impediment in the path of creation.’ The radiant one was thus praised by Brahma, the creator. He withdrew his energy and retained only a small bit from it. The immensely fortunate one who originated from the lotus then went about creating the universe, just as he had done at the end of the last kalpa. O great sage! Brahma created gods, asuras and others, mortals, animals, trees, herbs and hells, just as they had existed earlier.”

## Chapter 101

‘Markandeya said, “Having created the universe, Brahma divided it according to varnas, ashramas, oceans, mountains and dvipas, exactly as they had existed earlier. The illustrious one, who originated from the lotus, created forms and places for gods, daityas, uragas and others, as they had existed earlier, and also for the Vedas. Brahma’s son was known as Marichi. His son was Kashyapa and Kashyapa’s son was Kaashyapa. <sup>900</sup> Daksha was Brahma’s son and thirteen of Daksha’s daughters became Kashyapa’s wives. They had many sons, gods, daityas, uragas and others. Aditi gave birth to the gods, the lords of the three worlds. Diti’s sons were the daityas. Danu’s sons were the fierce danavas, mighty in their valour. Vinata’s sons were Garuda and Aruna. Khasa’s sons were yakshas and rakshasas. Kadru gave birth to nagas and Muni gave birth to gandharvas. Krodha gave birth to Kulyas and large numbers of apsaras were born from Rishta. O brahmana! Ira gave birth to Airavata and other elephants. O brahmana! Tamra had daughters, the foremost among whom was Shyeni. Birds like hawks, wild crows and parrots were born through these daughters. The trees were born from Ila. The large number of aquatic creatures were born from Pradha. O sage! The sons born through Aditi and Kashyapa, their sons, sons of sons, sons of daughters and others covered the entire universe, through male lines and female lines. Among Kashyapa’s sons, the large number of gods were the foremost. O sage! They <sup>901</sup> belonged to three groups—those with sattva, those with rajas and those with tamas. Parameshthi Prajapati Brahma, supreme among those who know about the brahman, made the gods the lords of the three worlds and gave them a share in sacrifices. Therefore, the daityas, danavas and rakshasas became their enemies and combined against them. There was an extremely terrible battle between the

two sides. After one thousand divine years, the gods were defeated. O brahmana! The powerful daityas and danavas were victorious.

“O supreme among sages! Aditi saw that her sons had been defeated by the daityas and the danavas and that the three worlds had been taken away from them. She was extremely distressed that the shares of the sacrifices had been taken away from them. She made supreme and single-minded efforts to worship Savitar. <sup>902</sup> She controlled her diet and observed supreme rituals. She praised Divakara, <sup>903</sup> the mass of energy in the sky. Aditi said, ‘I bow down to the extremely subtle one with the golden form. O energy! O lord of energy! O store of energy! O eternal one! O lord of the earth! You draw up water for the welfare of the world. Having received it, your form becomes fiercer. I bow down to that form. The juices are in the form of the moon and you suck them up for eight months. Thus, your radiant form become fiercer. I prostrate myself before that form. Through the rains, you release all those juices. O radiant one! I bow down to your form as a cloud, which has ingested those juices. Urged by the wind, you release those juices and nourish and mature the crops. O radiant one! I bow down to that form of yours. You adopt an extremely cold form to shower down snow and nurture the crops of that season. I bow down to that form. O Ravi! O god! O amiable one! During spring, you have a form that is not too fierce and not too cold. I bow down to that. I bow down to that form. There is another form that nourishes all the gods and the ancestors, through the maturing of crops. I bow down to that form. There is a form that grants life through herbs. There is a form of amrita. You are the essence of soma and the gods and the ancestors drink that. I bow down to that form. You have a form as a nourisher. The entire universe is your form. I bow down to you, and to Agni and Soma. <sup>904</sup> You are the store of qualities. With the Rig, Yajur and Sama hymns taken together, you have a form that is known as Trayi. <sup>905</sup> You heat the universe in this form. O Vibhavasu! I bow down to that form. There is another form that transcends all of this. It is not gross. It is infinite and spotless. It is always in the atman and it is spoken of in the sound of OUM. I bow down to that form.’ Controlling herself, the goddess chanted this stotram, day and night. O sage! She desired to worship Vivasvat and did not

take any food. O supreme among brahmanas! After a long period of time had passed, the illustrious Tapana <sup>906</sup> directly manifested himself before Daksha's daughter in the sky. She saw his extremely mysterious and radiant form straddling the sky and the earth and said, 'O lord of the earth! Show me your favours. I cannot look at you. O Vivasvat! O one who heats! Without any food, I saw you earlier in the sky and you were extremely difficult to behold. Now I see that mass of energy here on earth. O Divakara! Show me your favours and display a form I can behold. O lord! Show favours to a devotee. I am devoted to you. Save my sons. You are the creator who creates. You are the one who saves it and are engaged in preserving it. At the time of destruction, everything proceeds into your essence. In truth, there is no other destination in all the worlds. You are Brahma. You are Hari. You are known as Aja. <sup>907</sup> You are Indra. You are the lord of riches. You are the lord of the ancestors. <sup>908</sup> You are the lord of the waters. You are the god of the wind. You are Soma. You are Agni. You are the lord of the sky, the mountains and the oceans. You are the abode of all forms. How can one praise you? You are the lord of sacrifices. Those who are devoted to their own tasks praise you every day. Following the norms, the brahmanas offer sacrifices to you. Those who are devoted to yoga control their minds and meditate on you. You are the supreme destination that mortals head towards. You heat and cook. You save the universe. You are the one who reduces it to ashes. You are the one who manifests it with your rays. You are the source of water. You alone are the one who creates in the form of the one who took birth from the lotus. When you protect, you are known as Achyuta. At the end of a yuga, you alone are the one who assumes the form of Rudra.'""

## Chapter 102

‘Markandeya said, “After this, from his own energy, Vibhavasú revealed himself before Aditi. His complexion was like that of molten copper. O sage! The goddess prostrated herself before him. On seeing this, the illustrious one said, ‘Ask me for whatever boon you wish for.’ Her head was lowered down, her bent knees touching the ground. With Vivasvat, the granter of boons, present before her, she said, ‘O god! The daityas and danavas are superior in strength. They have taken away the three worlds and the shares in sacrifices from my sons. Show me your favours. O lord of the rays! For their sake, show me your favours. Use your portion to become one of their brothers, so that the enemies can be destroyed. O lord! Let it be such that my sons can again enjoy their shares of the sacrifices. O bringer of light! Let them become the lords of the three worlds. O Ravi! Be extremely pleased with me and show compassion towards my sons. Act in this way. You are spoken of as one who removes the distress of the afflicted and as one who ensures preservation.’ O brahmana! Aditi was prostrate before him. Pleased with her, the illustrious Bhaskara, the stealer of the water said, ‘In all my thousand portions, <sup>909</sup> I will be born in your womb. O Aditi! I will swiftly destroy the enemies of your sons. Refrain.’ <sup>910</sup> Having said this, the illustrious and radiant one vanished. With all her wishes having been satisfied, she too refrained from austerities.

““O brahmana! One of the sun’s rays is known as Sôushumna. That descended in the womb of the mother of the gods. O brahmana! She nurtured the divine embryo, observing purity, *chândrayana* <sup>911</sup> and other vows of hardship. At this, Kashyapa spoke to her, his words tinged with a little bit of anger. ‘You are fasting all the time. Do you wish to kill the embryo in your womb?’ She spoke to him. ‘O one who is full of great rage!

Can you not see that I am not killing the embryo that is in my womb? For the adversaries, he will be like death.’ Since she was following the path of the gods, she was herself angry at her husband’s words. Thus, saying this, she discharged the embryo and it blazed in its energy. Kashyapa saw the foetus, which dazzled like the rising sun. He bowed down and praised it, using Rig hymns and other hymns. O supreme sage! Thus praised, he <sup>912</sup> manifested himself from the foetus. His complexion was like that of lotus petals and his energy enveloped all the directions. An invisible voice that rumbled like the clouds was then heard from the firmament and it spoke to Kashyapa. ‘O sage! You said that the egg had been killed. O sage! Therefore, your son will be known as Martanda. <sup>913</sup> In the world, this lord will possess the rights of the sun. He will destroy the enemy asuras who have stolen shares of the sacrifices.’ Hearing the words that were spoken from the firmament, the gods were filled with unmatched delight and the danavas were robbed of their energy.

“‘After this, Shatakratu challenged the daityas to a battle. Happily, the danavas engaged in that battle with the gods. That clash between the gods and the asuras was extremely terrible. All the spaces in the universe were illuminated by the radiance of the blazing shastras and astras. In that battle, as soon as they looked at the illustrious Martanda, the great asuras lost their energy and were burnt down to ashes. At this, all the residents of heaven were filled with unmatched joy. They praised the source of energy, Martanda, and Aditi. As was the case earlier, they got back their own positions and the shares of sacrifices. The illustrious Martanda also acted according to his own rights. <sup>914</sup> With a complexion like that of a kadamba flower, his radiant rays spread, above and below. He assumed a form that wasn’t excessively radiant and was like a mass of fire, surrounded by flames.’”

## Chapter 103

‘Markandeya said, “Praising and bowing down before him, Prajapati Vishvakarma bestowed his daughter, known by the name of Samjna, on Vivasvat. <sup>915</sup> The son born through her and Vivasvat was Vaivasvata Manu and I have already told you about this specific nature.”

‘Kroushtuki said, “I wish to hear about the great-souled Martanda again. If men hear about his conduct, all the sins of kali yuga are destroyed.”

‘Markandeya replied, “O sage! The lord of the rays had three children through her, two were extremely fortunate sons and the daughter was Yamuna. The eldest was Prajapati Vaivasvata Manu, the divinity who presides over shraddha ceremonies. <sup>916</sup> The twins, Yama and Yami, <sup>917</sup> were born after that. Vivasvat Martanda’s energy was excessive. The three worlds, and the mobile and immobile objects, were scorched by this. Samjna saw the great energy in Vivasvat’s circular form and could not tolerate it. On seeing her own shadow, <sup>918</sup> she spoke to her. Samjna said, ‘O fortunate one! I am going to my father’s house. O auspicious one! Without being agitated, follow my instruction and remain here. O one who is beautiful in complexion! I have these two sons and a daughter. O illustrious one! You should behave affectionately towards them.’ Chhaya replied, ‘Go where you wish. As long as I am not seized by the hair or cursed, I will not divulge anything.’ Thus addressed by Chhaya, Samjna went to her father’s house. For some time, the one with the auspicious eyes resided in her father’s house. However, her father repeatedly told her, ‘You should go back to your husband.’ Thereupon, she assumed the form of a mare and went to the Uttara Kuru region. O great sage! The virtuous one went without food and tormented herself through austerities there. When Samjna went to her father, Chhaya obeyed her words. She assumed her form and



presented herself before Bhaskara. The illustrious Surya took her to be Samjna. Through her, he had two sons and a daughter. O supreme among brahmanas! The son who was born first was Savarni and he was the equal of the eldest son, the Manu.<sup>919</sup> The second son to be born was the planet, Shanaishchara. The daughter who was born was Tapati and King Samvarana married her. Queen Samjna used to behave towards her children in a certain way. But Chhaya did not behave towards those eldest children in exactly the same way. Manu forgave her, but Yama was unable to do so. His father's wife was extremely sorry and entreated him in many different kinds of ways. O sage! However, Yama was a child and was overcome by anger and the force of what was bound to happen. He raised his foot to kick at Chhaya-Samjna. Chhaya was filled with great intolerance and cursed Yama. Chhaya said, 'The father's wife is a senior and you have tried to kick her with your foot. Therefore, there is no doubt that your foot will fall down.' At this curse, Yama was greatly distressed in his mind. Along with Manu, Yama, with dharma in his soul, went and told their father everything. Yama said, 'O god! Our mother does not display the same affection towards us. She ignores the elder children and nourishes the ones who are younger. Though I did raise my foot, I did not actually bring it down on her body. If I did it because of childish folly, or because of confusion, I should be pardoned. O father! A mother has cursed her son in a fit of rage. O supreme among those who scorch! I do not think that she is our mother. Even if a son lacks in qualities, a mother or a father never lacks in qualities. How could she have uttered those words? "O son! May your foot fall down." O illustrious one! Through your favours, may my foot not fall down. O lord of the rays! Think of a means whereby this does not happen because of my mother's curse.' Ravi replied, 'O son! There is no doubt that this will happen. You know about dharma and are truthful in speech. Since you succumbed to rage, there is a reason. There are counters to all the other curses. However, when a mother curses, that curse cannot be withdrawn. I am incapable of rendering your mother's words false. But because of my affection towards you as a son, I can devise some means of mitigation. Worms will seize flesh from your foot and fall down on the ground. That

way, her words will be true and you will also be saved.’ After this, Aditya spoke to Chhaya. ‘All the sons deserve to be treated with the same degree of affection. Why are you partial towards some? There is no doubt that you are not their mother, Samjna. Who are you and where have you come from? Even if children lack in qualities, how can a mother curse them?’ She did not say anything, or reveal anything. Vivasvat fixed his atman in meditation and perceived the truth about everything. Chhaya-Samjna saw that the lord of the day was about to curse her. O brahmana! Trembling with fear, she told him exactly what had happened.

““On hearing this, Vivasvat became angry and went to his father-in-law. The one who was excellent in his vows saw that he wished to burn everything down in his rage. Following the norms, he worshipped Divakara and comforted him. Vishvakarma said, ‘This form of yours is excessive in energy and pervades everything. It is extremely difficult to tolerate. Unable to tolerate it, Samjna has gone to the forest and is performing austerities there. Your wife is auspicious in her conduct and you will see her there today. For the sake of your form, she is performing extremely difficult austerities in the forest. O god! O lord of the day! I remember Brahma’s words. If the idea appeals to you, I will reduce your form and make it beautiful.’ Earlier, the radiant one’s form used to be circular. The illustrious Ravi agreed and requested Tvashta to reduce him to that form. Having received the consent, Vishvakarma took Vivasvat to Shaka-dvipa. Placing him on the wheel, he started to pare down the energy. The radiant one was the nave of the entire universe. As he was whirled around, the earth, with its oceans, mountains and forests, rose up into the sky. O brahmana! O immensely fortunate one! The entire firmament, with the moon, the planets and the stars, moved downwards. Everything was agitated and anxious. All the water in the oceans was hurled up. The giant mountains were shattered and the summits were severed from their moorings. O supreme among sages! Dhruva and the nakshatras lost their foundations. With their bonds cut loose, thousands of them fell down. As he was whirled around with great force, in every direction, the winds were agitated. The gigantic clouds thundered as they were dispersed. O supreme among sages! As the radiant

one was whirled around, the earth, the sky and Rasatala rolled around. Everything was filled with great anxiety. O brahmana! The three worlds, with the gods and the rishis, were whirled around. Along with Brahma, the gods praised the radiant one. ‘Among all the gods, you are the original god. Your true nature has been known. You remain stationed here, demarcating the three divisions of periods of creation, preservation and destruction. O protector of the universe! O creator of heat, rain and cold! May everything be well. O god of the gods! O Divakara! May all be well with you. May there be peace in the worlds.’ As the god was being pared down, Indra approached and praised him. ‘O god! Victory to you. O one who pervades the entire universe! O lord of the universe! Victory to you.’ With Vasishtha and Atri at the forefront, the saptarshis praised him with many kinds of stotrams, pronouncing benedictions of peace. As the radiant one was being pared down, the valakhilyas were filled with great delight and praised him with the best of hymns from the Rig Veda. ‘O protector! You are emancipation for those who seek emancipation. You are the supreme object of meditation for those who meditate. You are the destination for all creatures who are engaged in *karma kanda*.<sup>920</sup> O lord of the gods! May there be blessings for the subjects. O lord of the universe! May there be blessings for us. May there always be blessings for the bipeds. May there be blessings for the quadrupeds.’ Similarly, the large number of vidyadharas, yakshas, rakshasas and uragas joined their hands in salutation. All of them lowered their heads and prostrated themselves before Ravi. They uttered many kinds of words that were pleasant to the mind and to the ears. ‘O creator of creatures! May creatures be able to tolerate your energy.’ Haha, Huhu, Narada, Tumburu, the accomplished gandharvas,<sup>921</sup> started to sing songs to Ravi, with the three notes of shadaja, madhyama and gandhara. Skilful melodies and rhythms were used and they brought pleasure. As Vibhavasu, the lord of the universe, was being pared down, Vishvachi, Ghritachi, Urvashi, Tilottama, Menaka, Sahajanya, Rambha and other supreme apsaras danced. They exhibited many kinds of dramatic gestures, with gestures and glances. Flutes, veenas, *jharjharas*,<sup>922</sup> drums, kettledrums, tambourines, double-sided drums, larger drums, the drums of

the gods and conch shells were sounded, in hundreds and thousands. The gandharvas sang and large numbers of apsaras danced. All the trumpets and the sound of musical instruments generated a tumultuous sound. Their hands were joined in salutation and their forms were lowered, full of devotion. As the one with the one thousand rays was pared down, all the gods bowed down to him. Because all the gods assembled, there was a great uproar. Placing him on the wheel, Vishvakarma gradually pared down his energy. The cause behind heat, rain and cold was praised by Hara,<sup>923</sup> the one seated on a lotus and Vishnu. If one hears the account of Bhanu's body being pared down, after the end of one's lifespan, one goes to Divakara's world.'''

## Chapter 104

‘Markandeya said, “Prajapati Vishvakarma pared Bhanu down. His body hair stood up in delight and he recited a stotram to Vivasvat. ‘O Vivasvat! O great-souled one! You are compassionate towards those who prostrate themselves before you. O one who has seven horses who are equal in speed! O extremely energetic one! O one who makes the large number of lotuses wake up! I bow down to you. O one who tears apart the veil of darkness! O one who is the greatest of purifiers! O one who is auspicious in deeds! O one who does not grant only one object of desire! O radiant one! O one who lies down amidst flames of dazzling fire! O one who is the cause behind all the welfare in the worlds! I bow down to you. O one without birth! O one who is the cause behind the three worlds! O one who is in the atman of beings! O lord of the rays! O bull! <sup>924</sup> I bow down to the extremely compassionate one. O excellent one! O Surya! O one who is the source of the powers of the eye! O Vivasvat! O one who is nothing but knowledge! O one present in the inner atman! O one in whom the universe is established! O one who wishes for the welfare of the universe! You are your own origin. You are in the eyes of all the worlds. O excellent god! O one who is infinite in energy! I bow down to you. For an instant, you are like the jewels on the crest of Mount Udaya. <sup>925</sup> Along with the large number of gods, you intend the welfare of the universe. Your form consists of one thousand rays that you use to illuminate and drive away the darkness. The darkness is like asava liquor. After drinking it up, you are intoxicated and turn deep red. O Mihira! <sup>926</sup> You use your radiant rays to illuminate and bring the three worlds to life. Your beautiful chariot is symmetrical and pleasing. With you astride it, it moves in harmony. You constantly travel on horses that are never exhausted. For the welfare of the worlds, you extend yourself. You

are the one who is full of amrita and soma juice, using these to satisfy the gods and the ancestors. For the sake of the destruction of the large number of enemies, I am prostrating myself before you and paring you down. I bow down to your steeds, which have the complexion of parrots. I have been purified by the dust on your feet. O one devoted to those who bow down before you! I am prostrate before you. O Ravi! O one who purifies the universe! Save me. You are the seed behind the origin of everything in the universe. You are the single cause behind the creation of the three worlds. O Ravi! The entire universe is illuminated because of you. O supreme among the gods. I always prostrate myself before you.'''

## Chapter 105

‘Markandeya said, “Having praised Surya in this way, Vishvakarma placed the lord of the day, with all sixteen parts of his energy, on the wheel. He then shaved off fifteen parts of this energy. After this, Bhanu’s body became extremely charming and beautiful. Using the energy that had been shaved off, Vishvakarma constructed Vishnu’s chakra, Sharva’s trident, Dhanada’s palanquin, the staff of the lord of the ancestors,<sup>927</sup> the javelin for the commander of the divine army<sup>928</sup> and all the other weapons of the gods. Bhanu’s energy was thus used for pacifying the enemies of the gods. With some of the energy pared off, he no longer possessed excessive energy and became resplendent. Martanda assumed a body that was beautiful in every limb. He meditated and saw his own wife in the form of a mare. Because of her austerities and her rituals, no being had been able to assail her. Bhanu went to Uttara Kuru, assumed the form of a horse and followed her. She saw him advancing and was scared, taking him to be someone else’s husband. While she was busy guarding her rear, he appeared in front of her. As they met, their noses touched each other. Through the noses, Vivasvat’s energy passed into the mare. The two gods, the Ashvins, were born from this and they were the best among physicians. These two sons, Nasatya and Dasra, were born from the mare’s mouth. Indeed, they were Martanda’s sons, from when he had assumed the form of a horse. Revanta was born from the last bit of the semen. He was born wielding a sword and a bow, and clad in armour. He was born with a quiver full of arrows, seated astride a horse. Bhanu then displayed his own radiant and unblemished form. Seeing that his form had become milder, she was filled with great delight.

““Once Samjna, the beloved wife, had assumed her own form, Bhaskara, the stealer of water, took her back to his own house. The eldest son became

Vaivasvata Manu. The second, Yama, had been cursed. However, because of the favour shown to him, <sup>929</sup> he possessed insight about dharma. Because of the curse, Yama's mind suffered a great deal. Accordingly, he took delight in dharma. That is the reason he is known as Dharmaraja. His father had himself found a way of mitigating the curse by saying that worms would devour flesh from his feet, which would then fall down on the ground. With the insight of dharma, he is impartial and treats friends and those who cause him injury in the same way. Therefore, the dispeller of darkness engaged him in the role of Yama. <sup>930</sup> O brahmana! His illustrious father made him a guardian of the world. Satisfied, Divakara made him the lord of the ancestors. Yamuna became a river, with her source in Mount Kalinda. Their great-souled father made the two Ashvins the physicians of the gods. Revanta was engaged as a lord over the guhyakas. The illustrious creator of the worlds spoke the following words. <sup>931</sup> 'O child! All the worlds will worship you. When mortals face great fear in forests from conflagrations and other things, or from enemies or bandits, if they remember you, they will be freed from those great calamities. When men worship you properly and satisfy you, you will bestow peace, intelligence, happiness, kingdoms, freedom from disease, fame and advancement on them.' Chhaya-Samjna's son, Savarni, obtained extremely extensive fame. In a future era, he will be the eighth Manu—Savarnika. On the slopes of Mount Meru, the lord is now undertaking extremely terrible austerities. Following Ravi's commands, his brother, Shanaishchara, became a planet. O supreme among brahmanas! The youngest daughter, Tapati, became the best of rivers and purifies the world. <sup>932</sup> The eldest brother was extremely fortunate and it is his creation that is the current one. I will tell you in detail about Vaivasvata Manu. If a person reads, or hears, about the origin of the gods, about Vivasvat's sons and Ravi's greatness, he is freed from calamities he faces and obtains great fame. If a person hears about the greatness of the great-souled Martanda, the original god, he is freed from sins that are committed during the day or during the night.'"



## Chapter 106

‘Kroushtuki said, “O illustrious one! You have properly described to me the birth of Bhanu’s children. You have also described in great detail the original god’s nature and greatness. O supreme among sages! Nevertheless, I want to hear about the radiant one’s greatness yet again. You should be pleased with me and describe it to me.”

‘Markandeya replied, “Hear about the greatness of the original god, Vivasvat, and what he did earlier, when he was worshipped by the people. I will tell you about it. Dama had a famous son and this was King Rajyavardhana. This lord of the earth protected the earth properly. O brahmana! The great-souled one protected the kingdom in accordance with dharma and every day, it prospered, in people and in wealth. All the subordinate kings were happy and nourished. Everyone on earth, the residents of cities and the countryside, were without fear. There were no evil portents, no disease. There was no fear from predatory creatures. As long as Dama’s son was the lord of the earth, there was no fear from drought. He performed an extremely great sacrifice and donated to all those who sought for it. He also enjoyed objects of pleasure, but without violating the principles of good dharma. In this way, he ruled over the kingdom and protected the subjects properly. Seven thousand years passed, as if it was but a single day.

““Viduratha was the king of the southern regions <sup>933</sup> and he had a daughter. His spirited daughter, named Manini, became his <sup>934</sup> wife. There was an occasion when Manini, the one with the excellent eyebrows, had not decorated her eyes with collyrium. While the king’s people looked on, she shed tears and these fell on the king’s head. When the tears fell on his body, the lord of the earth looked up and saw that her face was bathed in tears. When he saw that she was weeping silently and shedding tears, he asked

Manini about this. Asked by her husband, the spirited one replied, 'It is nothing.' But the lord of the earth asked her repeatedly. The slender-waisted one was repeatedly asked by the lord of the earth. She again told Rajyavardhana, 'It is nothing.' The lord of the earth again asked Manini, 'What is it?' Her husband kept asking the beautiful lady again and again. She then showed him a grey strand that had grown amidst his mass of hair. 'O protector of the earth! Look at this. Do I need any other reason? I am extremely unfortunate.' The king laughed at this. While all the major kings, minor kings, citizens and others who had assembled heard, he laughed and spoke to his wife. 'O large-eyed one! Enough of grief. O auspicious one! This is not something to weep about. All living beings are subject to birth, growth, decay and other transformations. I have studied all the Vedas. I have performed thousands of sacrifices. I have donated to brahmanas. O one with the beautiful face! I have had sons. With you, I have enjoyed all the objects of pleasure that mortals find it extremely difficult to come by. I have protected the earth properly. I have been stationed in battles and have exhibited my valour. I have laughed with my friends. I have sported in the interiors of forests. O fortunate one! Since you are frightened at this grey hair, what else is there that I have not done? O auspicious one! Let there be grey hair. Let there be wrinkles. Let my body turn weak. O Manini! I have accomplished what needed to be done. O fortunate one! If you have seen grey hair on my head, I will treat it by retiring to the forest. Earlier, childish pursuits were pursued during childhood, youthful pastimes during youth and also those appropriate for adults. In old age, it is appropriate that one should retire to the forest. O fortunate one! This is what my ancestors did and their ancestors before them. Therefore, I do not see any reason to shed tears. O fortunate one! Enough of being vexed. The grey hair you have seen is a reason for my upliftment. There is no reason to weep.' O maharshi! The assembled kings and citizens bowed down and addressed King Rajyavardhana in these conciliatory words. 'O lord of men! There is no reason for your wife to weep. But all us should weep. Indeed, so should all living beings. O protector! You have spoken words indicating that you will resort to the forest. O king! We have been nurtured by you and if you do that, we will lose our lives. O lord of the earth! If you do leave, all of us will follow you there. O protector! If you retire to the forest, there is no doubt that all the rites of all those who reside on earth will be destroyed. Since this will lead to dharma suffering, let this idea be discarded. You have

protected the earth for seven thousand years. O lord of men! Behold the great and auspicious merits this has led to. O great king! O lord of the earth! If you reside in the forest and perform austerities, the merits you reap will not be one-sixteenth of the merits you obtain from protecting the earth.’ The king replied, ‘I have protected the earth for seven thousand years. The time has now come for me to reside in the forest. My children have been born and I have seen the children of my children. Death will not tolerate me for more than a few days now. O citizens! Recognize that this grey hair on my head is a messenger from ignoble Death, who is fierce in his deeds. I will bestow the kingdom on my son. After that, I will give up objects of pleasure and resort to the forest. Until Yama’s soldiers arrive, I will torment myself through austerities.’ Desiring to leave for the forest, the king asked those who knew about astrology. He asked them about the right day and the right time to instate his son in the kingdom.

“Hearing the king’s words, their minds became anxious. Though they were learned in the sacred texts, they did not know about the day, the time or the hour. <sup>935</sup> Their voices choking with tears, the astrologers spoke to the lord of the earth. ‘O king! On hearing your words, all our learning has been destroyed.’ People arrived from other cities and from vassal kingdoms. O sage! They brought a lot of wealth from those cities and approached the king, who had made up his mind to retire to the forest. With trembling heads, excellent brahmanas spoke to him. ‘Be pleased and save us. Rule over the kingdom, as you used to do earlier. O lord of the earth! If you retire to the forest, all the worlds will suffer. O king! You should act so that the entire world does not suffer. O valiant one! O lord! For the very short period of time that we are going to remain alive, we do not wish to see the throne empty, without you there.’ With these and other brahmanas at the forefront, the citizens, kings, servants and advisers repeatedly requested the king. But he did not go back on his resolution of residing in the forest. He only offered the reply, ‘The Destroyer will not pardon me.’ At this, the advisers, kings, senior citizens and brahmanas got together, to consult about what could be done. O brahmana! As they consulted, they arrived at a decision. They were devoted to the king, who was extremely devoted to dharma. They would control themselves, meditate and attentively pray to

the radiant one, worshipping him through austerities, so that the king would have a longer lifespan. Single-minded in their determination, they worshipped Bhaskara in their houses. They worshipped him properly, offering him arghya and other objects of worship. Some were silent and meditated in their minds, using Rig hymns. Some used Yajur hymns, others used Sama hymns. In this way, they sought to satisfy Ravi. Other brahmanas fasted and lay down on the banks of a river. Desiring to worship Bhaskara, they performed austerities. Some performed agnihotra sacrifices, others chanted hymns to Ravi, day and night. Others stood and chanted, their eyes fixed on Bhaskara. In this way, they made up their minds to worship Bhaskara. They acted accordingly, resorting to many kinds of different modes.

“While they worshipped Bhaskara in this way, a gandharva named Sudama arrived and spoke to them. ‘O brahmanas! If you wish to worship Bhaskara, you should act so that Bhanu is pleased. Therefore, go to the forest known as Guru-Vishala, frequented by the Siddhas. It is on the great mountain known as Kamarupa. You should go there quickly. There, control yourselves and worship Bhanu with all the rites. It is a beneficial region <sup>936</sup> that brings success, and everything that you desire will be obtained.’ Hearing these words, the brahmanas went to that forest. There, they saw the sun’s sacred and auspicious abode. <sup>937</sup> O brahmana! The brahmanas and other varnas fasted. Attentively, they worshipped him with incense, flowers and other expensive offerings. They controlled themselves and worshipped him with flowers, unguents, incense and fragrances. They meditated and offered oblations into the fire. They donated food and other things. O brahmana! The brahmanas acted so as to satisfy Vivasvat. The brahmanas said, ‘We seek refuge with the god Ravi. His energy is greater than that of the gods, the danavas, the yakshas, the planets and the stellar bodies. Stationed in the firmament, the lord of the gods illuminates all the directions. He envelops the earth and the firmament with his rays. He is Aditya, Bhaskara, Bhanu, Savitra, Divakara, Pusha, Aryama and Svarbhanu. <sup>938</sup> He is the one with the blazing rays. At the end of the four yugas, he is the fire of destruction. When everything heads towards pralaya,

he is impossible to behold. He is the lord of yoga. He is infinite. He is red and yellow. He is the one who is bright. He is the one who is dark. He is in the agnihotra ceremonies of the rishis. He is established as the divinity who presides over sacrifices. We seek refuge with the god who is a mass of energy. He is the one who is not dislodged. He is without decay. He is supreme. He is mysterious. He is the supreme door to emancipation. He travels through the sky on hymns that are in the form of horses. They are always yoked together at sunrise and sunset and circle around Meru. He is *satyam* and he is *ritam*.<sup>939</sup> He is the sacred tirtha. Thinking of the foundation of the universe, he divides himself. We seek refuge with that Prabhakara.<sup>940</sup> He is Brahma. He is Mahadeva. He is the noble Vishnu. He is Prajapati. He is Vayu. He is the sky. He is water. He is the earth, with its mountains and oceans. He is the planets, nakshatras, the moon and others. He is the *vanaspatis*, trees and herbs.<sup>941</sup> Among beings that are manifest and not manifest, he is the one who initiates dharma and adharma. Your body has Brahma's body, Maheshvara's body and Vishnu's body. Your own nature has three forms. O Bhanu! O radiant one! Show us your favours. Everything is embodied in his limbs. He is the lord of the universe. May the radiant one show us his favours. He is the life of the universe. His first form is without destruction. The radiance of his disc is impossible to behold. His second form is that of the amiable moon.<sup>942</sup> May the radiant one be pleased with us. This universe has been fashioned out of those two forms, which are full of fire and soma. May the radiant god be pleased with us.' He was thus devotedly praised and worshipped properly, following the norms. O excellent brahmana! After three months, the illustrious and radiant one was satisfied. Ravi descended and showed them his form, which is extremely difficult to behold. He emerged from his dazzling disc, with the same radiance that the disc possessed. Savitar, the one without birth, showed his own clear form and the body hair of all the people stood up. The bodies of the brahmanas trembled. They bent down in obeisance and prostrated themselves. 'I bow down to you. O one with the one thousand rays! I bow down to you. You are the cause behind everything and the number of your standards is innumerable. You are worshipped as a saviour. You are the

destination of all sacrifices. Those who know about yoga meditate on you.  
Show us your favours.'””

## Chapter 107

‘Markandeya said, “The illustrious Bhanu was pleased and spoke to all the people. ‘O brahmanas and others! Tell me what you desire to get from me?’ He stood before them and his rays were so fierce that he was impossible to behold. The brahmanas, kshatriyas and others prostrated themselves and spoke. The subjects said, ‘O illustrious one! O dispeller of darkness! If you are pleased with our devotion, let our king live for ten thousand years. May he be without disease. May he triumph over his enemies. May his treasury be full. May youth not leave him.’ O great sage! The radiant one assented to what the people wanted and vanished from sight.

“They were delighted at having obtained the boon. They went and assembled before the lord of men. They reported to the Indra among men exactly what had happened. O brahmana! Hearing this, his wife, Manini, rejoiced. She was filled with supreme delight and her body hair stood up in joy. However, the king thought for a long time and did not say anything to the people. Manini’s mind was filled with delight and she spoke to her husband. ‘O lord of the earth! This is good fortune. Prosper with a long lifespan.’ Delighted, Manini honoured her husband. O brahmana! However, the lord of the earth’s mind was numb with his thoughts and he did not say anything. She again spoke to her husband, whose face was downcast in his reflections. ‘O king! This is a time of great advancement. Why are you not rejoicing? You will not suffer from any disease for ten thousand years and your youth will be stable. This will happen from today. Why are you not happy then? O lord of the earth! Please tell me. What is the reason for your mind being immersed in thought, despite you having obtained this great advancement?’ The king replied, ‘O fortunate one! What is this great

advancement? Why are you honouring me? I alone will remain alive for ten thousand years, not you. When you face a hardship, will that not make me miserable? There will be calamities for my sons, grandsons, great-grandsons and relatives. When I see them die, will that misery be a trifle? My extremely devoted servants and my large number of friends will be dead. O fortunate one! I will constantly face insurmountable miseries. There are those who have tormented themselves with austerities for my sake and have become emaciated and just a bundle of veins. When they die, I will remain alive and enjoy the objects of pleasure. This is shameful. Therefore, what has happened is a downfall for me, not an advancement. When you are congratulating me now, how can you not think of this?' Manini said, 'O great king! There is no doubt that what you have said is true. I and the citizens have erred. In our affection for you, we did not think about this. O protector of men! But since this has already happened, we should think about what can be done. The illustrious Ravi was pleased and said this. Therefore, it cannot be otherwise.' The king replied, 'In their affection, the citizens and my servants have done me a good deed. How can I enjoy the objects of pleasure without having freed myself of the debt to them? I will go to that mountain today. I will control my mind. For the welfare of the citizens, I will satisfy Bhaskara. For my sake, all the citizens and the relatives worshipped the lord of the gods. I will also do that now. I will fast and torment myself through austerities. I will prepare to worship Bhanu. My youth will remain stable and I will live for ten thousand years, free from disease. O one with a beautiful face! I will please the god so that this also happens to all the subjects, servants, sons, grandsons, great-grandsons and relatives. If the illustrious Ravi is pleased and ensures that they also remain alive, only then will I remain in this kingdom and happily enjoy the objects of pleasure. O Manini! Until the god does this, I will remain on that mountain. As long as my life remains, I will fast and torment myself through austerities.' When the lord of men said this, she agreed to what he had said. With him, she also went to that large mountain.

“With his wife, the king went to the sun’s abode. O brahmana! They devotedly engaged themselves in serving and worshipping Bhanu. The lord



of the earth became emaciated because of fasting. He tormented himself through fierce austerities, tolerating the cold, the wind and the heat. So did she. Tormenting themselves through these extremely great austerities, they worshipped Bhanu. After more than a year passed, Divakara was pleased. O brahmana! O supreme among excellent brahmanas! For the sake of all the servants, citizens and descendants, he granted the desired boon. Having obtained the boon, the king returned to his own city. He happily ruled over the kingdom. Observing dharma, he protected the subjects. He performed many sacrifices and incessantly donated gifts. Along with Manini, the one who knew about dharma enjoyed the objects of pleasure. Along with his sons, grandsons and servants, he was happy and his youth remained stable for ten thousand years. When he witnessed his conduct, the mind of the Bhargava named Pramati was filled with surprise and he recited this chant. ‘Such is the power of Bhanu’s devotees. King Rajyavardhana has ensured a long lifespan for himself and for his own people.’ O brahmana! I have thus told you what you had asked me about, the greatness of Aditya Vivasvat, the original god. Along with all the brahmanas, if a man hears this excellent account of Bhanu’s greatness, or reads it, he is cleansed of all the sins committed over a period of seven nights. A learned person who meditates on this becomes free of disease and obtains wealth and prosperity. He is born in a lineage of extremely intelligent people and becomes immensely wise. He performs and accomplishes extremely great sacrifices and donates the best of dakshina. O supreme among sages! If a man hears about the radiant one’s conduct mentioned here, he obtains similar fruits. If the mantra is chanted during each of the three sandhyas, all the sins are cleansed. If this entire mahatmya is read in Ravi’s temple, one is not separated from the illustrious one’s presence. O brahmana! Therefore, if you desire what is extremely auspicious, nurture Bhanu’s excellent mahatmya in your mind and meditate on it. O foremost among brahmanas! If a man reads this for three days, he obtains the same auspicious fruits that are obtained by donating an extremely beautiful and milk-yielding cow, its horns encrusted with gold.”

## Chapter 108

‘Markandeya said, “These are the powers of the illustrious Ravi. He is without a beginning and without an end. O Kroushtuki! Full of devotion, you asked me about his greatness. He is the paramatman in whom, yogis whose minds do not waver, are immersed. He is kshetrajna for those who practise *samkhya yoga*. For those who undertake sacrifices, he is the lord of sacrifices. Vishnu, Isha and Brahma support Surya’s powers. O brahmana! Manu, who had all his doubts severed, was born as his son and is the lord of the seventh manvantara. Manu’s sons were Ikshvaku, Nabhaga, the immensely valiant and strong Rishta, Narishantya, Nabhaga,<sup>943</sup> Prishadhra and Dhrishta. Each of them was the separate ruler of a kingdom. All of them were famous because of their deeds. All of them were accomplished in the use of shastras and astras.

“However, Manu desired a son who would be even more distinguished than them. O great sage! The supreme one undertook a sacrifice to Mitra and Varuna. At this, there was a transgression by the officiating priest. Therefore, a slender-waisted daughter named Ila was born to Manu. Seeing the daughter who had been born, Manu worshipped Mitra and Varuna with these words. ‘I performed a sacrifice so that I might obtain a distinguished son through your favours. But a daughter has been born to an intelligent person like me. If you are pleased with me and if you wish to confer a boon on me, through your favours, let this daughter of mine become a son who possesses the best of qualities.’ The two gods agreed to this. The daughter Ila instantly became a son who was known by the name of Sudyumna. However, while Manu’s intelligent son went out on a hunt in the desolate forest, because of Ishvara’s rage, he became female again.<sup>944</sup> In that form, Soma’s son, Budha, had a son through her. This son was named Pururava.

He conquered and became a chakravarti. When the son had been born, Sudyumna performed a great horse sacrifice and became a man again, becoming a king. Sudyumna had three sons—Utkala, Vinaya and Gaya. These three sons were born during the period when he was a man. They were immensely valiant and extensive in their energy. They performed sacrifices. The three sons who were born during the period when he was a man were kings. They enjoyed the earth, controlling their minds and following dharma. King Pururava was born during the period when he was a woman. Since he was Budha's son, the immensely fortunate one did not obtain a share. On Vasishtha's instructions, he was given the excellent city of Pratishthana and he became a king in that beautiful place.””

## Chapter 109

‘Markandeya said, “Manu’s son, known as Prishadhra, went to the forest on a hunt. He roamed around in that deserted and desolate forest. He did not find any deer and he was severely scorched by the sun’s rays. His limbs suffered from hunger, thirst and exhaustion and he roamed around here and there. He then saw a beautiful cow that yielded products for oblations. She belonged to a brahmana who performed agnihotra sacrifices and half of her body was hidden amidst the creepers. Taking her to be a gavaya, he struck her with an arrow. Her heart shattered by that arrow, she fell down on the ground. The brahmana who performed agnihotra sacrifices had a son who was devoted to austerities. He was a brahmachari. Seeing that the cow his father used for oblations had been brought down, he invoked a curse. This son was named Babhravya and his father had sent him to look after the cows. O sage! His mind and conduct were overwhelmed by his rage and intolerance. His eyes rolled around in his rage and there were drops of perspiration on his body. Seeing that the sage’s son was angry, King Prishadhra spoke to him. ‘Please be pacified. Like a shudra, why are you succumbing to rage? No kshatriya or vaishya will fall prey to anger in this way. Though born in the lineage of a distinguished brahmana, you are acting as if you have been born a shudra.’ The son of a foremost person was thus reprimanded by the king. Nevertheless, he cursed the evil-souled one, ‘You will become a shudra. Anything that you have learnt from your brahmana guru will be destroyed. You have caused injury to a cow my guru uses for oblations.’ Thus cursed, the king was enraged and was tormented by the curse. O brahmana! Intent on cursing the other one back, he took some water in his hands. Meanwhile, that excellent brahmana was also filled with wrath and wanted to destroy the king.

““But his father approached quickly and restrained him. ‘O child! There has been enough of this excessive rage. It is a great enemy. For dvijas, equanimity brings benefit in this world and in the next one. Anger destroys austerities. An angry person is dislodged from a long lifespan. If a person is angry, his knowledge melts away. An angry person’s objective is destroyed. A person prone to rage does not attain dharma. A wrathful person does not attain artha. If a person’s mind is overwhelmed by rage, he does not obtain happiness. Nor does he attain kama. Even if the king killed the cow knowingly, a person who knows about what is good for himself must show him compassion. Or perhaps he killed my cow in ignorance. Since there was no evil in his mind, how is he then worthy of a curse? A person who desires what is good for himself must not cause an impediment to another man. All compassionate people must show compassion to those who are foolish in their knowledge. If learned men bring down the staff of chastisement on those who have inadvertently committed a crime, I think ignorant men are superior to the learned ones. O son! You should not have cursed the king today. The cow has come about her miserable death because of her own past deeds.’ Lowering down his shoulders, Prishadhra bowed down before the sage’s son. He said, ‘Please show me your favours. I killed her in my ignorance. O sage! My mind took her to be a gavaya and I killed her. A cow must not be killed. O sage! I killed the cow used for oblations inadvertently. Please show me your favours.’ The rishi’s son replied, ‘O lord of the earth! Since my birth, I have never uttered a lie. O immensely fortunate one! Though I was overcome by rage, it cannot but be true. O king! Therefore, I am incapable of countering the curse. However, I will withdraw the second curse that I was about to invoke.’ After he said this, the father took his son and returned to his own hermitage. Prishadhra became a shudra.””

## Chapter 110

‘Markandeya said, “Karusha’s sons were seven hundred brave kshastriyas, known as the Karushas.”<sup>945</sup> From these valiant ones, thousands of others were born. Dishta’s son was Nabhaga. While he was still in early youth, he saw the daughter of a vaishya. She was extremely beautiful. As soon as he saw her, Madana agitated his mind. The son of a king kept regretting and sighing. The mind of the son of a king was under the sway of Ananga. He went to her vaishya father and asked for his daughter. The father joined his hands in salutation and spoke to the prince, whose father he was scared of. O brahmana! Therefore, he said, ‘You are kings and we are your servants. We pay you taxes. Why do you wish to have an alliance with the likes of us?’ The prince replied, ‘Desire and confusion bring about an equality in human bodies. When the appropriate time arrives, the human body is united with these.’<sup>946</sup> Perhaps such sentiments have a beneficial effect. Even if they belong to different classes, the virtuous survive by depending on each other. Thus, depending on the time, appropriate sentiments become inappropriate and inappropriate sentiments become appropriate. Since worthiness depends on time, the worthy become unworthy and the unworthy become worthy. The body is nourished through food and other desired objects. Therefore, it is proper that one should eat after ascertaining the right time. I respect your daughter and you should bestow her on me. If this is not done, it is evident that my body will face a hardship.’ The vaishya said, ‘We are dependent on the lord of the earth and you are also dependent on the lord of the earth. Take your father’s permission and accept her. I will bestow her on you.’ The prince replied, ‘Those who follow their gurus must ask their gurus about all tasks. But the gurus should not be informed about a task like this. How can the gurus be

made to hear about a topic that concerns Manmatha? <sup>947</sup> This is perverse. The gurus must be asked about other things.’ The vaishya said, ‘From your point of view, this is a topic about desire and you should not ask your guru. I will ask him. From my point of view, this is not a topic about desire.’ Thus addressed, the prince remained silent.

“He <sup>948</sup> informed the father everything about the prince’s views. The father summoned the brahmana Richika and other excellent brahmanas. With the prince also present, he informed them about the incident. After having reported the account, he told the sages, ‘The excellent brahmanas should now decide what should be done.’ The rishis said, ‘O prince! If you are attracted to this daughter of a vaishya, it will be accepted as dharma, <sup>949</sup> but this has to be carried out in the proper way. The first acceptance of a hand in marriage must be with the daughter of a person whose head has been sprinkled. <sup>950</sup> Once that has been done, she can become your wife. If you enjoy her in that way, there will be no sin. Otherwise, there will be a transgression. You must protect your position by first having a superior wife.’ He <sup>951</sup> disregarded the words the great-souled ones had spoken. He seized her, unsheathed his sword and exclaimed, ‘I have abducted the vaishya’s daughter under the rakshasa form of marriage. <sup>952</sup> If there is anyone who possesses the strength, let him free her.’ O brahmana! The vaishya saw that his daughter had been seized. He quickly sought refuge with the father and pleaded, ‘Save her.’ Enraged, the father instructed his large army. ‘Kill him. The wicked Nabhaga has defiled dharma. Kill him.’ A battle then started between him and the king’s soldiers. He was accomplished in the use of weapons and with those weapons, he brought down many. Hearing that the soldiers had been killed by the prince, the king himself went out to fight, surrounding himself with his own soldiers. A battle followed between the king and his own son. The prince was superior to his father in the use of shastras and astras.

“Suddenly, the sage Parivrat <sup>953</sup> arrived, descending from the sky. He told the lord of the earth, ‘Refrain from this battle. O immensely fortunate one! O great-souled one! Your son has acted against dharma. O king! It is not dharma for you to fight with a vaishya. A brahmana must first marry a

wife from among brahmanas. After that, a brahmana can have a wife from any of the varnas and no harm will be done. Similarly, a kshatriya's first wife must be from among daughters of kshatriyas. O king! If he has wives from lower varnas later, he does not deviate from his own dharma. A vaishya must first have a vaishya wife and can marry from a shudra lineage later. If one acts properly in the due order, the vaishya's family does not suffer. O king! If brahmanas, kshatriyas and vaishyas do not have wives from their own varnas first, but marry others instead, such marriages bring about their downfall. If a person first accepts a hand from a lower varna, without marrying from his own varna first, he assumes that inferior varna. Thus, this extremely evil-minded son of yours has become a vaishya. He no longer possesses the right to fight with a kshatriya like you. O descendant of a king! We do not know of any reason why this battle should continue. Therefore, desist.'''



## Chapter 111

‘Markandeya said, “At this, the king refrained from fighting with his own son. His son married the daughter of the vaishya. After becoming a vaishya, he approached the king and asked, ‘O lord of the earth! Instruct me about what will be my task.’ The king replied, ‘Babhravya and the other ascetics know about the rights dharma confers. They will tell you about the tasks dharma allows you to perform. Act accordingly.’ The sages told the assembly, ‘Animal husbandry, agriculture and trade represent supreme dharma for him.’ The king’s son did what he had been asked to do. Since he had deviated from his own dharma, he followed the dharma that had been instructed by those who knew about dharma.

“He had a son who became known by the name of Bhalandana. His mother told him, ‘O son! Go and become a cowherd.’ Having been thus engaged by his mother, he prostrated himself before his own mother. He then went to the royal sage, Nipa, who lived in the Himalaya mountains. Having approached him, as is decreed, he touched his feet. Prostrating himself before the royal sage, Bhalandana said, ‘O illustrious one! My mother has asked me to be a cowherd. Since I am capable of protecting the earth, how can I accept her words? <sup>954</sup> If I accept the task of protecting cattle, this earth of mine will be attacked by powerful heirs. O lord! Through your favours, I will get this earth back from them. I am prostrating myself before you and I will act in accordance with whatever you command me to do.’ O brahmana! At this, the royal sage, Nipa, conferred on the great-souled Bhalandana the knowledge of all weapons. O brahmana! Having obtained knowledge of weapons, as instructed by the great-souled one, <sup>955</sup> he went to his uncle’s sons, Vasurata and the other sons. As his father deserved, he asked for half of the ancestral kingdom. But they said,

‘You are the son of a vaishya. How can you enjoy the earth?’ A battle commenced between Bhalandana and others from his own lineage, Vasurata and the others. He was angry and used his knowledge of weapons to counter their shower of weapons. He mangled all their soldiers with his weapons and defeated them. The one who knew about dharma followed dharma in the battle and won over the earth from them. Having defeated the enemies, he offered the entire earth and the kingdom to his father. But his father did not accept it. In the presence of his wife, he replied to his son. Nabhaga said, ‘O Bhalandana! <sup>956</sup> This kingdom was created by our ancestors. I did not create this kingdom. That wasn’t because of my former lack of ability. I did not follow my father’s commands and preferred to become a vaishya. By marrying the daughter of a vaishya, I caused displeasure to my father. Until everything is submerged in the flood, as a king, I cannot obtain the auspicious worlds. Then again, if I ignore his command and rule over the earth, I will certainly not be entitled to emancipation for one hundred kalpas. Moreover, I am proud and cannot enjoy a kingdom that has been conquered by the strength of your arms. That will be like a weak and inferior person enjoying it. O son! Therefore, enjoy the kingdom yourself, or give it to your heirs. It is better for me to follow my father’s command and not rule over the kingdom.’

“At this, his beautiful wife, named Suprabha, laughed. She replied to her husband, ‘O lord of the earth! Accept this prosperous kingdom. O king! You are not a vaishya. Nor have I been born in a vaishya’s lineage. You are a kshatriya and I have also been born in the lineage of a kshatriya. Earlier, there was a king who was known by the name of Sudeva. He had a friend, King Dhumrashva’s son, Nala. Along with this friend, he went to a grove full of mango trees. O king! It was the month of Madhava <sup>957</sup> and along with their wives, they amused themselves. They ate a lot and they drank a lot. He was with his friend and their wives were with them. On the banks of a pond, they saw an extremely beautiful lady. She was the daughter of a king and the wife of Chyavana’s son, Pramati. In a state of intoxication, his evil-minded friend, Nala, seized her. While the king <sup>958</sup> looked on, she exclaimed, ‘Save me! Save me!’ Hearing her screams, her husband,

Pramati, quickly arrived there and asked, ‘What is this?’ He saw that while his wife had been seized by the extremely evil-souled Nala, while King Sudeva was present. Pramati told Sudeva, ‘Punish him. O king! In this kingdom, you are the one who rules. This Nala is wicked.’ Sudeva heard her miserable screams and those words, but did not wish to dishonour Nala. He said, ‘I am a vaishya. So that you may be saved, go elsewhere, to a kshatriya.’ Pramati blazed in his energy and seemed to burn him down in rage. He replied to the king. Pramati said, ‘What you have said is exactly true. You are a vaishya. A person who saves others from injuries is a kshatriya. You are a vaishya. As long as a kshatriya wields his weapons, no screams of affliction are heard. Therefore, you are no kshatriya. O worst of your lineage! Become a vaishya.’”

## Chapter 112

‘Markandeya said, “O brahmana! Pramati Bhargava invoked that curse on Nala, seeming to burn down the three worlds in his rage. He said, ‘You arrived in a state of intoxication and insolence in my hermitage and seized my wife by force. Therefore, you will soon be reduced to ashes.’ As soon as he spoke these words, a fire emerged from his <sup>959</sup> body and reduced Nala to ashes. On witnessing his powers, Sudeva lost his state of intoxication. He prostrated himself before him and said, ‘You should forgive me. Please forgive me. O illustrious one! Because I was intoxicated from drinking liquor, I spoke those words. Please be pacified and forgive me. Please take back the curse.’ After Nala had been burnt down, Pramati Bhargava lost his rage and his mind was no longer disturbed. Pacified in this way, he replied, ‘The words that I spoke cannot be falsified. However, since I am pleased with you, I will show you a great favour. There is no doubt that you will become a vaishya. But in that very life, you will soon give up the state of a vaishya and become a kshatriya again. That will happen when someone born as a kshatriya forcibly seizes your daughter. When that seizure happens, on your own, you will change back from being a vaishya to being a kshatriya. O lord of the earth! In this way, my father, Sudeva became a vaishya. O immensely fortunate one! Hear everything about who I am. In the Gandhamadana mountains, there was a royal sage named Suratha. He was an ascetic and controlled in his diet. He had given up all attachment and had retired to the forest. He saw a sharika bird fall down to the ground from the mouth of a hawk. Because of his compassion, the great-souled one immediately lost his senses. When he regained his senses, I was generated from his body. On seeing me, his heart was filled with affection and he accepted me. The lord said, “My daughter was born when I was filled with

compassion. Therefore, her name will be Kripavati.”<sup>960</sup> I grew up in the hermitage. Day and night, I roamed around in the forest, along with friends who were like me. The sage Agastya had a famous brother. He was wandering around in the forest, looking for flowers and my friends enraged him.<sup>961</sup> Therefore, he invoked a curse. “Since you have addressed me as a vaishya, I am cursing you that you will become a vaishya.” When the sage said this, I tried to pacify him. “O supreme among brahmanas! I have not committed a crime against you. Why are you cursing me because of a crime someone else has committed?” The rishi replied, “Someone who is not wicked becomes wicked by association with those who are wicked. It is like a pot filled with the five products from a cow<sup>962</sup> becoming polluted when a drop of liquor falls into it. However, you prostrated yourself and said that you had not committed a crime. O child! You have pleased me and I will show you my favours. Listen to what I will do. When you are born as a vaishya and instruct your son about accepting the kingdom, you will get back the memory of your past life. At that time, along with your husband, you will again become a kshatriya. With your husband, you will then obtain the right to enjoy all the divine objects of pleasure.” O Indra among kings! In this way, I was formerly cursed by the maharshi. Earlier, my father had been cursed by Pramati. O king! Thus, you are not a vaishya and my father is also not a vaishya. Since I am not tainted, how can you become tainted because of your association with me? I am not degraded.””

## Chapter 113

‘Markandeya said, “The king knew about dharma. Hearing her words and those of his son, he again spoke to his wife and son. ‘I will no longer accept a kingdom that I have given up on my father’s instructions. Why are you speaking futile words? Why are you causing me this hardship? In my vow of being a vaishya, I will pay you taxes. As you wish, enjoy the entire kingdom, or give it up.’ Hearing his father’s words, Prince Bhalandana accepted a wife and following dharma, ruled over the kingdom. O brahmana! His wheel was not obstructed anywhere on earth. His mind was never attracted to adharma and all the kings came under his subjugation. Following the ordinances, he performed many sacrifices and ruled over the earth properly. He chastised the enemies and was alone the lord of the earth. He had a son known by the name of Vatsapri. That great-souled one surpassed his father in his store of qualities. His wife was Sounanda, Viduratha’s daughter. The immensely fortunate one was devoted to her husband. He obtained her through his valour, after killing Kujrimbha, the lord of the daityas and Purandara’s enemy.”’

‘Kroushtuki asked, “O illustrious one! How did he kill Kujrimbha and obtain her? O one who possesses a pleasant mind! Please describe that account to me.”

‘Markandeya replied, “There was a king named Viduratha, famous on earth because of his deeds. He had two sons, Suniti and Sumati. Once, Viduratha went to the forest on a hunt. He saw an extremely large pit. It was as if the earth’s mouth was gaping open. On seeing this, he started to think. ‘What is this dreadful thing? For a very long time, this cannot possibly have belonged to earth. I think that this pit must be the gate to Patala.’ While he was thinking like this in that desolate forest, he saw a brahmana ascetic

named Suvrata approach. In surprise, the king showed him the pit and asked, ‘What is this? In this forest, what is this extremely deep hole?’ The rishi replied, ‘O lord of the earth! Why don’t you know this? In my view, an Indra among men must know everything that is to be known on the surface of the earth. An extremely valiant and fierce danava resides in Rasatala. He makes the earth yawn and therefore, he is known as Kujrimbha. <sup>963</sup> All the contrary deeds done on earth and heaven are his work. O lord of men! How is it that you have not heard of him? In ancient times, Tvashta built a mace named Sounanda. The evil-souled one seized it and uses it to kill his enemies in battle. Inside Patala, the asura uses it to shatter the earth and create entries for all the asuras. He has used the mace Sounanda to shatter the earth here. Without defeating him, how can you enjoy the entire earth? The fierce and powerful one uses the mace as a weapon to obstruct the sacrifices of the gods and nourish the daityas. This enemy is hidden in Patala. When you kill him, you will truly be the supreme lord and emperor of the earth. People speak of the mace as being strong. However, those who are discriminating know that it is both strong and weak. O king! When it is touched by a woman, on that day, it loses all its energy. But on the second day, it regains all its energy. <sup>964</sup> The one who is wicked in conduct does not know this about the mace’s powers. It is tainted because its energy is destroyed when it is touched by the tip of a woman’s hand. O lord of the earth! I have thus described to you the evil-souled danava’s strength and also about the mace. Now that you have been told, act accordingly. O lord of the earth! He has created this giant pit near your city. How can you have this false sense of security?’ Saying this, he departed and the lord of the earth left for his city. As he had heard, he told his ministers everything about the mace’s powers and about how its energy could be pacified. The lord of the earth consulted with his ministers about what could be done. Standing by his side, his daughter, Mudavati, heard everything.

““The daughter had already attained youth. After a few days, surrounded by her friends, she went to a grove and Kujrimbha abducted her from there. Hearing this, the king’s eyes filled with rage. His two sons were acquainted with the forest and he told them, ‘Go there quickly. There is a pit on the

banks of the Nirvindhya. Use that to go down to Rasatala and kill the evil-minded one who has abducted Mudavati.' With their own soldiers, those two angry sons reached the pit. They followed his footsteps and fought with Kujrimbha. Using clubs, swords, spears, javelins, battleaxes and arrows, there was an incessant and extremely terrible battle between them. With the power of maya, the daitya captured the two princes in the battle and killed all the soldiers. O supreme among sages! Hearing that his sons had been captured, the lord of the earth was struck by great grief and told his own soldiers, 'If anyone kills the daitya and frees my sons, I will bestow my large-eyed daughter on him.' O sage! Giving up all hopes of his sons being freed from the bondage, the king had this announced in his own city. Bhalandana's son, Vatsapri, heard this announcement being made. The powerful one was accomplished in the use of weapons and was valiant. The excellent king was a great friend of his father's. Arriving and humbly greeting him, he said, 'Quickly command me. I will free your two sons and your daughter. I will use my energy to slay the daitya.' The king happily embraced the son of his beloved friend and said, 'O child! Go and be successful in your objective. Had my son been in your place, he would have done exactly that. O child! Swiftly do what your mind is urging you to do.' The brave one armed himself with his sword and bow and quickly donned fingerguards made out of lizard skin. Using the pit, he swiftly went down to Patala. The son of a king fiercely twanged his bowstring and filled all of Patala with that sound. Kujrimbha, lord of danavas, heard this sound and arrived, filled with great rage and surrounded by his own soldiers. There was a battle between him and the son of the king. One set of powerful soldiers fought against another set of powerful soldiers. The danava fought with him for three days. After that, his heart filled with great rage, he rushed to fetch the mace. O immensely fortunate one! Constructed by Prajapati,<sup>965</sup> it was kept in the inner quarters and worshipped with fragrances, garlands and incense. Mudavati knew about the powers of the mace. She bent down and touched that excellent mace with her head. Before the great asura could seize the mace, the auspicious lady bent down and touched it several times, under the pretext of worshipping it. With the



mace, the lord of asuras went out to fight. However, all attempts to bring down the mace on the enemy were unsuccessful. O sage! The supreme weapon, the mace Sounanda, was devoid of energy. In the battle, the daitya then started to fight with the enemy using other astras and shastras. But the asura could not counter the astras and shastras used by the prince. His strength was in the mace and that had been neutralized by the slender-limbed one. The son of the king repulsed the danava's astras and shastras and deprived him of his chariot. The enemy of Indra of the gods was filled with great anger and again attacked with a sword and a shield. As he descended, the prince killed him with an *agneyastra* that was like the fire of destruction in its radiance. Wounded severely in the heart by the agneyastra, the life of the enemy of the gods left his body. Immediately, there were great festivities among the great serpents who resided at the extremities of Rasatala. Flowers were showered down on the son of the lord of the earth. The lords of the gandharvas sang and the musical instruments of the gods were sounded.

“Having slain him, the prince freed the two sons of the king and his slender-limbed daughter, Mudavati. After Kujrimbha was killed, the lord of the nagas, known as Ananta Shesha, accepted the mace. O store of austerities! Shesha, the lord all of nagas, was extremely pleased with Mudavati. The beautiful one knew that the Sounanda mace would lose its powers if it was touched by a woman's hand and had repeatedly touched it. O brahmana! The king of the nagas gave Mudavati a new name of Sunanda. This was because he was happy and because of the qualities of Sounanda.<sup>966</sup> The prince quickly brought her and her brothers before their father and bowed down before him. He said, ‘O father! Following your command, I have brought Mudavati and your two sons. Instruct me about what I should do next.’ The king's heart was filled with delight. In pleasant words, he said, ‘O child! You have done well. There are three reasons for even the gods to show me respect today—you have become my son-in-law, the enemy has been brought down and my children have been brought back to me, unharmed. As I had said, accept her hand on this auspicious day. You are a prince and this slender-limbed maiden is my daughter. Happily unite

with Mudavati and make my words come true.’ The prince replied, ‘O father! Your words are my command. I will act in accordance with your words. O father! You know that we do not have any rights in the matter.’ <sup>967</sup>

The Indra among kings arranged for the marriage of his daughter, Mudavati, with Bhalandana’s son. Vatsapri was a young man and he amused himself with her in beautiful regions and the tops of palaces. After some time had passed, the father, Bhalandana, became old and retired to the forest. Vatsapri became the king. He performed sacrifices. Following dharma, he protected the subjects. As one protects a son, the great-souled one protected the subjects. The kingdom prospered and there was no mixing of the varnas. No one suffered any fear on account of bandits, predatory creatures or evil-doers. As long as he ruled as the king, there was no fear on account of evil portents.’”

## Chapter 114

‘Markandeya said, “Through Sunanda, he had twelve sons—Pramgshu, Pravira, Shura, Suchakra, Vikrama, Krama, Bali, Balaka, Chanda, Prachanda, Suvkrima and Sunaya. All of them were immensely fortunate and supreme in battles. The eldest, the immensely valiant Pramgshu, became the king. The others remained subservient to him and were like his servants. At his sacrifices, many piles of objects were given to dvijas and even the inferior varnas.<sup>968</sup> This made the name *vasundhara* come true.<sup>969</sup> He ruled over his subjects properly, as if they were his own sons. With the pile of riches in his treasury, he performed hundreds of thousands of sacrifices. O sage! There were so many that they cannot be enumerated as *ayuta*, *koti*, *padma*,<sup>970</sup> or other such numbers. His son was Prajati and at his sacrifice, Shatakratu and the other gods received shares of sacrifices and obtained unmatched delight. He<sup>971</sup> killed ninety-nine extremely valiant danavas; Bala, supreme among strong ones; Jambha, the supreme asura; and many other immensely valiant enemies of the immortals.

“O sage! Prajati had five sons and Khanitra was the chief among them. Khanitra was famous because of his own valour and he became the king. He was serene, truthful in speech, brave and engaged in the welfare of all creatures. He was always devoted to his own dharma, served the aged and was extremely learned in the sacred texts. He was eloquent in speech and possessed humility. He was accomplished in the use of weapons, but did not boast. He was loved by all the people. Day and night, he incessantly spoke the following words. ‘Let all creatures rejoice. Even in desolate places, let them display affection. Let all creatures be well. Let them not suffer from any fear. May living beings not suffer from any physical or mental disease. Let all the people nurture friendliness towards all beings. May everything

be auspicious for dvijas. May they have affection towards each other. May all the varnas be prosperous. May they be successful in their tasks. May the worlds be auspicious towards all creatures. May your minds be such that you desire welfare for all of them, just as you do for your own self, or for your son. May the intelligence be such that there is welfare for all creatures. May this great benefit occur. Who commits a crime against whom? Even if there is a slight bit of injury, who has caused that? All such notions result from confusion in the mind. The person who is the doer will certainly face the fruits of his act. O people! Holding this view, be auspicious in your intelligence towards everyone. So that they can obtain beneficial worlds, let learned people not commit sins in this world. If a person loves me now, let everything on earth always be beneficial for him. But even if a person hates me in this world, let him also see everything auspicious.’ Such was the nature of Khanitra, the king’s son. The lotus-eyed one was prosperous and possessed all the qualities. Affectionate towards his brothers, he made them lords of separate regions. He himself enjoyed the earth, with boundaries extending up to the oceans. Shouri was given the east, Udavasu the south, Sunaya <sup>972</sup> the western direction and Maharatha the north. He and these kings had separate gotras and separate priests. The sages and ministers had a hereditary line of succession. <sup>973</sup> Shouri’s priest was a brahmana named Suhotra, born in Atri’s lineage. Udavasu’s priest was Kushavarta, born in Goutama’s lineage. Sunaya’s priest was named Pramati and he was born in Kashyapa’s lineage. King Maharatha’s priest was Vasishtha. Those four lords of men ruled over their own kingdoms. Khanitra was the overall emperor and ruled over the entire earth. Treating them like sons, King Khanitra was always engaged in the welfare of all his brothers and all the subjects.

“Once, Shouri’s minister, Vishvavedin, spoke to him. ‘O protector of the earth! We want to tell you something in private. A true king is the one to whom all the kings of the earth are subservient and he is subsequently succeeded by his sons and grandsons. His brothers are initially kings over small dominions. His sons will have smaller territories and his grandsons will have even smaller territories. <sup>974</sup> Over a period of time, this is what

happens from one generation to another generation. O lord of the earth! Eventually, his descendants have to eke out a living from agriculture. Though his brothers offer him strength and affection, he is not acting so as to save his brothers. What affection will a king show towards those who are further away, like his brother's sons? O lord of the earth! He will regard his brother's grandsons as being even further away. Is there any reason why he should have affection towards a son who is further still? <sup>975</sup> If a person seeks to satisfy the king through any means possible, what is the point of appointing ministers? <sup>976</sup> If you act in accordance with my counsel, you will alone be able to enjoy the entire kingdom. If you are satisfied with what you possess, why have me? To accomplish sovereignty, one needs a doer and an agent. Obtaining the entire kingdom is the task and you are the doer. We are the agents. Using us as agents, rule over the kingdom of your father and ancestors. We are not meant to provide you fruits in the world hereafter.' The king replied, 'Our eldest brother is the king and we are his younger brothers. That is the reason he enjoys the earth, while we rule over smaller territories. O immensely intelligent one! We are five brothers and there is only a single earth. How can each of us possess a separate prosperity over the entire earth?' Vishvavedin said, 'O king! It is indeed true that there is but a single earth. Why don't you then become the eldest and rule over all of it? You become the emperor of everything and the lord over everything. Just as I am trying for you, the other ministers are trying for them.' The king replied, 'The eldest is the king and he serves us affectionately, as if we are his sons. How can I act towards him as if I have a sense of ownership over the entire world?' Vishvavedin said, 'O lord of the earth! When you are established in the kingdom, you will also be worshipped as the eldest, deserving offerings of wealth. What is this about the eldest and the youngest? The kingdom is for men who want it.' O excellent one! When the king agreed to this and pledged accordingly, Vishvavedin, the minister, brought his brothers under his subjugation. Through conciliation and other means, he brought their priests under his control and engaged them in abhichara rites against Khanitra. Using sama, dana, bheda and other means, he weaned away those who were devoted to him. He used the power of his

own danda to make supreme efforts. From one day to another day, the four priests performed extremely fierce abhichara rites. Four she-demons <sup>977</sup> were generated from this. She was dreadful and possessed a large mouth. She was extremely terrible to behold. She held aloft a spear that was extremely awful. She arrived at the place where King Khanitra was. However, the wicked one was repulsed by his auspicious store of good merits. Those four she-demons then descended on those evil-souled ones, the four priests of the kings and Vishvavedin. The priests were killed and burnt to ashes by the she-demon. And so was the minister, Vishvavedin, who offered evil counsel to Shouri.””

## Chapter 115

‘Markandeya said, “Since those who resided in different cities were killed at the same time, there was great amazement in all the worlds. He <sup>978</sup> heard that his brothers’ priests had been killed and that his brother’s minister, Vishvavedin, had been burnt down. O supreme sage! The great king, Khanitra, was extremely surprised and exclaimed, ‘What is this?’ He did not know the reason. When Vasishtha came to his house, the king asked him about the reason why his brother’s priests and the minister had been destroyed. Asked by him, the great sage told him exactly what had happened—what Shouri’s minister had said, what Shouri had said in reply, what the wicked minister had done to bring about dissension among his brothers, what the priests had done and why the priests, who were normally compassionate even towards an enemy, had been destroyed because they sought to harm an innocent king. Hearing this, the king exclaimed, ‘Alas! Woe is me.’ O brahmana! In front of Vasishtha, he blamed his own self. The king said, ‘Shame on me! I am not the store of anything auspicious. I am limited in fortune. There is no decency in me. Through the evil working of destiny, I have committed a crime that is condemned by all the worlds. Because of me, four brahmanas have been destroyed. Which man on earth is a greater sinner than me? Had I not been born as a man on this earth, then my brothers’ priests would not have been destroyed. Shame on the kingdom! Shame on my birth in a great lineage of kings! I have become the reason for the destruction of the brahmanas. My brothers’ priests were only working for the sake of their masters. They were not destroyed because they were wicked. Since I am the reason behind the destruction, I am wicked. What will I do? Where will I go? There is no one on earth who is as much of a sinner as I am. I am the proximate reason for the destruction of

brahmanas.’ Khanitra, the lord of the earth, thus grieved in his heart. Desiring to go to the forest, he consecrated his son. The lord of the earth instated his son, known as Kshupa, in the kingdom. Along with his three wives, he left for the forest, to perform austerities. Having gone there, following the norms of vanaprastha, he tormented himself through austerities. The excellent king did this for three hundred and fifty years. O supreme among brahmanas! As a result of the austerities, the noble king’s body became emaciated. While dwelling in the forest, he restrained all the flows in his body and gave up his life. He went to the auspicious worlds, where all the objects of desire can be eternally milked, worlds obtained by kings who perform horse sacrifices and other sacrifices. Along with him, his three wives also gave up their lives and also obtained the worlds obtained by that extremely great-souled one. If one hears about Khanitra’s conduct, or reads about it, all the sins are destroyed. O immensely fortunate one! Now hear about Kshupa.’”



## Chapter 116

‘Markandeya said, “Having obtained the kingdom, Kshupa, Khanitra’s son, ruled over the subjects just as his father had done. He followed dharma and delighted them. The lord of the earth performed sacrifices and was devoted to donating. In administering justice and other things, he was impartial between friend and foe. O sage! Once, when the lord of the earth was in his residence, the sutas told him, ‘You are just like the King Kshupa who existed in earlier times. Earlier, Brahma’s son, Kshupa, used to be the lord of the earth. One should act so that one can match his conduct.’ The king answered, ‘I wish to hear about the conduct of the extremely great-souled Kshupa. If I am capable of acting in that way, I shall also do what he did.’ The sutas said, ‘O lord of the earth! In those earlier times, the king freed cattle and brahmanas from taxes. <sup>979</sup> With the one-sixth he collected, <sup>980</sup> the great-souled one performed a sacrifice.’ The king answered, ‘How can someone like me follow those great-souled kings? They were excellent in their intelligence. However, one must endeavour. Therefore, hear about the pledge I am taking now. I will try to follow the great king, Kshupa. I am making this pledge to the four varnas on earth. When the crops are harvested thrice, <sup>981</sup> I will perform three sacrifices. The taxes paid by cattle and brahmanas will be the same as what they paid formerly during that king’s time. Indeed, I will pay to cattle and brahmanas.’ Having made this pledge, Kshupa acted in accordance with his words. After the harvesting was done, he performed three supreme sacrifices. He gave riches to cattle and brahmanas that were equal to what the cattle and brahmanas would earlier have paid as taxes.

“Through his wife Pramatha, he had an unblemished son named Vira. Because of his <sup>982</sup> power and valour, all the kings on earth were brought

under subjugation. His beloved wife was named Nandini and she was from Vidarbha. Through her, the lord had a son named Vivimsha. As long as the immensely energetic and great king, Vivimsha, ruled the earth, the earth was always full of men. Parjanya rained at the right time and the earth was full of crops. The harvests were plentiful and the fruits were succulent. The juices provided nourishment, and yet, the juices did not lead to any intoxication. The great store of riches was no reason for men to turn insolent. O great sage! The enemies were terrified of his power. The large number of people and well-wishers were healthy and delighted and worshipped him. He ruled over the earth properly and performed a large number of sacrifices. After being killed in a battle, he went to Shakra's world.””

## Chapter 117

‘Markandeya said, “His son was Khaninetra, immensely strong and valiant. The gandharvas were amazed at his sacrifices and sang, ‘There will never be another person on earth who sacrifices like Khaninetra.’ After having performed ten thousand sacrifices, he donated the earth, along with its oceans. He donated the entire earth to great-souled brahmanas. Without striving for them, he obtained pleasurable objects through his austerities. But he donated all those unmatched and supreme riches that he obtained. O brahmana! After receiving from him, the brahmanas did not accept from any other king. He performed sixty-seven thousand, sixty-seven hundred and sixty-seven sacrifices at which large quantities of dakshina were given.

“The lord of the earth had no son. O great sage! For the sake of a son, he desired to perform a sacrifice to the ancestors. Desiring flesh for the sacrifice, he went on a hunt. He was alone and without any soldiers, in the great forest. He was astride a horse, holding a sword and bow and arrows. His fingerguards were made out of lizard skin. As he urged his mount on, a deer quickly emerged from another part of the dense forest and said, ‘Accomplish your purpose by killing me.’ The king replied, ‘The other deer were greatly scared on seeing me and ran away. Why do you wish to act in this way, offering yourself up to death?’ The deer said, ‘O great king! I do not have a son. My birth is futile and without any purpose. Having reflected on it, I do not see any reason for my remaining alive.’ In the presence of this deer, another deer approached the lord of the earth and said, ‘That is enough. Kill me and accomplish your purpose with my flesh. You will then achieve your objective and also do a favour to me. O great king! For the sake of a son, you wish to undertake a sacrifice to your own ancestors. How will your desired purpose be accomplished with the flesh of someone who

is without a son? The objects offered must be appropriate in comparison with what a task is meant to achieve. A person who possesses knowledge about scents does not use something with a bad odour to determine a good fragrance.’ The king replied, ‘The other deer said that the reason for its non-attachment is the lack of a son. What is the reason for your non-attachment? Why do you want to give up your life? Tell me.’ The deer said, ‘O lord of the earth! I have many sons and daughters. I am full of miserable thoughts about them, as if I am dwelling in the midst of a blazing forest conflagration. O Indra among men! As a species, deer are extremely weak and can be subdued by anyone. I have a sense of ownership in my children and I am miserable on their account. I am scared of humans, lions, tigers, wolves and other things. O lord! I am even scared of dogs and jackals, the worst among all creatures. For the sake of my relatives, I desire that the earth should be empty of the fear of humans, lions and other things that are extremely cruel. Indeed, for the sake of nurturing them, I wish that creatures that sustain themselves on grass, cattle, sheep, goats, horses and the like, should also come about their destruction. My offspring go out separately and because of my sense of ownership, hundreds of thoughts overwhelm my mind. When my son is grazing in the forest, has he been ensnared by a crafty net? Has he been struck by a thunderbolt, or trapped by a noose? Has he been subjugated by a man, a lion, or something else? If one reaches home, I wonder what state the one who has not reached home is in. My relatives have reached that extremely large forest and it has been a long while. How are they? O king! When I see that all of them have reached home, I am slightly relieved. But I also sigh a little, hoping for the safety that night will bring. When it is dawn, I desire their safety during the day. When it is dusk, I desire their safety during the night. My desire is for a state when there will be safety all the time. O lord of the earth! I have thus told you the reason for my great anxiety. Therefore, show me a favour and use your arrow to bring me down. Thus, pierced by hundreds of miseries, I want to give up my life. O lord of the earth! I have told you about the reason. Listen to my words. Those who kill themselves go to the world known as Asurya.<sup>983</sup> O lord! But animals appropriate for sacrifices obtain

lofty and excellent worlds. Agni used to be an animal earlier. <sup>984</sup> The lord of the oceans used to be an animal. Having obtained the ultimate position in a sacrifice, the sun obtained its lofty state. <sup>985</sup> O king! Therefore, show me your compassion and also convey me to a lofty state. After that, obtaining a son, you will achieve your desired objective.’ The first deer said, ‘O Indra among kings! He should not be killed. He has many sons. He has performed good deeds and is blessed. Since I possess no offspring, I am the one who should be killed.’ The second deer said, ‘Since all your fear and miseries are in a single body, you are the one who is blessed. <sup>986</sup> Since I have many bodies, I face many kinds of miseries. Earlier, when I was alone, all my sorrows were only on account of my own body. However, when I got a wife, my miseries doubled because of that sense of ownership. When the offspring were born, the miseries were as many as the bodies they possessed. Since you have no reason for excessive grief, haven’t you been successful? The offspring may have the opposite effect in the world hereafter, <sup>987</sup> but in this world, they are the reason for grief. I act for the sake of protecting and nourishing the offspring. I think that because of this, I will certainly go to hell.’ The king replied, ‘O deer! I do not know who is blessed, one with offspring, or one without offspring. My attempt to get a son has led to this vacillation in my mind. It is true that offspring can lead to suffering in this world and in the next world. But I have also heard that those without offspring incur a debt. <sup>988</sup> O deer! Therefore, for the sake of obtaining a son, I will undertake a sacrifice, but without killing animals. As a former lord of the earth did, I will practise terrible austerities.’”

## Chapter 118

‘Markandeya said, “After this, the king went to Gomati, the destroyer of sins. He controlled himself and satisfied the god Purandara. He tormented himself through fierce austerities. He controlled his speech, body and mind. For the sake of offspring, the lord of the earth controlled himself and pleased Purandara. O great sage! The illustrious Indra, the lord of the gods, was satisfied with his hymns, austerities and devotion and told him, ‘O lord of the earth! I am satisfied with your austerities, devotion and the hymns you have uttered. Tell me about the boon that you desire.’ The king replied, ‘I am without a son. May I have a son who will be supreme among those who wield weapons. May his prosperity always be unimpeded. May he act in accordance with dharma. May he know about dharma. May he be successful.’ Shakra agreed to this and the king accomplished his desire. O lord of the earth! To protect the subjects, he returned to his own city. He performed a sacrifice and protected the subjects properly. O brahmana! Through Shakra’s favours, a son was born to him. His father, the lord of the earth, gave him the name of Balashva. He had his son receive instruction in all the different kinds of weapons.

“O brahmana! After his father, he became the king and emperor. Balashva brought all the kings on earth under his subjugation and made them pay the best of taxes as tribute. He became the king of all the land and protected the subjects. However, all those Indras among men and their heirs were indomitable. Though they never rose up against him, they did not pay the taxes either. They were no longer satisfied and set themselves up in their own territories. Thereafter, those kings seized the land of that Indra among men. O sage! The lord of the earth used his strength to cling onto his own kingdom. But there were many kings who laid siege to his own city. Those

extremely valiant ones assembled with their equipment and their riches. Those lords of men confined the lord of the earth to his own city. Having been confined within his own city, the lord of the earth was enraged. But his treasury was exhausted and he had limited means to punish them. Therefore, he suffered from supreme grief. O supreme among brahmanas! He did not see any succour in his own army. He covered his face in his hands, and suffering from mental anguish, sighed. The breath from his mouth emerged through the space between his hands. As it emerged, it created hundreds of warriors, chariots, elephants and horses. O sage! Within a short period of time, the entire city of the king was covered by this extremely large force, very strong in its essence. Surrounded by that extremely large force, the lord of men emerged from his city and vanquished everyone. Having defeated them, he brought them under his subjugation and compelled them to pay taxes again. As was the case earlier, the immensely fortunate lord of men obtained great prosperity. Since the trembling of his hands generated an army that caused the enemy to be destroyed, Balashva came to be known as Karandhama.<sup>989</sup> The great-souled one had dharma in his soul and was friendly towards all creatures. O lord of the earth! He became famous in the three worlds under the name of Karandhama. He had gone through great affliction. But the force created, through dharma from the agitation, led to the destruction of the enemy and itself appeared before him.””

## Chapter 119

‘Markandeya said, “Viryachandra’s daughter possessed excellent eyebrows and was auspicious in her vows. Her name was Vira. In a svayamvara, she accepted the great king, Karandhama. The valiant Indra among kings had a son through her. On the surface of the earth, he became famous under the name of Avikshit. When he was born, the king asked those who knew about destiny. <sup>990</sup> ‘Has my son been born under an auspicious nakshatra and an auspicious lagna? Have they looked down on my son’s birth in a benevolent way? There are evil planets. I hope he has not come into the sight of vision of such planets.’ Thus asked, those who knew about destiny spoke to the lord of men. ‘Your son’s muhurta, nakshatra and lagna are auspicious. He has been born such that he will be immensely valiant, immensely fortunate and immensely strong. O great king! Your son will be a great king. The preceptor of the gods has looked at him from the seventh house and Shukra is also in the seventh house. <sup>991</sup> Soma is looking at him from the fourth house. Stationed at the edge, Soma’s son is looking at him. O great king. Savitar, Bhouma and Shanaishchara have not looked at him. Your son is blessed. He possesses all the good signs and will possess prosperity.’ Hearing the words of those who knew about destiny, the mind of the lord of the earth was filled with delight. He went to his house and said, ‘The preceptor of the gods, Soma and Soma’s son have looked at him. Aditya, the sun’s son <sup>992</sup> and Bhouma have not looked at him. When you <sup>993</sup> spoke, you used the expression “look at” several times. Therefore, he will be famous by the name of Avikshit.’ His son, Avikshit, became accomplished in the Vedas and the Vedangas. From Kanva’s son, he acquired the knowledge of using every kind of weapon. The king’s son surpassed the two physicians of the gods <sup>994</sup> in his beauty. He surpassed



Vachaspati <sup>995</sup> in intelligence, the moon in loveliness, Ravi in energy, the ocean in fortitude and the earth in tolerance. He was brave. There was no one who was equal to the great-souled one in valour.

“At a svayamvara, Hemadharma’s daughter, Vara, accepted him as her husband. So did Sudeva’s daughter, Gouri; Bali’s daughter, Subhadra; Vira’s daughter, Lilavati; Virabhadra’s daughter, Nibha; Bhima’s daughter, Manyavati; and Dambha’s daughter, Kumudvati. Because the time wasn’t right, a few did not accept him at their svayamvaras. Nevertheless, the king’s valiant son seized them by force. Resorting to his own valour, he fended off all the kings and all those from the lineages of their fathers. He was strong and he was proud of his strength. The daughter of the lord of Vishala possessed excellent teeth and her name was Vaishalini. She was from Vishala and the time arrived for her svayamvara. But she did not choose him voluntarily. O brahmana rishi! He was proud of his strength and had seized others by force. Therefore, he defeated all the kings and seized her in that way. All the many respected kings were repulsed and were extremely dejected. Anxious, they assembled and spoke to each other. ‘How can we pardon this deceit committed by a single person against all of us powerful ones? Shame on us kings! All of us have been born in a single varna. <sup>996</sup> When a person is being slain by someone who is wicked and insolent, a kshatriya is someone who saves him from injury. If a person does not do this, he takes that name only in vain. When a wicked person acted against us, we weren’t able to save ourselves from harm. Having been born in the lineage of a kshatriya, what do you <sup>997</sup> wish to do now? The sutas, magadhas and bandis utter praises for us. Let those be true. O brave ones! Because we were destroyed by the enemy, let that not be falsified. O lords of the earth! Let spies not spread this account of our conduct in different directions. All of us have been born in distinguished lineages. Let us resort to our manliness. Why should we be scared of dying? Without fighting in battle, who can become an immortal? Our conduct should be based on manliness and the use of weapons. Let us think about that.’ Hearing this, all the kings were visibly filled with intolerance. All of them spoke to each other and stood up, raising their weapons. Some mounted

chariots. Some mounted elephants. Others mounted horses. Others succumbed to rage and advanced with foot soldiers.””

## Chapter 120

‘Markandeya said, “At that time, there were many kings who had been destroyed. But some kings who had been repulsed, remained and they prepared themselves for fighting. O sage! A terrible encounter ensued between several excellent kings and the son of the king, fighting alone. Extremely unassailable, they attacked him with swords, spears, clubs and arrows in their hands and fought. He fought against all of them. The son of the king was accomplished in the use of weapons and pierced them with one hundred fierce arrows. Those powerful ones also struck him back with sharp arrows. Some had their arms severed. Others had their heads sliced off. Some were pierced in the hearts. Others were struck in the chest. The trunks of elephants were severed and the heads of horses. He struck the chariots and the horses yoked to the chariots. In other cases, he struck the charioteers. With arrows that rained down, he splintered the arrows of the enemy into two. Exhibiting his dexterity, he severed the swords of some and the bows of others. The son of a king tore apart the armour of an enemy and killed him. Some were killed by Avikshit. Others fled from the field of battle on foot. That entire band of kings was thus agitated. There were seven hundred brave ones who were determined that they were going to die. They were young and born in noble lineages. They were brave, but modest. Meanwhile, all the other soldiers were defeated and were intent on running away. The son of the king fought with the assembled kings. He was not excessively angry and fought in accordance with the dharma followed in fighting. The extremely strong one shattered their vehicles and their armour. O great sage! Filled with rage, they abandoned dharma. Though he fought in accordance with dharma, they fought against him. <sup>998</sup> The faces of those princes became wet with beads of perspiration. He pierced one with torrents

of arrows and splintered the bow of another. Using his arrows, he severed the standard of another and brought it down on the ground. One struck his horses and another shattered his chariot. One struck him with a blow of the club and another pierced him in the back with arrows. <sup>999</sup> When his bow was splintered, the son of a king was filled with rage. He seized a sword and a shield, but those were also brought down. When his sword and shield were severed, the best among those who fought with a club seized a club. However, displaying the dexterity of his hands, another one used a kshurapra arrow to cut it down. The kings turned their faces away from the principles of fighting according to dharma. They hemmed him in from all sides. One pierced him with one thousand arrows, another with one hundred. He was alone and was afflicted by many. Distraught, he fell down on the ground and those immensely fortunate princes bound him up. Using adharma, they captured the son of a king.

““Along with King Vishala, they entered the city of Vaidisha. They were happy and delighted at having been able to capture the prince. They brought him before the maiden whose svayamvara had been arranged. <sup>1000</sup> The king and the priest repeatedly told her, ‘From amongst these kings, choose whichever one appeals to you as a groom.’ O sage! The proud maiden did not accept any of them as a groom. At this, the lord of men asked an astrologer about her marriage. ‘Tell me about the best day for her marriage. There has been a battle today and that must have given rise to this impediment.’ Asked by the Indra among men, the one who knew about destiny thought. He discerned the ultimate truth and therefore, distressed in his mind, he spoke to the lord of the earth. ‘O lord of the earth! Without much delay, there will be other excellent and auspicious lagnas. O one who grants honours! Conduct the marriage when those days arrive. Since a great impediment has presented itself, enough about this now.’””

## Chapter 121

‘Markandeya said, “Karandhama heard that his son had been bound. His wife, Vira, and all the other kings also heard this. The lord of the earth heard that his son had been bound by following adharma. O great sage! For a long time, he had consultations with the kings who were his neighbours. Some lords of the earth said that all those kings, who had followed adharma and had bound him with many fighting against one, should be slain. Some said, ‘Why are we delaying? Let the army be swiftly prepared.’ Others who had assembled said, ‘The wicked Vishala should be killed.’ However, there were lords of the earth who also said, ‘Avikshit deviated from dharma first. Though she was unwilling, he unjustly seized her by force. At the svayamvara, he simultaneously countered all the princes. But when all of them got together, he has been subdued.’ Vira was a mother who had given birth to a brave son and she heard their words. She had been born in a brave gotra and she was the delighted wife of a brave husband. She spoke in the presence of her husband and the kings. ‘O lords of the earth! My son’s arms are used for the good and he has acted well. He has defeated all the lords of the earth and seized the maiden by force. He fought in that cause. However, when he was bound, he was single-handed and that is not in accordance with dharma. I do not think that affects my son’s honour in any way. This is indeed the manliness a man displays when he is under the influence of intolerance. When a lion desires to kill its enemies, it does not think of good policy. When maidens were presented at their svayamvaras, my son seized many, while those extremely proud lords of the earth looked on. How can there be a comparison between a person born in a kshatriya lineage and a person born in an inferior lineage who is begging for something? In the presence of the strong, a kshatriya uses his strength to seize. Even when he

is subjugated and is bound in iron chains, he is not distressed. Even kings who follow dharma use force. Therefore, enough of this weakness in the mind. Bondage is praiseworthy. You should bring down and kill those who have a former enmity towards you and enjoy the earth, their lands, their sons and other things, even their wives. <sup>1001</sup> For the sake of valour, that is the path that leads to great honour. Therefore, you should swiftly prepare to do battle, ascending chariots and other mounts. Without any delay, ready the elephants, the horses and the charioteers. Are you thinking about a battle with many kings? Even if he has few on his side, there is plenty to satisfy a brave person when fighting with many. Who is not capable of defeating a limited number of kings in battle? If they do not give rise to fear, the enemies aren't valorous. When a man acts so as to defeat those who envelop the worlds, like the sun driving away darkness, he is the one who acts in an exceedingly brave way.' O sage! In this way, King Karandhama was goaded by his wife. He made efforts to ready the army and kill those who had caused his son injury.

“O great sage! There was a battle between him and King Vishala and all those who had bound his son. The battle between King Karandhama and those who followed Vishala lasted for three days. When that array of kings had generally been defeated, Vishala appeared before Karandhama, holding arghya in his hand. Worshipped by the king, Karandhama was delighted. With his son having been freed, he happily spent the night there. O brahmana rishi! Bringing his daughter with him, Vishala presented himself before him and Avikshit spoke to his father about the marriage. ‘O king! I will not accept her, or any other woman, in front of whose eyes I have been defeated in battle. Bestow her on someone else. Let her choose someone else whose fame has been left intact and who has not been insulted by the enemy. Since I have been defeated by the enemy, I am as incapable as a woman. Where is my manliness? There is no difference between her and me. Independence is the trait of a man. Dependence on another is always a woman's trait. If a man is dependent on others, what kind of manliness does he exhibit? She has often seen my face. How will I again show her my face? In her sight, I have been disabled and brought down to the ground by

enemy kings.’ Thus addressed by his son, the lord of the earth spoke. <sup>1002</sup> ‘O child! You have heard the words spoken by the great-souled one. O beautiful one! Choose a husband in whom your heart finds pleasure. Choose whoever you honour. O one with the beautiful face! We will grant you a habitation in any place that lies in the sun’s path.’ The maiden replied, ‘Acting properly, he has been defeated by many who did not act properly. O lord of the earth! This kind of battle does not damage his fame or his valour. Single-handedly, he fought against many, like a lion against elephants. By standing his ground like that, he has manifested supreme valour. Not only did he remain steadfast in battle, all of them defeated him together. By striving against many, he exhibited his bravery. He fought according to dharma and was full of bravery and valour. All the kings followed adharma and defeated him. Where is the shame in this? O father! <sup>1003</sup> I do not hanker after him only because of his beauty. His bravery, valour and fortitude have stolen my heart. What is the need to speak a lot? For my sake, please beseech this extremely great-minded king. No one else will be my husband.’ Vishala said, ‘O prince! My daughter has spoken these excellent words. Indeed, there is no other prince on earth who is your equal. Your bravery and valour are beyond any dispute. O brave one! Accept my daughter and purify my lineage.’ The prince responded, ‘O king! I will not accept her, or any other woman. O lord of men! My intelligence is entirely feminine in nature now.’ After this, Karandhama said, ‘O son! Accept her. The heart of Vishala’s daughter, with the excellent eyebrows, is firmly fixed on you.’ The prince replied, ‘O lord! I have not violated your commands ever before. O father! Therefore, command me and I will carry out your command.’ Vishala saw that the king’s son was firm in his determination. His mind was troubled and he told his daughter, ‘O daughter! Take your mind away from him. There is no need for this. There are many princes. Choose someone else as your husband.’ The maiden answered, ‘O father! If he does not desire me, then I ask for the boon that no one else will be my husband, even in other births. I will perform austerities.’ King Karandhama spent three happy days with Vishala and then returned to his own city.

“Avikshit was comforted by his father and other kings, who cited instances from former times. He too returned to the city. The maiden took her leave from the relatives and went to the forest. She fasted and tormented herself through austerities. She resorted to supreme non-attachment. When she fasted for three months, she was reduced to an extremely emaciated and miserable state, consisting only of veins. The slender-limbed one was no longer interested in making any other efforts. The young girl was ready to die. The gods got to know that she had made up her mind to give up her life. Therefore, they sent a messenger of the gods to her presence. Arriving before her, he said, ‘O daughter of a king! I am a messenger sent by the gods to you. Hear about what must be done. You should not give up your body, which is so very difficult to obtain. O fortunate one! You will be the mother of a chakravarti. O immensely fortunate one! He will slay the enemy and without being obstructed in any way, enjoy the earth, with its seven dvipas, for a very long time. In front of the gods, he must kill the enemy, Tarujit, and the cruel Ayas and Shanku. He must establish the subjects in dharma. He must protect all the four varnas in pursuing their own dharma. He must slay bandits, mlechchhas and others who are evil in their minds. O fortunate one! He must perform and complete many sacrifices, with the best of dakshina. He must perform horse sacrifices and other sacrifices that number six thousand.’ The princess saw him stationed in the sky, adorned with divine garlands and unguents. She spoke softly to the messenger of the gods. ‘It is true that you have come from heaven as a messenger of the gods. There is no doubt about that. But how can there be a son without a husband? I have taken a pledge in my father’s presence that no one other than Avikshit will be my husband in this life. Though he was requested by my father, his father Karandhama and me, he does not desire me.’ The messenger of the gods replied, ‘O immensely fortunate one! There is no need to speak a lot. A son will be born to you. You should not give up your life. That is adharma. Remain in this grove and nourish your emaciated body. Through the power of your austerities, everything will be well with you.’ Having said this, the messenger of the gods returned to the



place he had come from. From one day to another day, the one with the excellent eyebrows nourished her body.””

## Chapter 122

‘Markandeya said, “On one occasion, Avikshit’s mother Vira, the mother of a brave son, summoned him on an auspicious day. She spoke to her son, Avikshit. ‘O son! Permitted by your great-souled father, I will undertake a vow of fasting. This is extremely difficult and is known as *kimichchhaka*.<sup>1004</sup> The success of this depends on your father, you and me. If you take a pledge that you will do this, then I will undertake the vow. I will give you half the riches from your father’s great treasury. The riches do belong to your father, but I have his permission to use them. My contribution to the success is the hardship, and it will ensure benefit. Your contribution to the success is through your strength and valour. There will be no success otherwise. Or the success will only come about through miseries. O son! If you truly take the pledge, then so will I. Tell me. What are your views?’ Avikshit replied, ‘The riches belong to my father and I have no ownership over them. As you have said, if there is anything that can be done with my body, I will do it. O mother! Do not worry and be distressed about the *kimichchhaka* vow. It has the approval of the king, my father, the lord of riches, and of me.’ At this, the king’s queen prepared herself to accomplish the vow. As has been instructed, she controlled herself and worshipped Kubera.<sup>1005</sup> She worshipped all the *nidhis* and the large number of guardians of all the *nidhis*. With supreme devotion, she controlled her speech, body and mind and worshipped Lakshmi.

“King Karandhama resided in a secluded part of his house. While he was seated there, his advisers, who were accomplished in all the sacred texts, spoke to him. The advisers said, ‘O king! While ruling over the earth, you have become old. You have one son, Avikshit, and he has given up all thought of taking a wife.<sup>1006</sup> He does not have a son. O lord of the earth!

When he faithfully follows your path, it is certain that the earth, which belongs to you, will pass into the hands of the enemy. Your lineage will be destroyed and the offerings of pinda and water to your ancestors will also be destroyed. There is this great fear from enemies. In addition, the rites will suffer. O lord of the earth! Therefore, act so that your son again steadily applies his mind to repaying the debt due to the ancestors.’ At this time, the lord of the earth heard words spoken by Vira’s priest to supplicants. ‘Who wants what? Who has something that is extremely difficult to achieve? Karandhama’s queen is now observing the kimichchhaka vow.’ Prince Avikshit also heard the priest’s words. He spoke to all the supplicants who had gathered at the king’s gate. ‘Let people speak. Is there anything that can be accomplished with my body? My immensely fortunate mother is observing the kimichchhaka vow. Let all the supplicants hear. I have given my pledge. What do you want? As long as the kimichchhaka vow is being observed, I will give it.’ The king heard the words that emerged from his son’s mouth. He rose up and spoke to his son, ‘I am a supplicant. Give it to me.’ Avikshit replied, ‘O father! I must give to you. Tell me what you want. Let the task be extremely difficult to accomplish, easy to accomplish, or one that is accomplished with hardship.’ The king said, ‘If you have truly taken a pledge about the kimichchhaka vow, give it to me. Show me the face of my grandson, lying down on my lap.’ Avikshit replied, ‘O king! I am your only son and I am observing brahmacharya. I do not have a son. How can I show you your grandson’s face?’ The king said, ‘If you stick to this, brahmacharya will lead to sin. Therefore, free yourself <sup>1007</sup> and show me my grandson.’ Avikshit replied, ‘O great king! Command me about something else that is extremely difficult. Non-attachment means that I have given up all association with women. Let it be that way.’ The king said, ‘You have witnessed victory against many enemies who fought with you. Even after that, if you adhere to non-attachment, you are not learned. There is no need to speak a lot. Abandon brahmacharya. Satisfy your mother’s wish and show me my grandson’s face.’ Though the son requested him several times, the king did not ask for anything else. Hence, the son spoke again. ‘O father! According to the kimichchhaka vow, I have to give you and I face a

great difficulty. I will therefore be shameless and accept a wife again. In the sight of a woman, I have been defeated and have been brought down on the ground. O father! It is extremely difficult to become that woman's husband. Nevertheless, what can I do? I am bound by the noose of being true to my pledge. I will act according to what you have said. Enjoy the success of your command prevailing.'""

## Chapter 123

‘Markandeya said, “On one occasion, the prince went out on a hunt in the forest. He pierced deer, wild boar, tigers and other tusked animals. Suddenly, he heard a woman’s voice screaming, ‘Save me! Save me!’ Because of fear, those repeated shrieks were uttered inarticulately. The prince exclaimed, ‘Do not be scared! Do not be frightened!’ He swiftly urged his horse in the direction from which the screams had come. In that desolate forest, the maiden continued to shriek. The proud lady had been firmly seized by Danu’s son, Dridhakesha. She said, ‘I am the wife of Avikshit, Karandhama’s son. An ignoble person is abducting me in this desolate forest. I am the wife of the intelligent son of Karandhama, the lord of the earth. All the lords of the earth, gandharvas and guhyakas are incapable of standing before him. <sup>1008</sup> His rage is like that of Death. His valour is like that of Shakra.’ Hearing this, with the bow and arrow in his hand, the son of the king thought. ‘What is this? How can my wife be in the forest? This is no doubt the maya of wicked rakshasas who reside in the forest. However, I will certainly go there and find out the reason.’ He quickly went there and saw an extremely beautiful and desirable woman in the forest, adorned with all the ornaments. With a staff in his hand, Danu’s son, Dridhakesha, had seized her. She repeatedly shrieked in piteous tones, ‘Save me! Save me!’ He told her, ‘Do not be scared.’ He told him, ‘You have been killed. When Karandhama rules over the earth, who is this wicked person who has polluted it? All the kings on earth have been humbled by his power.’ He arrived there, grasping that supreme bow. On seeing him, the slender-limbed one exclaimed, ‘Save me! I am being abducted dishonourably. I am King Karandhama’s daughter-in-law and Avikshit’s wife. Though I have a protector, I am being abducted by this

wicked one in the forest, as if I have no protector.’ At this, Avikshit thought about the words that had been uttered. ‘How can she be my wife? How can she be my father’s daughter-in-law? In any event, I will free the slender-limbed one and find out later on. Kshatriyas wield weapons for the sake of saving those who are afflicted.’ Angry, the brave one spoke to that extremely evil-minded danava. ‘Release her and escape with your life. Otherwise, you will no longer exist.’ At this, releasing her, the danava raised his staff up high and rushed towards him. In turn, he covered him with showers of arrows. Full of great insolence, the danava warded off these floods of arrows and hurled the staff, studded with one hundred spikes, towards the prince. As it descended, the king’s son splintered it with his arrows. He <sup>1009</sup> seized a tree that was standing nearby. As he <sup>1010</sup> showered down arrows, he hurled the tree towards him. However, with broad-headed arrows released from his bow, he shattered this into fragments as small as sesamum. The danava hurled a boulder towards the prince. But he used his dexterity to step aside and baffle it and it fell down on the ground, useless. Whatever the angry danava hurled at him, the son of the king seemed to be playing as he severed it with his flood of arrows. His staff had been shattered and all his other weapons had also been severed. Therefore, he angrily raised his fists and rushed towards the prince. As he descended, Karandhama’s son severed his head with a *vetasapatra* <sup>1011</sup> and it fell down on the ground.

“‘When the evil-minded danava was slain, all the gods applauded with words of praise for Karandhama’s son. The gods told the prince, ‘Ask for a boon.’ Desiring to bring pleasure to his father, he said, ‘I ask for a son who will be exceedingly valiant.’ The gods replied, ‘O unblemished one! You will have an extremely strong son who will be a chakravarti, through the maiden whom you have freed.’ The prince said, ‘I am bound by the noose of a pledge to my father. Hence I want a son. Having been defeated by the kings, I had given up all desire to take a wife. That is the reason I rejected the daughter of King Vishala, though she desired me. For my sake, she has given up intercourse with any other man. Having rejected Vishala’s daughter, like a heartless person, how can I now marry another woman?’

The gods replied, ‘This is the wife whom you always praise. This is Vishala’s daughter. The one with the excellent eyebrows has resorted to austerities. Through her, you will have a brave son who will bring prosperity in the seven dvipas. This son of yours will perform one thousand sacrifices and will be a chakravarti.’ O brahmana! After telling Karandhama’s son this, the gods departed. He asked his wife, ‘O timid one! How did all this come about?’ She told him, ‘When I was rejected by you, I abandoned all my relatives and kin. I became non-attached and came to this forest. O brave one! I resorted to austerities and my body was almost completely wasted. I wished to give up my life, but a messenger of the gods arrived and restrained me. He said, ‘You will have an extremely strong son who will be a chakravarti. He will please the gods and slay the asuras.’ With this command from the gods, the messenger of the gods restrained me. Wishing to be united with you, I did not give up my life. O immensely fortunate one! Day before yesterday, I went to Gangahrada to have a bath. As I entered the water, I was dragged down by an aged naga. He took me to Rasatala. There, in front of me, there were thousands of nagas, wives of the nagas and young nagas. They approached and praised me. Others worshipped me. The nagas and their women humbly entreated me. ‘You must show all of us your favour. When we commit a crime, your son will be eager to kill us. At that time, restrain him. The nagas who subsist on air will commit an offence against your son. At that time, you must restrain him. Please show us this favour.’ When I said I agreed to this, they adorned me with divine ornaments from Patala and excellent flowers, fragrances and garments. I was then brought to his world by a naga who subsists on air. I was as captivating as before. I was as beautiful as before. Seeing my beauty and that I was adorned in all the ornaments, the evil-minded Dridhakesha seized me, wishing to abduct me. O prince! I have now been freed through the strength of your arms. O mighty-armed one! Therefore, be pleased with me. Accept me. In this world, there is no other prince who is your equal. I am telling you the truth.’”

## Chapter 124

‘Markandeya said, “He heard her words. He also remembered the auspicious words his father, the king, had uttered in connection with the kimichchhaka pledge. Avikshit, the son of a king, replied to her. His mind was attached to the maiden who had cast aside all objects of pleasure for his sake. ‘O slender-limbed one! After I was defeated by the enemy, I rejected you. Having vanquished the enemy, I have now got you back. What will I do?’ The maiden replied, ‘In this charming forest, accept my hand. If a man and a woman desire each other, their union leads to good results.’ The prince said, ‘O fortunate one! Let it be that way. Perhaps destiny has been the instrument. Why else, after having been in different places, have we met now?’ O sage! At that time, a gandharva’s son arrived there, along with the best of apsaras and surrounded by the best of gandharvas. The gandharva said, ‘O Prince! This spirited one is my daughter and her name is Bhamini. Because of Agastya’s curse, she became Vishala’s daughter. When she was playing in a childish way, she angered Agastya and he cursed her, “You will become a woman.”’<sup>1012</sup> We spoke to him and mollified him. “Please show us your favours. She is a child and could not discriminate. O brahmana rishi! You should pardon the offence and favour us.” The great sage said, “Because I knew she was a child, the curse was mild. There cannot be any violation of the curse I have imposed.” Cursed by Agastya, my beautiful daughter, named Bhamini, the possessor of excellent eyebrows, was born in Vishala’s house. I came here because of her. Accept this princess. You will have a son through my daughter and he will be a chakravarti.’ The son of a king agreed and accepted her hand. The rites were followed and Tumburu offered oblations into the fire. The gods and the gandharvas sang, while large numbers of apsaras danced. Flowers were showered down from the



clouds and the musical instruments of the gods were sounded. All of them assembled at her marriage with the prince. She would give birth to a son who would save the entire world and be the agent for prosperity. O sage! With her and the great-souled son of a king, all of them went to the world of the gandharvas. Bhamini pleased herself with Avikshit, the son of a king. With her, he obtained objects of pleasure and prosperity there. Sometimes, they amused themselves in extremely charming groves in the city. Sometimes, he sported with her on smaller hills and sometimes along the banks of rivers, decorated with swans and cranes. Sometimes, near the residence, they were in an extremely beautiful mansion. Sometimes, night and day, they found pleasure in other beautiful spots. The great-souled one amused himself with the slender-limbed one. The sages, gandharvas and kinnaras brought them food, unguents, garlands, garments, drinks and other excellent items.

“While the brave one pleased with Bhamini in that extremely inaccessible world of the gandharvas, the beautiful lady gave birth to a son. When that extremely valiant one was born, the gandharvas arranged for great festivities. They could perceive the tasks that would be accomplished through this tiger among men. Some sang. Others played on drums, kettledrums and two-sided drums. Others played on flutes, veenas and other musical instruments. Large numbers of apsaras danced there. The clouds showered down flowers and rumbled with a gentle sound. While this tumult was going on, the sage Tumburu was affectionately remembered. He arrived and performed the jatakarma rites. All the gods assembled and all the sparkling divine rishis. The Indras among the nagas came from Patala—Shesha, Vasuki and Takshaka. O supreme among brahmanas! The foremost among the gods and the asuras came. So did the yakshas, the guhyakas and all the different kinds of wind. <sup>1013</sup> All the rishis, gods, danavas, pannagas and sages from different lineages came to the great city of the gandharvas. Tumburu performed the jatakarma and other rites. This having been done, he pronounced the benedictions for the child. ‘May you become an extremely valiant, mighty-armed and immensely strong chakravarti. May you rule over the earth for an extremely long period of time. O brave one!

May Shakra and all the other guardians of the world and the rishis pronounce benedictions for you. May your valour destroy the enemy. May the eastern Marut <sup>1014</sup> blow auspiciously for you, so that there is no dust before you. May the southern Marut blow constantly and not cause any hardships. May the western Marut confer excellent valour on you. May the northern Marut give you the best of strength.’ After these benedictions, an invisible voice spoke. ‘As the preceptor has said, there will be many Maruts for you. Therefore, on earth, he will be famous by the name of Marutta. All the kings on earth will be subservient to his commands. This brave one will be at the head of all the lords of earth. He will be immensely valiant and will be a chakravarti on earth, with its seven dvipas. Having attacked the kings, he will enjoy the earth without any impediments. He will be foremost among all the kings who perform sacrifices. He will surpass all the kings in his prowess and valour.’ Everyone heard these words, spoken on behalf of the residents of heaven. The brahmanas, the gandharvas and the mother and the father were satisfied.”

## Chapter 125

‘Markandeya said, “O brahmana! The prince took his beloved son with him, and followed by his wife and followed by the gandharvas, went to his city. He went to his father’s house and affectionately worshipped him, bowing down at his feet. So did the slender-limbed and modest princess. King Karandhama was seated on his throne of dharma, amidst other kings. The prince told him, ‘Behold the face of your grandson, seated on your lap. For the sake of my mother’s kimichchhaka vow, I had earlier given you a pledge about this.’ Having said this, he placed his son on his father’s lap and told him everything, exactly as it had happened. His eyes overflowing with tears, he embraced his grandson, repeatedly praised him <sup>1015</sup> and exclaimed, ‘I am fortunate.’ After that, forgetting about everything else, he happily honoured the gandharvas who had come with arghya and other objects. There were great festivities of joy in the houses of the citizens. O great sage! They thought, ‘A son has been born to your protector.’ The city was full of healthy and well-nourished people and beautiful women sang and played on musical instruments. Beautiful courtesans performed superb dances. Cheerful in his mind, the king happily gave the best of brahmanas jewels, riches, cattle, garments and ornaments.’

““Like the moon during shukla paksha, the child grew. He brought joy to his parents and was loved by the people. O sage! He first learnt about the Vedas from his preceptors. Then he learnt all the sacred texts. After this, he learnt dhanurveda. He completed all the tasks required to become accomplished in the use of the sword and the bow. Conquering all exhaustion, the brave one learnt about other weapons. O brahmana! Humble and obedient, and seeking to please his guru, he learnt about weapons from Bhargava, born of the Bhrigu lineage. He became accomplished in

knowledge of weapons, the Vedas and dhanurveda. He was so accomplished in all kinds of knowledge that there was no one superior to him. Vishala got to know everything about his daughter and about the worthiness of his daughter's son. His mind was filled with delight.

““On seeing his son's son, the king's <sup>1016</sup> wishes had been satisfied. He had performed many sacrifices and had donated gifts to supplicants. He had accomplished all the rites and had ruled over the earth according to his strength and intelligence, ensuring that the varnas followed their own dharma. He had defeated the enemies. Therefore, he wished to retire to the forest and told his son, Avikshit, ‘O son! I am old. I will leave for the forest. Accept the kingdom from me. I have accomplished everything. Nothing except your instatement remains. I am giving you this well-administered kingdom. Accept it.’ Thus addressed by his father, Prince Avikshit bowed down humbly and replied, ‘O father! I do not wish to rule over the earth. I want to perform austerities. My shame has not yet gone. My mind doesn't want the kingdom. Engage someone else instead. When I was bound, I was freed by my father and not through my own valour. Therefore, where is my manliness? A person with manliness must rule over the earth. Since I cannot protect my own self, how can I protect the earth? Therefore, please bestow the kingdom on someone else. If a man is bound because of his own delusion and is freed by someone else, how can he be a lord of the earth? That man is like a woman. He is following the dharma of women. The king should be a brave person who can protect both men and women.’ The father replied, ‘There is no difference between a father and a son. A son is like the father. O brave one! When you were bound, you were freed by none other than your own father.’ The son said, ‘O lord of men! I am incapable of making my mind change. My mind is extremely ashamed that I have been freed by you. If a person enjoys riches accumulated by his father, if he is saved by his father from a hardship, or if he is known by his father's name—it is best that such a person is not born in a lineage. If a person earns wealth on his own, if a person becomes famous because of what he himself has done, or if a person frees himself from a hardship on his own—that destination is the destination I want for myself.’ O sage! The father

requested him several times, but he gave the same reply. Therefore, the king instated his son, Marutta, in the kingdom. With his father's permission, he obtained the kingdom from his grandfather. Delighting his well-wishers, he ruled properly. Controlling his speech, body and mind and taking Vira with him, King Karandhama went to the forest to perform austerities. He tormented himself through extremely difficult austerities for one thousand years. When he gave up his body, he went to Shakra's world. O brahmana rishi! Covered in filth and with matted hair, his wife, Vira, performed austerities for another one hundred years. She desired the world in heaven that her great-souled husband had gone to. She subsisted on roots and fruit and resided in Bhargava's hermitage, amidst the wives of the brahmanas, engaging herself in serving the brahmanas.'"

## Chapter 126

‘Kroushtuki said, “O illustrious one! You have told me everything about Karandhama’s conduct and about Avikshit’s conduct. I now wish to hear about the conduct of the great-souled Marutta, Avikshit’s son. It is heard that he made great efforts, was an immensely fortunate chakravarti and was brave, handsome and greatly intelligent. He knew about dharma, followed the principles of dharma and ruled the earth well.”

‘Markandeya replied, “With his father’s permission, he obtained the kingdom from his grandfather. Like a father taking care of his sons, he ruled in accordance with dharma. He performed many sacrifices and gave the appropriate amounts of dakshina. The lord of the earth was devoted to following the commands of the priests and the officiating priests. His wheel was unimpeded everywhere in the seven dvipas. His progress was unimpeded in heaven, Patala, the water and every other place. O brahmana! Having obtained riches, he appropriately expended them on rites. He performed many great sacrifices for the gods, with Indra at the forefront. He attentively ensured that all the varnas were engaged in their own tasks. With the wealth obtained from them, he performed ishta and purta rituals. O supreme among brahmanas! The earth was protected by the great-souled Marutta and its prosperity rivalled that of the residents of the world of the gods. He not only surpassed the lords of the earth. Having performed one hundred sacrifices, he even surpassed the king of the gods. O brahmana! His officiating priest was Samvarta, the son of Angiras and the brother of the great-souled Brihaspati, the store of austerities. There was a golden mountain named Munjavat, frequented by the gods. For the sake of the king, he <sup>1017</sup> brought down its summit. O brahmana! Using that, through his austerities, he performed a sacrifice to make all the different territories, <sup>1018</sup>

and the mansions sparkling and golden. In this connection, a chant about Marutta's conduct is sung and studied by the rishis. 'The earth has not had a performer of sacrifices who is Marutta's equal. His residence and all his mansions were rendered golden. Indra was intoxicated with soma and the brahmanas with dakshina. Shakra and the other supreme gods served the brahmanas. At king Marutta's sacrifice, all the brahmanas were satisfied and their houses were filled with jewels. Therefore, they ignored all that gold. At his sacrifice, the palaces, and everything else, turned to gold. All the three varnas received something, and in turn, gave it away. People were satisfied at what was obtained there and their wishes were satisfied. Thus, they also performed separate sacrifices in different places.' He ruled over the kingdom in this way and protected the subjects.

“O supreme among sages! On one occasion, an ascetic came and spoke to him. ‘O lord of men! Your father’s mother has sent a message to you. She has seen that the community of ascetics has been overwhelmed by the poison from the insolent nagas. After ruling the earth properly, your father’s father has gone to heaven. Though your father is capable, he has abandoned the village and has gone to the forest. I reside in Ourva’s hermitage and am incapable of undertaking my austerities. Therefore, while you are ruling over the kingdom, I can see an aberration. O king! This was not the case when your grandfather or your ancestors ruled. Addicted to objects of pleasure, it is clear that you are intoxicated. Perhaps your senses have conquered you. You are blind because you do not have spies and cannot distinguish good from evil. Having arrived from Patala, their dominion, serpents have bitten seven sons of the sages and have polluted the waterbodies. They have defiled the oblations with sweat, urine and excrement. Since offerings have been given to the nagas for a long time, this is clearly an offence. <sup>1019</sup> The sages are capable of reducing the serpents to ashes. However, that is not their right. You alone are the one who possesses that right. O king! The sons of kings can enjoy objects of pleasure only as long as their head has not been sprinkled with the water of consecration. <sup>1020</sup> “Who are my friends? <sup>1021</sup> Who are my enemies? What is the strength of the enemy? Who am I? Who are my ministers? Which kings

are on my side? What is the size of my treasury and my army? Who are the people who are devoted to me? Who is neutral? Who is an adversary? Who has been weaned away by the enemy? What is the nature of the enemy? In my city, my kingdom and among my people, who are properly undertaking the tasks of dharma? Who seems to act properly, but is actually foolish? Who should be punished? Who should be protected? Which man deserves indifference? Considering the time and the place, who should be subdued using sama and bheda? Using spies, which kings should one find out about?” To know about all the advisers, a lord of the earth should employ spies. Without being distracted in his mind, a lord of the earth must always engage in these tasks and not spend his days and nights in being addicted to objects of pleasure. O lord of the earth! A lord of the earth hasn’t got his body for the sake of pleasure. The objective is to undertake great sacrifices for the sake of protecting the earth and one’s own dharma. Having undertaken great hardships in this world, there is supreme and eternal bliss in heaven. O lord of men! Therefore, comprehend and give up these objects of pleasure. You should go through hardships so as to protect the earth. While you rule, the rishis are facing these difficulties on account of the serpents. O lord of the earth! Since you do not have spies, you are blind and do not even know. What is the need to speak a lot? Punish the wicked and bring them down. O king! Protect the virtuous. Thereby, you will obtain one-sixth the share of dharma. <sup>1022</sup> If you do not protect, you will acquire the sin committed by the wicked and the insolent. There is no doubt about this. Now do what you wish. I have told you everything that your father’s mother has said. O lord of the earth! Now do whatever appeals to you.’”



## Chapter 127

‘Markandeya said, “Hearing the words of the ascetic, the king was filled with great shame. He said, ‘Shame on me! I have been blind.’ Saying this, he sighed and seized his bow. He quickly went to Ourva’s hermitage. He bowed his head down and worshipped Vira, his father’s mother. As was proper, he honoured the ascetics and they pronounced their benedictions on him. He saw the seven dead ascetics lying down on the ground, bitten by nagas. In their presence, he repeatedly blamed himself. He said, ‘The serpents have shown disrespect towards my valour. They are wicked and hate brahmanas. The entire universe, with its gods, asuras and humans, will witness what I do to them.’ Saying this, the king angrily grasped the samvartaka weapon, <sup>1023</sup> so as to destroy all the nagas who roamed around in Patala and on earth. Suddenly, the world of the nagas blazed in every direction. O brahmana! The energy of the great weapon could not be countered and burnt everything down. The nagas were without any protector and terrified. ‘Alas, father! Alas, mother! Alas, child!’ Such lamentations were uttered. Some had the tips of their tails burnt. Other serpents had their hoods burnt. They cast aside their ornaments and garments and taking their wives and sons with them, left Patala. They went and sought refuge with Bhamini, Marutta’s mother. Earlier, she had granted them freedom from fear.

““Afflicted by fear, all the serpents went to her and prostrated themselves before her. In faltering tones, they told her, ‘Please remember what you told us earlier. Earlier, in Rasatala, we worshipped you for a purpose. That time has arrived now! O one who has given birth to a brave son! Save us. O queen! Control your son and give us our lives. The flames of his weapon are burning down the world of the nagas. Your son is burning us down in

this way. There is no refuge other than you. O illustrious one! Show us your compassion.’ Hearing their words, she remembered what she had said earlier. The virtuous lady respectfully addressed her husband in these words. ‘I have already told you what the serpents said in Patala. At that time, worshipping me, they had spoken about my son. Terrified and burnt by his energy, they have arrived here now. They have sought refuge with me. Earlier, I had promised them freedom from fear. Those who seek refuge with me are also seeking refuge with you. You and I follow the same dharma, together. Hence, they have sought refuge with you. Therefore, restrain your son, Marutta. Because of your words and because of my requesting him, he will certainly be pacified.’ The king replied, ‘Because of the constant commission of a great sin, Marutta has become filled with rage. I think that your son’s rage is impossible of being controlled.’ The nagas said, ‘O king! We have sought refuge with you. You should show us your favours. A kshatriya wields weapons for the sake of saving those who are afflicted.’ Hearing the words of the nagas, beings who sought protection, and requested by his wife, the extremely illustrious Avikshit said, ‘O fortunate one! I will quickly go and speak to your son about saving the nagas. One should not forsake those who seek refuge. If the king <sup>1024</sup> does not withdraw his weapon at my words, then I will counter your son’s weapon with my own weapons.’ Avikshit, supreme among kshatriyas, picked up his bow and along with his wife, quickly went to Bhargava’s hermitage.’” <sup>1025</sup>

## Chapter 128

‘Markandeya said, “He saw his son there, with an excellent bow in his hand. The fierce weapon affixed to the bow enveloped all the directions in its flames. It was vomiting giant and blazing flames that covered the entire earth and was even reaching inside Patala. It was terrible, dreadful and impossible to withstand. He saw the lord of the earth, with his forehead furrowed. He said, ‘O Marutta! Do not be angry. You should withdraw your weapon.’ As the generous one continued to repeat these words, his complexion faded. <sup>1026</sup> He heard his senior’s words and glanced repeatedly at him. With the bow in his hand, he respectfully prostrated himself before his father. <sup>1027</sup> He replied to his father, ‘The serpents have committed an extremely grave offence. While I am ruling over the earth, they have exhibited disrespect towards my strength. They went to the hermitage and bit seven sons of the sages. O lord of the earth! They have polluted the places around the hermitage of the rishis. While I am ruling, those evildoers have polluted the oblations. They have polluted all the waterbodies. O father! That is the reason you should not say anything. You should not prevent me from slaying the serpents. They are the killers of brahmanas.’ Avikshit said, ‘Since they have slain brahmanas, once they are dead, they will go to hell. Act in accordance with my words and refrain from using the weapon.’ Marutta replied, ‘I will not pardon the wicked criminals. If I do not control the sinners, I will also go to hell. O father! Therefore, you should not restrain me.’ Avikshit said, ‘The nagas have sought refuge with me. O king! Out of respect towards me, withdraw your weapon. Enough of this rage.’ Marutta replied, ‘I will not pardon the wicked criminals. How can I transgress my own dharma and act in accordance with your words? If a king brings down the rod of chastisement on those who should be

punished and protects the virtuous, he obtains auspicious worlds. If he ignores this, he obtains hell.’ Along with his mother, his father tried to restrain him in many ways. But he did not withdraw his weapon. At this, he <sup>1028</sup> again said, ‘The terrified nagas have sought refuge with me and you are harming them. Therefore, I will restrain you by using countermeasures. I have also learnt about weapons. You are not the only one on earth who knows about weapons. O one who is extremely wicked in conduct! In front of me, what manliness will you have?’ O bull among sages! His eyes coppery red in rage, Avikshit grasped the bow in his hand and seized the kala weapon. This was an excellent weapon, encircled by flames, and was capable of killing the enemy. The immensely valiant one affixed the kala weapon to his bow. The world, along with all its oceans and mountains, was already agitated and scorched because of the samvartaka weapon. O brahmana! Now the kala weapon was about to be released. When his father picked up the kala weapon, Marutta glanced at him and said, ‘I have invoked my weapon against the wicked and not against you, so as to kill you. Therefore, why are you releasing the kala weapon against me? I am a son who has always followed his own dharma. I have always been obedient towards you. O immensely fortunate one! My task is to protect the subjects. Why do you wish to kill by invoking your weapon?’ Avikshit replied, ‘We are acting so as to protect those who have sought refuge with us. You are acting as an impediment in this attempt. Therefore, you will not be able to escape with your life. Alternatively, use the valour of your weapon to slay me and kill the wicked nagas after that. Otherwise, I will kill you with my weapon and protect the giant nagas. Shame on the life of a man who does not show favours towards the afflicted who have sought refuge, even if they happen to be from the side of the enemy. I am a kshatriya. They are terrified and have sought refuge with me. Since you are acting against that, why should you not be killed by me?’ Marutta said, ‘A true king is one who kills a person who creates impediments in the way of protecting the subjects, even if that person is a friend, a relative, a father, or a guru. O father! Therefore, I will strike you. Do not be angry. I am only protecting my own

dharma. I harbour no anger against you.’ They were determined to kill each other.

“Meanwhile, seeing this, the sage, Bhargava and the others, arrived there. They said, ‘You should not release this weapon towards your father. You should not kill a son who is famous for his deeds.’ Marutta said, ‘As a king, I must kill the wicked and protect the virtuous. O brahmanas! These are wicked serpents. What is my crime in this?’ Aviskhit said, ‘It is my duty to save those who have sought refuge with me. O brahmanas! Since my son is killing those who have sought refuge, he is committing a crime.’ The rishis responded, ‘The eyes of these nagas are rolling around in terror. Tell them that we will revive the brahmanas that the other wicked serpents have bitten. O noble kings! Enough of this conflict. Please be pacified. Both of you are firm in your pledges and both of you know about dharma.’ Vira approached her son and said, ‘It is at my words that your son got ready to kill the nagas. However, since the brahmanas who were killed have been revived, my purpose has been accomplished. Therefore, those who sought refuge with you should be allowed to escape with their lives.’ Bhamini said, ‘Earlier, the residents of Patala worshipped me. That is the reason I requested my husband to be engaged in this task. O beautiful one! Therefore, it is best for both of us that my husband and son, and your grandson and son, should refrain from this encounter.’ By withdrawing their poison and using medications from divine herbs, the serpents revived the brahmanas. Marutta, the lord of the earth, prostrated himself at his father’s feet, who affectionately embraced him and said, ‘May you destroy the honour of enemies. Rule over the earth for a long time. Find pleasure with your sons and grandsons. May you not have enemies.’ With the permission of the brahmanas and Vira, along with Bhamini, those two lords of men ascended the chariot and returned to their own city. Vira, supreme among those who upheld dharma, performed extremely great austerities. Devoted to her husband, the immensely fortunate one obtained the world her husband had gone to.

“Marutta ruled in accordance with dharma. The king conquered the six enemies <sup>1029</sup> and enjoyed objects of pleasure. The immensely fortunate

Prabhavati, Vidarbha's daughter, and Souvira's daughter, Suvira, became his wives. Sukeshi, the daughter of Ketuvirya of Magadha, also became his wife, as did Kaikeyi, daughter of Sindhuvirya, the king of Madra. His other wives were Sairandhri from Kekaya, Vapushmati, the daughter of the king of Sindhu and Sushobhana, the daughter of the king of Chedi. O brahmana! Through them, he had eighteen sons. The eldest, Narishyanta, was the foremost son. Such was the valour of Marutta, the immensely strong and immensely great king. His wheel faced no obstructions in the seven dvipas. There was no king who was his equal, nor will there ever be. He was an infinitely energetic royal sage, full of spirit and valour. O best among brahmanas! If a person hears about the conduct of the great-souled Marutta, he obtains the best of births and is cleansed of all sins.””

## Chapter 129

‘Kroushtuki said, “O illustrious one! You have told me everything about Marutta’s conduct. I have a desire to hear about his descendants in detail. O great sage! Among those descendants, there were those who were full of valour. They deserved the kingdom and became lords of the earth. I wish to hear about them from you.”

‘Markandeya replied, “Marutta had a son named Narishyanta. Among the eighteen sons, he was the eldest and the best. Marutta, bull among kshatriyas, enjoyed the entire earth for eighty-five thousand years. He followed his own dharma and ruled over the kingdom, performing excellent sacrifices. Instating his eldest son, Narishyanta, he left for the forest. There, the king single-mindedly tormented himself through great austerities. O brahmana! Covering heaven and earth with his fame, he ascended to heaven. His son, Narishyanta, was intelligent. He witnessed his father’s conduct and those of the other kings and thought. ‘In this lineage, my ancestors have been great-souled kings. They performed sacrifices. They were energetic and following dharma, protected the earth. They donated riches and did not retreat from the field of battle. Who is capable of following the conduct of those great-souled ones? They performed rites of dharma, offering oblations and other things. I also wish to do that. If not that, what else will I do? If a lord of the earth rules over the earth according to dharma, what is the special quality in that? If an Indra among men does not rule properly, he is a sinner and will go to hell. If a king possesses riches, he must perform great sacrifices and donate. What is wonderful about this? He is the lord for those who suffer. Nobility of birth, shame, anger towards enemies, the support of his people and the observance of his own dharma prevent him from running away from the field of battle. All

this has been properly accomplished by my former ancestors and my father, Marutta. What else can be done? What can I do that my ancestors could not? They sacrificed. They were supremely generous. They did not retreat from the field of battle. They took part in great battles and their manliness is beyond dispute. I must progressively try to do things they could not do. Alternatively, those former kings incessantly performed sacrifices, but they performed those themselves. They could not make others perform sacrifices. That is what I will do.’ Thinking in this way, the lord of men performed a single sacrifice. This was graced with so much of wealth being donated that no one had undertaken anything like this before. So that they could sustain their lives, he gave brahmanas houses and an extremely large quantity of riches. After this, the king gave them a hundred times that amount for the sake of undertaking sacrifices. He gave each one of them who was resident on earth cattle, garments, ornaments, grain and houses. Later, the king started another sacrifice. However, when he started the sacrifice, he could not find any brahmana to officiate at it. Whenever the king chose a brahmana, the brahmana said, ‘I have consecrated myself for officiating at another sacrifice. Please choose someone else. O king! You gave us so much of wealth that it has still not been exhausted. How can you give us more at a sacrifice?’ Thus, the lord of the earth could not find any brahmana who would be an officiating priest. He therefore started to donate from outside the altar.<sup>1030</sup> But they were so satiated with riches that there was no one there to accept this. He wished to give to brahmanas, but was dispirited. He spoke these words. ‘This is wonderful. The earth is splendid. There is no brahmana who does not possess riches. But the treasury is without purpose and those who undertake sacrifices are unsuccessful. Without an officiating priest, no one will undertake a sacrifice any more. Even if we wish to donate, the brahmanas do not wish to accept.’ Devotedly, he repeatedly bowed down before some brahmanas and persuading them to act as officiating priests, started a great sacrifice. When the lord of the earth started this, it was extraordinary. As the king started this sacrifice, all the people on earth also started performing sacrifices. Every brahmana was either performing his own sacrifice, or acting as an



officiating priest at someone else's sacrifice. When King Narishyanta performed a sacrifice, everyone on earth also undertook a sacrifice with the riches he had received from the king. There were simultaneously more than eighteen crores of sacrifices in the east, seven crores in the west, fourteen crores in the south and fifteen crores in the north. O sage! As Narishyanta undertook his sacrifice, the brahmanas also undertook such sacrifices. O brahmana! In earlier times, such was King Narishyanta, Marutta's son, possessing dharma in his soul. He was famous for his strength and manliness.'"

## Chapter 130

‘Markandeya continued, “Narishyanta’s son, Dama, was one who subdued wicked enemies. His strength was like that of Shakra and he was as compassionate as a sage. The king was born as the son of Indrasena, who was descended from Babhru’s lineage. The immensely illustrious one remained in his mother’s womb for nine years. As long as Dama remained in his mother’s womb, the princess <sup>1031</sup> had to practise self-control. <sup>1032</sup> The priest knew about the three periods of time <sup>1033</sup> and gave Narishyanta’s son the name of Dama. The prince obtained the entire knowledge of dhanurveda from Vrishaparva, the king of the asuras. <sup>1034</sup> The noble daitya, Dundubhi, resided in a hermitage and from him, he learnt the truth about all kinds of weapons. He learnt all the Vedas and Vedangas from Shakti. In that way, he controlled himself and learnt yoga from the royal sage, Arshtishena. Sumana was the daughter of the immensely strong lord of Dasharna, Charuvarman. At the svayamvara organized by her father, she accepted the handsome and great-souled one as her husband. He was accomplished in the use of weapons and was immensely strong. This occurred while all the beings who had come there to seek her hand looked on.

““The son of the king of Madra, Mahananda, was immensely strong and valiant and was attracted to her. So was Sankrandana, the son of the king of Vidarbha and Prince Vapushman, who wielded a mighty bow and was pervasive in intelligence. They saw that she had chosen Dama, the chastiser of wicked enemies. Captivated by her limbs, they consulted with each other. ‘Let us seize this beautiful maiden by force. Abducting her, let us go to our homes. After this, the one with the beautiful hips will choose one of us at a svayamvara. Following dharma, she will become the wife of whoever she wants. If the one with intoxicating eyes does not like any of us, she will

become the wife of whoever kills Dama.’ Those three princes made up their minds in this way. She was by Dama’s side and they seized the one with the beautiful limbs. Some kings who were on his side protested at this. Other kings who were neutral also spoke. O great sage! On seeing that their minds were agitated, Dama glanced at the kings who were all around and addressed them in these words. Dama said, ‘O kings! Svayamvara is said to be one of the rites of dharma. O kings! Following dharma, the lord of Dasharna organized a svayamvara. They have seized her through force. Was that dharma or adharma? <sup>1035</sup> If it was adharma, I should not do anything and should look for another wife. However, if it was dharma, then I have had enough of this life, which has been trampled on by the enemy.’ O great sage! At this, Charuvarman, the lord of Dasharna, silenced the entire assembly and spoke. ‘O kings! Dama has spoken about what is dharma and what is adharma. You should speak, so that my dharma, and his, does not suffer.’ Some kings spoke to the lord of the earth. ‘When there is mutual love, marriage according to gandharva rites is sanctioned for kshatriyas, but not for brahmanas, vaishyas or shudras. Your daughter has chosen Dama and the marriage has been completed. O king! Therefore, according to dharma, your daughter belongs to Dama. Anyone who acts contrary to this has been overwhelmed by confusion and desire.’ O brahmana! However, there were also great-souled kings who belonged to the other side and they addressed the lord of Dasharna in these words. ‘They are confused. Why do they say that only the gandharva form is dharma for kshatriyas? It is not that this is not praised. But for those who live by weapons, there is also the rakshasa form. O lords! There is the rakshasa form of marriage, where one carries off the maiden by force and kills anyone who stands in the way. This is the best form of marriage, the other <sup>1036</sup> is held to be second in importance. Mahananda and the others have followed the dharma of kshatriyas.’ At this, the kings who have spoken earlier, spoke to the king again. They spoke words that had to do with mutual affection and dharma befitting the class. ‘It is true that the rakshasa form of marriage is praised for kshatriyas. But while under her father’s supervision, this maiden chose him. Therefore, the rakshasa form of marriage is said to be one where her

father and his relations are slain by force. That does not apply when her husband has accepted her hand. While all the lords of the earth looked on, she chose Dama. This is also a marriage according to the gandharva rites. How does the question of a rakshasa form come in? A maiden who has been married is no longer a maiden. O lords of the earth! A maiden is bound by that marriage. <sup>1037</sup> They have used force to take her away from Dama. If a powerful person does something like this, it is not regarded as virtuous.' Hearing these words, Dama's eyes turned red with rage.

“He strung his bow and spoke these words. ‘While I look on, my wife is being abducted through force. What is the point of my lineage and my arms? I have been born as a eunuch. Shame on my weapons. Shame on my valour. Shame on my arrows. Shame on my bow. Shame on my birth in the lineage of the great-souled Marutta. If these foolish ones survive and leave after abducting my wife with force, shame on me. My birth as a man has been futile.’ Having said this, Dama, the chastiser of all the great enemies, spoke to the powerful kings, with Mahananda as the foremost. ‘This beautiful maiden has intoxicating eyes and is enchanting in her limbs. She has been born in a noble lineage. She is right here. What is the point of life if she does not become my wife? O lords of the earth! Thinking this, get ready to fight. After defeating me, proudly make her your wife.’ Having said this, he showered down arrows and shrouded the kings, like darkness covering the trees. The brave lords of the earth also unleashed arrows, javelins, spears and clubs. However, as if he was toying with them, Dama severed all these. They used their arrows to counter his arrows. O sage! Narishyanta's son severed the arrows shot by the kings. The battle continued between Dama and the princes. Mahananda entered the fight against Dama, holding a sword in his hand. Dama saw him advance in the great battle, holding a sword in his hand. He released a shower of arrows, like Purandara showering down rain. However, Mahananda instantly severed that net of arrows and weapons with his sword and sidestepped the others. Filled with rage, the immensely valorous Mahananda mounted Dama's chariot and fought with him. Mahananda fought with dexterity, in many kinds of ways. However, Dama shot an arrow that was as radiant as

the fire of destruction at his heart. Though his heart was pierced, Mahananda plucked it out from his chest and hurled a dazzling sword towards Dama. As it descended, blazing like a meteor, Dama hurled a javelin and severed it. He then severed Mahananda's head with a vetasapatra. When Mahananda was killed, most of the kings turned away from the battle. Vapushman, the lord of Kundina, was still there. Filled with strength, pride and insolence, he fought against Dama. He was the son of the lord of the southern regions <sup>1038</sup> and was accustomed to fighting. He battled fiercely. In that battle, exhibiting his dexterity, he <sup>1039</sup> severed his charioteer's head and his standard. With his sword severed, he seized a club studded with many spikes. However, while he still held it in his hand, he <sup>1040</sup> swiftly severed it. Before Vapushman could pick up any other supreme weapon, Dama pierced him with an arrow and brought him down on the ground. He fell down on the ground. His limbs trembled and quivered. The prince was no longer interested in fighting. On seeing that the encounter was over, with a cheerful mind, Dama took Sumana with him and left. Happily, the lord of Dasharna followed the rites and performed Dama and Sumana's marriage. Having obtained a wife, Dama lived for a short duration of time in the city of the lord of Dasharna. With his wife, he then left for his own abode. Before letting him go, the lord of Dasharna bestowed on him elephants, horses, chariots, donkeys, camels, many female and male servants, garments, ornaments, the best of bows, cushions and seats and many other vessels that were full.””

## Chapter 131

‘Markandeya said, “O extremely great sage! He obtained Sumana as his wife. The son of a king prostrated himself at the feet of his father and his mother. O brahmana! Sumana, the one with the excellent eyebrows, also prostrated herself before her father-in-law and mother-in-law and they pronounced their benedictions on her. There were great festivities in Narishyanta’s city, when they returned after the marriage from the city of the lord of Dasharna. Hearing about the alliance with the lord of Dasharna and his son’s victory over the kings, King Narishyanta was delighted. Dama, the son of the great king, amused himself with Sumana, in the best of gardens, forest regions, palaces and the slopes of mountains. After amusing herself with Dama for a long period of time, Sumana, the daughter of the lord of Dasharna, conceived. King Narishyanta, the lord of the earth, had enjoyed objects of pleasure for a long time. Having turned old, he instated Dama in the kingdom. With his ascetic wife, Indrasena, he left for the forest and followed the norms of vanaprastha there.

“Vapushman was evil in conduct and was the son of Sankrandana of dakshinatya. <sup>1041</sup> With a few followers, he went on a hunt. He saw Narishyanta in the form of an ascetic, his body covered in filth. He also saw his wife Indrasena, extremely weak because of austerities. He asked, ‘Who are you? Are you a brahmana, a kshatriya, a vaishya, or a forest-dweller in this stage of vanaprastha? Tell me.’ The king was observing a vow of silence and did not reply to him. But Indrasena told him everything accurately. He thus got to know that this was Narishyanta, his father’s enemy. He exclaimed, ‘I have got you,’ and seized him by his matted hair. Her voice choking with tears, Indrasena shrieked, ‘Alas!’ He angrily unsheathed his sword and spoke these words. ‘He is the father of Dama,

who defeated me in battle and carried Sumana away. I will kill him. Let Dama save him. He is the evil-minded one who repulsed all the sons of kings who had assembled for the sake of the maiden. I will slay his father. That evil-souled one prided himself on his youth, weapons and beauty. Dama is my enemy. While I kill his senior, let him restrain me.’ Saying this, King Vapushman, the evildoer, sliced off his head, while Indrasena wept. The sages and others who dwelt in the forest reprimanded him. Having killed and left him there, he left the forest and returned to his own city.

““When Vapushman had left, Indrasena sighed and sent a shudra ascetic to her son. ‘Go quickly to my son, Dama, and tell him my words. You are accomplished and know everything about what has happened to me. What do I have to tell you? Nevertheless, you should tell my son about the extremely miserable condition I am in. “I have seen the king, my husband, being violated in this way. You have the rights of the king. You should protect the four varnas. Why are you not protecting the ascetics in their hermitages? My husband, Narishyanta, was tormenting himself through austerities. Though you exist, I am being forced to lament, like a person without a protector. Though he committed no offence, he was forcibly dragged by the hair by the one known as Vapushman. The lord of the earth is dead. This is the state of affairs. You should now act so that dharma does not suffer. I should not say more. I am your mother and a female ascetic. Your father was an aged ascetic. Though he committed no crime, he has been abused and killed. You should now think about what should be done. You have brave ministers who know the truth about all the sacred texts. Consult with them and do what needs to be done. O lord of men! That is not a right that belongs to us, ascetics. That is what you must do. You are known as the lord of the earth. Viduratha’s father was killed by a *yavana* and therefore, the son destroyed his <sup>1042</sup> lineage. Jambha was the king of the asuras and his father was bitten by serpents. Therefore, he killed all the serpents who resided in Patala. Parashara’s father, Shakti, was killed by the rakshasas. Hearing this, he made the entire lineage of rakshasas fall down into the fire. No one tolerates the transgression of one’s lineage, not to speak of a kshatriya, and not to speak of a father being killed. Your father

has not been killed by a weapon being brought down on him. I think that you have been killed by a weapon being brought down on you. Who is scared of a person who brings his weapon down on forest-dwellers? Whether you are scared, or whether you are not scared, you happen to be the son of a king. O great king! It is you who have been transgressed and therefore, you should act accordingly against Vapushman and his servants, kin and relatives.”” Telling the messenger this, Indrasena let him go. Embracing her husband’s body, the spirited one entered the fire.””



## Chapter 132

‘Markandeya said, “The shudra ascetic sent by Indrasena went there and told Dama what had happened and about his father’s death. Hearing what the ascetic said about his father’s death, Dama blazed in rage, like a fire into which ghee has been offered. O great sage! The patient one was scorched by the fire of rage. He pressed one hand with the other and spoke these words. ‘O father! Though I, your son, was alive, you were like one without a protector. You were killed by an extremely cruel one who has abused my lineage. Will I forgive him like a eunuch, or will I perform atonement? I possess the right to chastise evildoers and protect the virtuous. I have witnessed my father’s death and the enemy is still alive. What is the point of speaking a lot? What is also the point of lamenting about my father? Other than the lamentation, I will do what needs to be done now. I will satisfy my senior with the blood from Vapushman’s body. After that, I will enter the fire. I will perform the water rites with his blood and properly feed the brahmanas with his flesh. If I cannot offer a pinda to my father in this way, I will enter the fire. Even if the asuras, gods, yakshas, gandharvas, vidyadharas and large numbers of Siddhas arrive to help him, I will angrily use my weapons to reduce all those assembled ones to ashes. The one from dakshinatya is not brave. He does not follow dharma. He is not applauded. I will slay him and enjoy the entire earth. Either I will kill him, or I will enter the fire. The extremely evil-minded one killed an aged ascetic who resided in the forest and followed a virtuous and peaceful conduct. I will slay him and all the assembled relatives, friends and armies consisting of infantry, elephants and horses. I will seize this bow and sword. I will ride this chariot and advance against the enemy’s army. While all the large number of assembled gods look on, I will create carnage. With my arms and my

soldiers, in the battle, I will destroy the entire lineages of all those who seek to help him. Let the king of the gods advance in the battle, with the vajra in his hand. Let it be the fierce and enraged lord of the ancestors, <sup>1043</sup> with an upraised staff. Let it be the lord of riches, or Varuna, or Surya. Even if they endeavour to save him, I will slay him with my torrents of sharp arrows. My father was controlled in his mind. He was without any taints. He lived in the forest and survived on fruits that had fallen down. He was friendly towards all creatures. But while his son existed, he was brought down. Today, I will satisfy the vultures with his <sup>1044</sup> flesh and blood.””

## Chapter 133

‘Markandeya continued, “Narishyanta’s son, Dama, took this pledge. His eyes were dilated in rage and intolerance. He covered his beard with his hand. He lamented, ‘Alas! My father has been killed.’ He thought about this and reprimanded destiny. He summoned his priest and spoke to all the ministers. Dama said, ‘Tell me what should be done. My father has gone to the abode of the gods. You have heard what the shudra ascetic said. The aged king was an ascetic in the stage of vanaprastha. He was observing a vow of silence. He was without any weapons. When asked by Vapushman, my mother, Indrasena, told him all this. Nevertheless, he unsheathed his sword and seized his matted hair with his left hand. Having seized him, the evil-souled one killed him. The protector of the world was like one without a protector. Using words of “shame”, my virtuous mother has instructed me about what must be done. The unfortunate one embraced Narishyanta, devoid of all signs of prosperity, and entered the fire. She has gone to the abode of the gods. I will now do what my mother has told me to do. Prepare elephants, horses, chariots and foot soldiers. I will advance against my father’s killer, my father’s great enemy. If I do not act in accordance with my mother’s words, what is the point of remaining alive?’ Hearing his words, the ministers also lamented. Distressed in their minds, they prepared the servants, soldiers and mounts. Surrounded by these dependents, they advanced, with King Dama at the forefront. They received benedictions from brahmanas and the priest, who knew about the three phases of time.

“Sighing like a serpent, Dama advanced against Vapushman. He killed the vassal kings who guarded his frontiers and swiftly progressed towards the southern region. Seeing him advance, Vapushman was filled with intolerance. Vapushman, Sankrandana’s son, recognized Dama. He saw him

advance, with his dependents, advisers and equipment. Without his mind being agitated, he instructed his soldiers and sent a messenger out from the city. 'Come quickly. Narishyanta is waiting for you. O kshatra-bandhu! With his wife, he is summoning you to his presence. These sharp arrows that will be released from my arms are thirsty. In the battle, they will pierce your body and drink your blood.' Dama heard everything that the messenger said and advanced swiftly. He remembered the pledge that he had taken earlier and sighed like a serpent. He challenged him to the battle and said, 'A true man does not boast.' Thereafter, there was a battle between Dama and Vapushman. Chariots fought against chariots, elephants fought against elephants and horses fought against horses. O brahmana rishi! An extremely tumultuous encounter ensued. All the gods, Siddhas, gandharvas and rakshasas looked on. O brahmana! As Dama fought in that battle, the earth trembled. No elephant, horse or charioteer could withstand his arrows. Vapushman's general fought against Dama. However, Dama pierced him deeply in the heart with an arrow. When he fell down, all the soldiers started to run away. Dama, the chastiser of enemies, then spoke to their master. 'O wicked one! Having killed my father, the ascetic, where are you running away? He was performing austerities and was without a weapon. If you are a kshatriya, return.' He returned, along with his younger brother, son, matrimonial allies and relatives, and started to fight against Dama, who was on a chariot. Shooting arrows from his bow, he covered the directions, Dama and his chariot with arrows. Everything was quickly covered with nets of arrows. Dama was filled with rage on account of his father having been killed. He severed those arrows and used other arrows to pierce him. O brahmana! With a single arrow, he dispatched seven of his sons, his matrimonial allies, his relatives and his friends to Yama's abode. When his sons and relatives were killed, astride his chariot, Vapushman was filled with rage. He fought against him, with arrows that were like venomous serpents. O great sage! However, Dama severed all these arrows. They angrily fought against each other, wishing to defeat each other. As they swiftly struck each other with arrows, their respective bows were shattered. As if playing, those two extremely strong ones grasped swords

and started to fight with each other. For an instant, Dama thought about his father being killed in the forest. He seized him by the hair and brought him down on the ground. He placed his foot on his head, raised his hand and said, ‘O kshatra-bandhu Vapushman! Let all the gods, humans, serpents and birds look on. I will tear out your heart.’ Having said this, Dama shattered his heart. He wished to drink the blood that was issuing out, but was restrained by the gods. With that blood, he performed the water rites for his father. Having repaid the debt to his father, he returned to his own residence. He offered pinda with Vapushman’s flesh. He fed brahmanas and those born in rakshasa lineages. Such were the kings who were born in surya vamsha. <sup>1045</sup> There were many other learned and brave ones. They performed sacrifices and knew about dharma. They were accomplished in Vedanta. I am incapable of enumerating them. If a man hears about their conduct, he is cleansed of sins.’”

## Chapter 134

The birds said, ‘O Jaimini! Having said this, Markandeya, the great sage, allowed the sage Kroushtuki to leave, so that he could complete his mid day rites. O great sage! We have told you what we heard from him. This represents the success that is without beginning and was earlier recounted by Svayambhu to the sage Markandeya. We have recounted it to you. It is sacred and auspicious. It brings a long lifespan and ensures success in dharma, artha and kama. Anyone who reads it, or hears it, is instantly freed from all sins. O sage! You asked us four questions at the beginning—the conversation between the father and the son, Svayambhu’s creation, the positions of the Manus and the conduct of the kings. We have described these to you. What else do you wish to hear now? If a man hears all this, or reads it at assemblies, he is cleansed of all sins. After destruction, he merges into the brahman. The grandfather spoke about eighteen Puranas. The extremely famous Markandeya Purana is known as the seventh among them. They are Brahma, Padma, Vishnu, Shiva and Bhagavata, with Markandeya as the seventh. Agni is said to be the eighth and Bhavishya the ninth. The tenth is Brahmavaivarta and Linga is said to be the eleventh. The twelfth is said to be Varaha and Skanda is the thirteenth. Vamana is the fourteenth and Kurma is the fifteenth. Matsya, Garuda and Brahmanda come after that. If a person reads the names of the eighteen Puranas and always chants them at the time of the three sandhyas, he obtains the fruits of a horse sacrifice. The five characteristics of a Purana are sarga, pratisarga, vamsha, manvantara and vamshanucharita. This excellent Purana has the answers to the four questions. If one repeatedly hears it, all the sins committed in a hundred crore kalpas are destroyed, like grass struck by the wind, even if they be sins like killing a brahmana, or other inauspicious

offences. If one hears it, the auspicious merits obtained are like those obtained from donating at Pushkara. Indeed, when one completes studying it, one obtains fruits that are superior to studying all the Vedas. If a person makes it heard, he should be worshipped as if he is the god, the grandfather himself. According to capacity, a king should satisfy such a brahmana with donations of fragrances, flowers, garments, villages and mounts. This Purana is like the assimilated truth of all the Vedas. It is a reservoir of all the sacred texts on dharma. If a person hears this, he obtains everything that is a desired objective. After hearing the entire Purana, a learned person should worship Vyasa for the stated fruits of dharma, artha, kama and moksha. To obtain the fruits that come from listening to it, the guru must be satisfied with gifts. The guru should be given cattle, gold, garments and ornaments. If a man listens to even a single shloka without worshipping the reciter, he does not obtain good merits. He is said to be a person who has stolen the sacred texts. The gods are not pleased with him and the ancestors do not please him with sons. He does not obtain the desired fruits from donating, shraddha ceremonies, or bathing at tirthas. In assemblies of virtuous people, he is censured as a thief who has stolen the sacred texts. A discriminating person should not listen to this sacred text with disrespect. A virtuous person must not read this excellent sacred text with disrespect. If he does so, he is born as a dumb person for seven births and gives birth to those who are foolish. Having heard the seventh Purana, if a person worships it, he is freed from all sins and purifies his lineage. Having been purified, there is no doubt that he goes to Vishnu's eternal world. When he is dislodged from there, he is again born as human. <sup>1046</sup> Hearing this Purana, one obtains supreme yoga. But it should not be bestowed on non-believers, vrishalas, or those who criticize the Vedas. Nor on those who criticize gurus or brahmanas, those who deviate from their vows, those who criticize their father or mother, those who criticize the Vedas <sup>1047</sup> and the sacred texts, those who break their pledges, or those who are angry towards their own kin. Even if one is breathing one's last breath, it must not be given to them. In particular, if one reads it, or has it read, out of avarice, delusion, or fear, it is certain that one goes to hell.

‘Markandeya said, “All these accounts lead to dharma, heaven and emancipation. If a person hears it, or reads it, he attains success. He never suffers miseries on account of physical or mental disease. There is no doubt that he is freed even from sins like killing of a brahmana. Virtuous people become his friends and relatives and their minds are favourably inclined towards him. He never suffers from enemies or bandits. He pursues good objectives and eats sweet food. He never suffers from famine. O supreme among brahmanas! He is always freed from many miseries and sins like stealing another person’s wife or riches, or causing violence.” O brahmana! If a person listens to this account, he always obtains prosperity, growth, remembrance, peace, wealth, nourishment and contentment. O brahmana! One need never grieve over a man who listens to the entire Markandeya Purana. Nor should one grieve over a person who recites it properly. He obtains yoga, pure jnana and success and obtains the world of heaven, where he is surrounded by Shakra and the other gods. He is always worshipped in heaven. This Purana is full of jnana and vijnana. Having heard it, one ascends a vimana and obtains greatness in the world of heaven. Those who are intelligent and know about the truth have declared the number of aksharas in this Purana. These lead to six thousand and eight hundred shlokas. It is said that, earlier, the intelligent Markandeya had another one hundred shlokas too.’

Jaimini concluded, ‘O birds! I had doubts and there was no one else in Bharata who could have dispelled them. No one else could have done what you have done. May you have long lifespans. May you be accomplished, with wisdom and intelligence. May your intelligence always be immersed in samkhya yoga. Let the sorrow in your minds because of the curse invoked by your father be destroyed.’

Having uttered these words, the sage went to his own hermitage. Because of the words spoken by the birds, his consciousness had become pervasive.

*This ends the Markandeya Purana.*



<sup>1</sup> For example, shlokas 2.4.10, 4.1.2 and 4.5.11 of the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad use the two expressions together.

<sup>2</sup> Chandogya Upanishad, 7.1.2.

<sup>3</sup> *Ancient Indian Historical Tradition*, F.E. Pargiter, Oxford University Press, London, 1922.

<sup>4</sup> Sutas were bards, minstrels, raconteurs.

<sup>5</sup> Ugrashravas was a suta.

<sup>6</sup> The Critical Edition of the Valmiki Ramayana was brought out by the Baroda Oriental Institute, now part of the Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda. The Critical Edition of the Mahabharata was brought out by the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Pune.

<sup>7</sup> The Bhagavadgita translation was published in 2006, the translation of the Critical Edition of the Mahabharata in ten volumes between 2010 and 2014 (with a box set in 2015) and the translation of the Critical Edition of the Valmiki Ramayana in 2017. The translations are by Bibek Debroy, and in each case, the publisher is Penguin.

<sup>8</sup> *The Markandeyamahapuram*, Nag Publishers, Delhi, 1983.

<sup>9</sup> *A Prose English Translation of Markandeya Puranam*, Manmatha Nath Dutt, Elysium Press, Calcutta, 1896.

<sup>10</sup> *The Markandeya Purana, Translated with Notes*, F. Eden Pargiter, Baptist Mission Press and the Asiatic Society, 1904. This was published in the Bibliotheca Indica series. More accurately, the Pargiter translation was serialized in the Bibliotheca Indica series, beginning 1880, and 1904 is the date of the book being published. Earlier, in the Bibliotheca Indica series, in 1862, K.M. Banerjea edited and published the Sanskrit text.

<sup>11</sup> *The Vishnu Purana: A System of Hindu Mythology and Tradition*, H.H. Wilson, Truber & Company, London, 1864, 1877.

<sup>12</sup> Introduction in the Pargiter translation.

<sup>13</sup> *The Bhagavata Purana*, Volumes 1–3, Penguin Random House India, 2018.

- <sup>1</sup> This paragraph is an invocation.
- <sup>2</sup> Vasudeva and Hari are Vishnu's names. This is a reference to Vishnu's *vamana* (dwarf) incarnation, where Vishnu traversed these three worlds in three strides and deprived the demon king, Bali.
- <sup>3</sup> The serpent Shesha.
- <sup>4</sup> *Jaya* means victory. Used for a text, it means the Mahabharata and/or the Puranas.
- <sup>5</sup> Krishna Dvaipayana Vedavyasa.
- <sup>6</sup> That is, composed the Mahabharata.
- <sup>7</sup> *Purvapaksha*.
- <sup>8</sup> The four stages of life: of *brahmacharya*, *garhasthya*, *vanaprastha* and *sannyasa*.
- <sup>9</sup> The word used is *tata*. Although it means father, it is applied to anyone who is senior.
- <sup>10</sup> Vedavyasa.
- <sup>11</sup> He is *nirguna*.
- <sup>12</sup> Droupadi or Krishnaa.
- <sup>13</sup> Balarama.
- <sup>14</sup> A tirtha is a sacred place of pilgrimage. But it is also a place where one descends into water. Therefore, for a sacred place to be called a tirtha, it must have water.
- <sup>15</sup> A maharatha is a great warrior. Specifically, a maharatha can simultaneously fight with 10,000 warriors.
- <sup>16</sup> Sleep, lassitude, fear, anger, confusion, pride, insanity, negligence, surprise, doubt, covetousness, malice, envy, insincerity, falsehood, faithlessness, partiality and ignorance.
- <sup>17</sup> Indra's pleasure garden.
- <sup>18</sup> Another name for Indra. Indra's wife is Shachi. Shatakratu, the performer of one hundred sacrifices, is another of Indra's names.
- <sup>19</sup> *Pumshchalis*. Pumshchalis have no sense of discrimination and are almost like courtesans.
- <sup>20</sup> Indra killed demons named Bala and Vritra.
- <sup>21</sup> Indra killed a demon named Paka.
- <sup>22</sup> We have translated Praleya as a proper noun. However, Mount Praleya means a mountain that is covered with snow and *praleya* could therefore be an adjective.
- <sup>23</sup> A measure of distance, just over 2 miles. Four kroshas make up a *yojana*.
- <sup>24</sup> Great rishi.
- <sup>25</sup> The Ganga flows in three places, heaven, the earth and the nether regions.

- <sup>26</sup> The god of the wind.
- <sup>27</sup> Pralolupa.
- <sup>28</sup> Dhanada is the lord of treasures, that is, Kubera.
- <sup>29</sup> Rakshasas roam around in the night.
- <sup>30</sup> The fragrant screw pine or caldera.
- <sup>31</sup> Kubera is the lord of both the yakshas and the rakshasas.
- <sup>32</sup> When Garuda desired amrita, there was a clash between Garuda and Shakra/Indra.
- <sup>33</sup> Madanika was the daughter of the apsara Menaka.
- <sup>34</sup> Vapu was born as Tarkshi. The word *tarkshi* means bird. The sense seems to be that since Durvasa cursed Vapu that she would be born as a bird, the name given was Tarkshi.
- <sup>35</sup> The Vedangas are limbs of the Vedas, auxiliary disciplines necessary to understand the Vedas. The six Vedangas are *shiksha* (phonetics), *chhanda* (prosody), *vyakarana* (grammar), *nirukta* (etymology), *kalpa* (ritual instructions) and *jyotisha* (astronomy/astrology).
- <sup>36</sup> Bhagadatta was the king of Pragjyotishapura and fought on the side of the Kouravas. Kiriti means the one with the diadem and is one of Arjuna's names.
- <sup>37</sup> Arjuna's.
- <sup>38</sup> Supratika was Bhagadatta's elephant.
- <sup>39</sup> This probably means that the eggs were lying down on the flesh of the dead bird.
- <sup>40</sup> Yudhishtira.
- <sup>41</sup> When Bhishma was lying down on a bed of arrows, waiting for an opportune time to die.
- <sup>42</sup> Shukracharya was the preceptor of the demons.
- <sup>43</sup> Yama.
- <sup>44</sup> Indra.
- <sup>45</sup> Often, the words asuras, danavas and daityas are used as synonyms. Asuras are the antithesis of the *suras*, the gods. Thus, asuras are demons, as are danavas and daityas. The sage Kashyapa married Diti and Danu, who were sisters. Diti's sons are daityas and Danu's sons are danavas.
- <sup>46</sup> Vishnu has the Sudarshana chakra as a weapon.
- <sup>47</sup> Shiva.
- <sup>48</sup> Yama.
- <sup>49</sup> The text uses the word Jatavedas.
- <sup>50</sup> Varuna.
- <sup>51</sup> Kubera.
- <sup>52</sup> Dhatri can loosely be translated as creator, the creator mentioned earlier being Brahma. Vidhatri is more like an ordainer.

- <sup>53</sup> Shamika.
- <sup>54</sup> The birds.
- <sup>55</sup> Shamika.
- <sup>56</sup> A *romanchapata* is a piece of cloth made out of a hide with erect body hair.
- <sup>57</sup> Indra.
- <sup>58</sup> Indra in the form of the bird.
- <sup>59</sup> From Garuda's wings, as Garuda was passing.
- <sup>60</sup> Though they are addressed collectively, the singular is used.
- <sup>61</sup> Because sons won't be born.
- <sup>62</sup> Debts to ancestors are paid by being good householders and having children, debts to gods are paid through sacrifices and debts to humans (usually stated as debts to sages) are paid through studying.
- <sup>63</sup> Dakshina is the fee received by a brahmana for officiating at a sacrifice. It is also the fee paid by a student to his preceptor at the time of graduation.
- <sup>64</sup> The body is being described as an entity with nine gates—two ears, two eyes, one mouth, two nostrils, the genital organ and the anus.
- <sup>65</sup> Since the eyes have been mentioned, this probably means the two ears, the mouth and the two nostrils.
- <sup>66</sup> Anger, greed and confusion.
- <sup>67</sup> Attachment.
- <sup>68</sup> King Purusha.
- <sup>69</sup> Though not identical, this is reminiscent of Bhagavadgita 2.62–63.
- <sup>70</sup> Meaning ignorance.

<sup>71</sup> The word used is *dvija*, which means bird, as well as brahmana. Both are correct. But since the brahmanas are now in the form of birds, we have chosen bird rather than brahmana.

<sup>72</sup> The goddess of learning and speech.

<sup>73</sup> Transcending such transient feelings.

<sup>74</sup> *Shabaras* were mountain-dwelling tribes. But though the specific incident can't be pinned down, Shabara might also have been used as a proper name.

<sup>75</sup> When a guest arrives, he is given *achamaniya* (water to wash the mouth), *padya* (water to wash the feet) and *arghya* (a gift).

<sup>76</sup> Reva is another name for River Narmada.

<sup>77</sup> That is, the Mahabharata.

<sup>78</sup> The Vedangas.

<sup>79</sup> Without qualities (*guna*). Vasudeva and Janardana are Krishna's names.

<sup>80</sup> This is Droupadi, Krishnaa, not to be confused with Krishna.

<sup>81</sup> The four forms of Vishnu are Vasudeva, Samkarshana, Pradyumna and Aniruddha.

<sup>82</sup> The qualities (*gunas*) of *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*.

<sup>83</sup> Heaven, earth and the nether regions.

<sup>84</sup> Ishana is Shiva. The asuras had three cities (Tripura) and Shiva destroyed all three with a single arrow.

<sup>85</sup> *Ayana* means place of refuge. (It also means progress.) There was destruction before creation. At the time of destruction, there was water everywhere and Vishnu slept on this water (*nara*). Hence, Vishnu is known as Narayana.

<sup>86</sup> Saguna means with *gunas*, nirguna means without *gunas*.

<sup>87</sup> The same as Samkarshana.

<sup>88</sup> The darkness of ignorance.

<sup>89</sup> This is almost identical to Bhagavadgita 4.7.

<sup>90</sup> The *varaha* (boar) incarnation.

<sup>91</sup> Alternatively, Nrisimha, the half-man half-lion incarnation.

<sup>92</sup> Dwarf.

<sup>93</sup> As Krishna. *Avatara* means descent, but is usually translated as incarnation.

<sup>94</sup> Indra killed Visharupa, also known as Trishira, Tvashta's son. That sin of killing a brahmana clung to Indra.

<sup>95</sup> Guardian of the world.

<sup>96</sup> The saptarshis are the seven great sages. The list varies, but the standard one is Marichi, Atri, Angira, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu and Vasishtha. In the sky, the saptarshis are identified with the constellation of Ursa Major (Great Bear).

<sup>97</sup> Goutama's wife. Assuming Goutama's appearance, Indra deceived Ahalya.

<sup>98</sup> The two Ashvins.

<sup>99</sup> An akshouhini is an army, consisting of 21,870 chariots, 21,870 elephants, 65,610 horse riders and 109,350 foot soldiers.

<sup>100</sup> The wind god, also known as Vayu.

<sup>101</sup> Nakula and Sahadeva.

<sup>102</sup> Arjuna was in any case Indra's son. Indra's energy entered Dharma and this was born as Yudhishtira. Indra's strength entered Pavana and this was born as Bhima. Indra's beauty entered the Ashvins and this was born as Nakula and Sahadeva.

<sup>103</sup> Krishnaa, Droupadi.

<sup>104</sup> Balarama.

<sup>105</sup> In fighting with the club, Duryodhana was Balarama's disciple. However, he was never Balarama's son-in-law. Balarama and Revati had two sons, Nisatha and Ulmuka. In some accounts, they also had a daughter named Vatsala, who was supposed to be married to Lakshmana, Duryodhana's son, though it is never quite clear whether this marriage ever took place. At best, Balarama's son-in-law was Lakshmana, not Duryodhana himself. Therefore, though we have translated the word *jamatri* as the obvious son-in-law, one should probably look for a secondary meaning and indeed, the word also means a friend.

<sup>106</sup> Balarama. Shura/Shurasena was Vasudeva's father. Shouri is also one of Krishna's names.

<sup>107</sup> Dvaraka.

<sup>108</sup> Hog plums.

<sup>109</sup> The starfruit tree.

<sup>110</sup> Ebony.

<sup>111</sup> Since there is no such tree, this is probably *bilva*, wood apple.

<sup>112</sup> Citron fruit.

<sup>113</sup> The breadfruit tree.

<sup>114</sup> The *kadamba* tree.

<sup>115</sup> The black and white ebony.

<sup>116</sup> Kind of pepper.

<sup>117</sup> The indigo plant.

<sup>118</sup> Kind of dock or sorrel.

<sup>119</sup> Cashew nut.

<sup>120</sup> Myrobalan. Haritaka and vibhitaka are also types of myrobalan.

<sup>121</sup> A medicinal tree.

<sup>122</sup> *Carissa carandas*.

<sup>123</sup> Tree with orange red flowers, *Saraca Indica*.

<sup>124</sup> This can mean either nutmeg or a white lotus. Nutmeg fits better here.

<sup>125</sup> *Ketaka*, the screw pine.

<sup>126</sup> Tree with fragrant flowers.

<sup>127</sup> Tree with yellow and fragrant flowers.

<sup>128</sup> The Indian devil tree (*Alstonia scholaris*).

<sup>129</sup> The Indian laburnum.

<sup>130</sup> The royal jasmine.

<sup>131</sup> The Indian coral tree. Mandara is another name for the same tree.

<sup>132</sup> Tree with reddish purple flowers, *Phanera variegata*.

<sup>133</sup> The jujube tree.

<sup>134</sup> *Bignonia suaveolens*.

<sup>135</sup> The cedar tree.

<sup>136</sup> *Shorea robusta*.

<sup>137</sup> Palm tree.

<sup>138</sup> Tree with dark bark.

<sup>139</sup> Tree with orange-red flowers, flame of the forest, *Butea frondosa*.

<sup>140</sup> The rosewood tree.

<sup>141</sup> Partridge.

- <sup>142</sup> Literally, a bird with one hundred feathers. This can mean a parrot, a woodpecker or a crane.
- <sup>143</sup> The shrike.
- <sup>144</sup> The sparrow.
- <sup>145</sup> The green Haritala pigeon.
- <sup>146</sup> Pheasant.
- <sup>147</sup> Unidentified bird.
- <sup>148</sup> The Jacobin cuckoo or pied crested cuckoo.
- <sup>149</sup> *Pundarika* and *kamala* are separately mentioned. Each of these is a different kind of lotus.
- <sup>150</sup> Kadamba is a kind of goose, chakravaka is the Brahminy duck, karandava is a kind of duck, plava is a diving aquatic bird and madgu is also a kind of diving bird.
- <sup>151</sup> Literally, took himself to be an *avadhuta*. An avadhuta is an ascetic who has renounced all worldly attachments. However, it also has the nuance of someone who has been cast off from society and has been excluded by it.
- <sup>152</sup> *Pratiloma* means contrary, perverse, against the grain.
- <sup>153</sup> The sons of the Pandavas.



<sup>154</sup> There are four yugas, krita (satya) yuga, treta yuga, dvapara yuga and kali yuga. The incidents currently being described are occurring in dvapara yuga.

<sup>155</sup> The king of obstacles.

<sup>156</sup> Shiva.

<sup>157</sup> Vishvamitra was descended from Kusha and the lineage is referred to as Koushika.

<sup>158</sup> As a metaphor for a stupid act.

<sup>159</sup> The holy fig tree.

<sup>160</sup> Therefore, that too, is exempted.

<sup>161</sup> *Shronisutra*. This means a string worn around the loins, as well as the belt for a sword.

<sup>162</sup> Vishvamitra.

<sup>163</sup> By abandoning us, you are being violent and cruel.

<sup>164</sup> Vishvadeva is sometimes used to refer generically to all gods, sometimes it is used for a specific category of gods. When it is used for a specific category of gods, the number varies.

- <sup>165</sup> Shiva.
- <sup>166</sup> The word used is *pratigraha*, to receive/accept, the opposite of giving. This is an indirect way of expressing the predicament. Harishachandra had promised to give. If he failed, it would be as if he had accepted instead.
- <sup>167</sup> Offering oblations to a sacred fire, a kind of sacrifice.
- <sup>168</sup> The meaning has to be deduced. The obvious one is that since she has given birth to a son, the objective of having a son has been accomplished.
- <sup>169</sup> Kind of antelope.
- <sup>170</sup> Upendra means Indra's younger brother, that is, Vishnu.
- <sup>171</sup> Asta is the mountain behind which the sun sets.
- <sup>172</sup> Harishchandra has to ask someone to buy his wife.
- <sup>173</sup> Wife.
- <sup>174</sup> Harishchandra and Shaibya's son.
- <sup>175</sup> *Kakapaksha* (like a crow's wing) is a description of sidelocks of hair on the temples of boys and young men.
- <sup>176</sup> Depending on the qualities. These are coins, though the word coin is not explicitly mentioned.
- <sup>177</sup> Harishchandra's.
- <sup>178</sup> An inferior kshatriya.
- <sup>179</sup> Dharma is the personified form of dharma. Chandala has different nuances and a chandala is not necessarily a *shudra*. A chandala is also of mixed parentage, with a shudra father and a brahmana mother. More generally, chandalas are outcastes, while shudras are within the caste fold.
- <sup>180</sup> One hundred million, of coins.
- <sup>181</sup> One who is an outcaste. Literally, one who eats dogs, or eats with dogs.
- <sup>182</sup> These are different types of demons and spirits, dakini being female.
- <sup>183</sup> Pedantically, a chandala is the son of a brahmana mother and a shudra father. A pulkasa (equivalently *pukkasa*) is the son of a *nishada* father and a shudra mother.
- <sup>184</sup> Feminine of pulkasa.
- <sup>185</sup> The dead brahmana's relatives.
- <sup>186</sup> By waiving the fee.
- <sup>187</sup> The bird *Turdus salica*.
- <sup>188</sup> Mythical eight-legged creature that feeds on lions. However, the word also means a young elephant or a camel.
- <sup>189</sup> Yama's.
- <sup>190</sup> The god of funeral ceremonies, Yama.
- <sup>191</sup> Indra.
- <sup>192</sup> The word used in the text is *chatuh*, meaning four. Even if four teeth means something, one can't make sense of four forearms. Therefore, we have taken this as *chatur*, meaning beautiful.
- <sup>193</sup> The fourth mark has not been mentioned. In any event, these are not the marks of royalty. Though texts don't necessarily agree, a fish is for a person who undertakes sacrifices. That doesn't have to be a king. For a king, the four are usually from an umbrella, a conch shell, a lotus, an elephant, a chakra, a *svastika* mark.
- <sup>194</sup> The river Vaitarani flows in the nether regions and must be crossed before entering Yama's world.
- <sup>195</sup> Hell where there is a forest (*vana*) full of trees, whose leaves (*patra*) are as sharp as the blades of swords (*asi*).

<sup>196</sup> The names of two other hells. Usually twenty-eight hells are mentioned. Rourava and maharourava (the great rourava) are hells where one suffers at the hands of fierce animals known as *rurus*.

<sup>197</sup> Brahma.

<sup>198</sup> Vishvadevas.

<sup>199</sup> Divine singers and bards.

<sup>200</sup> Semi-divine species, singers and dancers, celestial musicians.

<sup>201</sup> There is a play on the words *vishva* (universe) and *mitra* (friend).

<sup>202</sup> Gadhi was Vishvamitra's father.

<sup>203</sup> Along with the subjects.

<sup>204</sup> This seems to be dharma, rather than the god Dharma.

<sup>205</sup> Celestial vehicles.

<sup>206</sup> As he had himself desired, he did not live in heaven permanently and Rohitashva was consecrated as the heir apparent.

<sup>207</sup> That is, Shukracharya.

<sup>208</sup> Both of these are birds. Ati is also known as the *sharati*, the *Turdus ginginianus*. Baka is the Indian crane.

<sup>209</sup> Vasishtha was Harishchandra's priest.

<sup>210</sup> As a result of the enmity between Vasishtha and Vishvamitra. Vishvamitra had them destroyed through King Kalmashapada, who had become a rakshasa. The story is told in several places, such as the Mahabharata.

<sup>211</sup> Vishvamitra.

<sup>212</sup> There are seven nether regions—Atala, Vitala, Sutala, Talatala, Mahatala, Rasatala and Patala. However, *patala* is also used as a generic term for all the nether regions.

<sup>213</sup> One of these is addressed to a male beloved, the other to a female beloved.

<sup>214</sup> Jnana is what one learns from sacred texts and preceptors, *vijnana* is knowledge one obtains through inner reflection. Both these words have complicated explanations, but this simple statement will suffice.

<sup>215</sup> The cycle of worldly existence.

<sup>216</sup> Both in tantra and in yoga, there are six sets of separate rituals. However, this probably means the six acts permitted for a brahmana—studying, teaching, performing sacrifices, officiating at sacrifices, giving and receiving.

<sup>217</sup> The word *rasa* has multiple meanings. *Harsha* means delight and happiness has already been mentioned. Perhaps the text simply means the taste (one of the meanings of *harsha*) of delight. Or perhaps this is a reference to the eight/nine *rasas* or sentiments of poetry, where, *hasya*, laughter, happens to be one. Therefore, we have not translated these two words.

<sup>218</sup> The three Vedas.

<sup>219</sup> The three Vedas.

<sup>220</sup> This is a description of the time of death.

<sup>221</sup> *Prana* is the breath of life or the life force. *Prana* draws breath into the body, *apana* exhales it. *Vyana* distributes it through the body and *samana* assimilates it. *Udana* gives rise to sound.

<sup>222</sup> *Astika*.

<sup>223</sup> This is the *linga sharira*.

<sup>224</sup> Funeral cakes offered by descendants.

<sup>225</sup> This is the day of the *shraddha* or funeral ceremony.

<sup>226</sup> Usually, these words are synonyms for *Yama*. *Mrityu* is Death, *Kala* is Detiny/Time and *Antaka* is Destroyer.

<sup>227</sup> Meaning, terrible.

<sup>228</sup> Literally, a place that is beyond all good fortune.

<sup>229</sup> That is, *kshatriya*.

<sup>230</sup> Once the fruits of good deeds have exhausted themselves.

<sup>231</sup> The three Vedas.

<sup>232</sup> The great Rourava.

<sup>233</sup> The text uses the expression ten thousand twice. So strictly speaking, this is ten million years, interpreted simply as innumerable years.

<sup>234</sup> Meaning darkness.

<sup>235</sup> Meaning the act of severing.

<sup>236</sup> Meaning, a place that lacks stability or foundation.

<sup>237</sup> Literally, a heated pot.

<sup>238</sup> And didn't allow them to drink.

<sup>239</sup> The word used is *karambha*. This means mud, but has other meanings too.

<sup>240</sup> Literally, jewel among men. At the moment, we have translated this as a proper name, though it is really an adjective.

<sup>241</sup> Addressing Nararatna.

<sup>242</sup> That is, Nararatna.

<sup>243</sup> Meaning, the learned one.



- <sup>244</sup> Meaning desire for another woman.
- <sup>245</sup> The debt to the ancestors is paid by having offspring.
- <sup>246</sup> Anyone from the lineage of Janaka is referred to as Janaka.
- <sup>247</sup> The word used is *jati*.
- <sup>248</sup> As mentioned in the case of the eyes.
- <sup>249</sup> Used as fans.
- <sup>250</sup> The fragrant root of a grass, used to make fans and screens that offer cool shade.
- <sup>251</sup> A bird with a beak like a needle, such as the honeysucker.
- <sup>252</sup> Row. When sitting down to eat, different varnas are meant to sit in different rows.
- <sup>253</sup> Stale or leftover food. After touching ucchishta, one should clean one's hands.
- <sup>254</sup> Payasam is a dish made out sweetened milk and rice. Krisara is a dish made out of sesamum and grain. When offered to the gods, food becomes clean and can be eaten after it has been sanctified and has become prasad.
- <sup>255</sup> The path of the sun probably means when the sun is directly shining down from above.
- <sup>256</sup> Interpreted as those who sell.
- <sup>257</sup> The silk-cotton tree, which is thorny all over.
- <sup>258</sup> The first fire means the fire in general.
- <sup>259</sup> We have deviated from standard interpretations in this sentence. Standard interpretations take this to mean that they become the husbands of widows. There is nothing in the text to derive such a meaning.
- <sup>260</sup> Implying those who indulged in backbiting.
- <sup>261</sup> Another hell, literally meaning the strand of time/destiny.

<sup>262</sup> And has thus been expelled from his varna.

<sup>263</sup> Paddy sown in May–June.

<sup>264</sup> The word madgu has different meanings, such as, a cormorant or a snake. However, since there is an obvious progression in the birth, madgu should probably be taken as the son of a brahmana and a suta lady.

<sup>265</sup> Havishya is food that can be offered as oblations. It is simple and has no seasoning. It is only eaten on special occasions, such as when a vow is being observed.

<sup>266</sup> Liquor obtained through a process of distillation.

<sup>267</sup> One of the possible meanings of the word *sharngaka*. It might also mean a deer, an elephant, a bee or a chataka bird.

<sup>268</sup> Chakora bird.

<sup>269</sup> Hari is also one of Indra's names.

<sup>270</sup> The word used is *ghatiyantra*. This does not necessarily mean a modern clock, but any contrivance for measuring time. The word also means a rope slung over a pulley, to draw water out of a well with a bucket.

<sup>271</sup> The four stages of life (ashrama) are brahmacharya (state of being a student), garhasthya (householder stage), vanaprastha (seeking refuge in the forest) and sannyasa (renouncing).

<sup>272</sup> The *garhapatya* fire that is kept burning in every household.

<sup>273</sup> Pleasure and pain, heat and cold and so on.

<sup>274</sup> You will be freed from the cycle of samsara.

<sup>275</sup> Royal road means public road. The courtesan was standing outside her door, soliciting customers.

<sup>276</sup> The sage Mandavya's (also known as Animandavya) story is recounted in the Mahabharata. In his childhood, he tortured insects by impaling them on blades of grass. Therefore, Yama cursed him. When robbers hid their stolen goods in his hermitage, the king's retinue took him to be a thief and wrongly punished him by impaling him on a stake.

<sup>277</sup> Svadhyaya is self-study, interpreted here as recitation of the Vedas. Vashatkara is the exclamation 'vashat' made at the time of offering an oblation. Svadha is said at the time of offering oblations to the ancestors and svaha is said at the time of offering oblations to the gods. These are only done during the day.

<sup>278</sup> Dakshinayana is the movement of the sun to the south of the equator, the period from the summer to the winter solstice. Uttarayana is the movement of the sun to the north of the equator, the period from the winter solstice to the summer solstice.

<sup>279</sup> Rites are divided into nitya (daily) and naimittika (occasional).

<sup>280</sup> After offering shares to gods and others.

<sup>281</sup> To gods, sages, ancestors, humans and other creatures.

<sup>282</sup> Those merits are earned by the husband and a wife has half a share in her husband's merits.

<sup>283</sup> The wife.

<sup>284</sup> In the list of saptarshis, Atri is typically mentioned second.

<sup>285</sup> Rajas because of the passion of creation. The text can be translated as, it had the form of the moon (Soma), that is, potentially. We have simply translated this as white, since Soma follows. Soma was thus Brahma being born as Anasuya's son, but through mental powers.

<sup>286</sup> At the Haihayas.

<sup>287</sup> Destroy Kartavirya Arjuna, the king of the Haihayas.

<sup>288</sup> Meaning the firmament.

<sup>289</sup> Brahma.

<sup>290</sup> Literally, that of being mad. Simply, indulging in unorthodox practices.

<sup>291</sup> A specific type of liquor.

<sup>292</sup> Kritavirya's son.

<sup>293</sup> Indra.

<sup>294</sup> 60,000 sages who were the sizes of thumbs. They preceded the sun's chariot.

<sup>295</sup> Bhuloka is earth, svarloka is heaven and bhuvarloka is the space in between the two.

<sup>296</sup> Meant as, the goddess who is behind the creation of the entire world.

<sup>297</sup> Chakravarti is a universal emperor, literally, a king whose wheel (chakra) travels everywhere on earth.

<sup>298</sup> The holy fig tree.

<sup>299</sup> Garuda.

<sup>300</sup> The preceptor means Brihaspati. Brihaspati's equal in intelligence, Shakra's equal in valour and an equal of the two Ashvins in beauty. The text says Shukra. This is an obvious typo and should be Shakra.

<sup>301</sup> This is Ashvatara speaking.

<sup>302</sup> Respectively, Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva.

<sup>303</sup> Lord, as in Isha.

<sup>304</sup> Vinata's son, Garuda.

<sup>305</sup> Through his austerities and devotion to Vishnu, Dhruva became the Pole Star. The story is told in the Vishnu Purana and the Bhagavata Purana.

<sup>306</sup> Derived from the word *valaya*, meaning globe or circle. The one who covers the globe.

- <sup>307</sup> Thanks to the horse (*ashva*), Ritadhvaja acquired this name.
- <sup>308</sup> The demon.
- <sup>309</sup> Kama is the god of love and Rati is his wife.
- <sup>310</sup> The word used is *shyama*, which means dark. But the word also means a maiden who has not yet had a child.
- <sup>311</sup> Ananga is the god of love and creeper means his wife, Rati. Ananga and Madana are Kama's names.
- <sup>312</sup> The woman who was fanning her.
- <sup>313</sup> *Surabhi* has several meanings. In this context, Surabhi is best interpreted as an invisible voice from the sky. However, later, she is referred to as the mother of the cows. Surabhi is the divine cow and the mother of cattle.
- <sup>314</sup> A kinnara or *kimpurusha* belongs to semi-divine species, companions of Kubera. Pannaga is a naga.
- <sup>315</sup> Kundala.
- <sup>316</sup> The sage Kapila reduced King Sagara's sons to ashes. They were King Bhagiratha's ancestors. To bring them salvation, Bhagiratha brought Ganga down from heaven.

<sup>317</sup> Kuvalayashva.

<sup>318</sup> Meaning, he was still young when he died.

<sup>319</sup> He proved that he was indeed Shatrujit's son.

<sup>320</sup> Garuda.

<sup>321</sup> This seems to be Kuvalayashva reporting the incidents to his father, though it could be the other way round too.

<sup>322</sup> As in, Isha-s.

<sup>323</sup> Sumati, the son.

<sup>324</sup> The place of origin of the river Sarasvati.

<sup>325</sup> Morning, noon and evening.

<sup>326</sup> The creator of the universe.

<sup>327</sup> *Askhara* means without decay, imperishable. But since it also has nuances of the imperishable syllable, we have not translated the word here.

<sup>328</sup> The word used is *paramanu*.

<sup>329</sup> *Matras*, the three *matras* ‘O’, ‘U’ and ‘M’ constitute Oum.

<sup>330</sup> The three worlds are earth, heaven and the region in between; the three gods are Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva; the three Vedas are Rig, Sama and Yajur; the three fires are garhapatya, *ahavaniya* and *dakshinagni*; the three stellar bodies probably means the sun, the moon and the stars; the three categories are dharma, artha and kama; the three gunas are sattva, rajas and tamas; the three sounds are the pitches of *udatta* (raised), *anudatta* (not raised) and *svarita* (sounded); the three taints are *bata* (wind), *pitta* (bile) and *kapha* (phlegm); the three ashramas probably leaves out brahmacharya; and the three times are the past, the present and the future. This leaves the bit about the ancestors unclear. Since everything here is identified with the number three and day and night are mentioned, the ancestors might signify *sandhya*, the intervening period between night and day, when oblations are offered to ancestors.

<sup>331</sup> Broadly, there are three kinds of sacrifices (*yajnas*)—where food is offered (*paka-yajna*), where soma is offered (*soma-yajna*) and where oblations are offered (*havir-yajna*). Each of these categories has seven specific types of sacrifices under it. For example, for *paka-yajna*, it is *ashtaka*, *sthalipaka*, *parvana*, *shravani*, *agrahayani*, *chaitri* and *ashviyuji*. For *soma-yajna*, it is *agnishtoma*, *atyagnishtoma*, *ukthya*, *shodashi*, *vajapeya*, *atiratra* and *aptoryama*. For *havir-yajna*, it is *agniyadhana*, *agnihotra*, *darsha purnamasa*, *agrayana*, *chaturmasya*, *niruddha pashu bandha* and *soutramani*.

<sup>332</sup> A *matra* is pronounced. ‘O’, ‘U’ and ‘M’ are *matras*. The *ardhamatra* (half a *matra*) form cannot be expressed through speech.

<sup>333</sup> The five senses of perception and the mind.

<sup>334</sup> The seven *svaras* (notes) are *shadaja*, *rishabha*, *gandhara*, *madhyama*, *panchama*, *dhaivata* and *nishada*; the names of *ragas* given in various texts vary, but the listing invariably has six names, not seven; *gitika* is also a metre, not just a song, since there is no list of seven songs, this might mean the seven metres; *murchhana* is moving up or down the scale, with seven *svaras* to start, there are thus seven *murchhanas*; *tala* is the beat of time in music and the number is not invariably listed as forty-nine; the three *gramas* (octaves) are *udara*, *mudara* and *tara*.

<sup>335</sup> There is a typo in the text, it should be *pada*, not *param*. A verse in a song/poem has four lines and a *pada* is one of these. There is a repetition of *tala*, and three *layas* (speed) are fast, medium and slow.

<sup>336</sup> Shiva burnt down Kama, the god of love. Since he no longer has a body, he is known as *Ananga* (the one without a body).

<sup>337</sup> *Vrishadhva*, Shiva.

<sup>338</sup> *Shitikantha* is the one with the dark throat, *Umapati* is Uma’s consort and *Trilochana* is the one with the three eyes.

<sup>339</sup> A *pinda* is a ball of food offered to ancestors at a funeral ceremony. Usually, three such *pindas* are offered.



<sup>340</sup> The hood in the middle.

<sup>341</sup> Since they are snakes, they have been born twice, first as an egg.

<sup>342</sup> The Goutami river can be taken as either a tributary of the Godavari or the Godavari itself.

<sup>343</sup> That great people exist, the trust in this belief.

<sup>344</sup> Shambara was an asura.

<sup>345</sup> Whose command has to be followed.

<sup>346</sup> Is she made out of the five elements and, therefore, real?

- 347 He died.
- 348 The teeth.
- 349 Not the atman.
- 350 To which the body will be reduced.
- 351 Presumably meaning, discard false notions about these. This shloka is not easy to understand.
- 352 Actually, the text says *kshatra-bandhu*.
- 353 Etymologically, Alarka has no meaning, though it does mean a mad dog.
- 354 Vikranta means someone who steps beyond, and is therefore, powerful and valiant.
- 355 Meaning, one with excellent arms.
- 356 Meaning, one who crushes enemies. Arimardana is the same as Shatrumardana.
- 357 Pravritti is action with a desire for the fruits, whereas *nivritti* is action without a desire for the fruits, or lack of action entirely.
- 358 A preta is a ghost, the spirit of a dead person, or simply something evil. A bhuta has the same meaning. Strictly speaking, there are differences between preta, bhuta and pishacha (one who lives on flesh). A preta is the spirit (not necessarily evil) of a dead person before the funeral rites have been performed. A bhuta (not necessarily evil again) is the spirit of a dead person who has had a violent death and for whom, proper funeral rites have not been performed, and may not even be performed. A pishacha (necessarily evil) is created deliberately through evil powers. Guhyakas are semi-divine species, companions of Kubera.
- 359 Interpreted as brahmanas.
- 360 Murari is Krishna/Vishnu.
- 361 Kama (desire), *krodha* (anger), *lobha* (avarice), *moha* (delusion), *mada* (arrogance) and *matsarya* (jealousy).

<sup>362</sup> Became five years old.

<sup>363</sup> Explaining the number eight is difficult. Day and night were divided into eight *yamas* (a *yama* meant three hours). Perhaps this simply means that destruction is possible at any time during the day.

<sup>364</sup> The six modes are peace, war, alliances, dividing one's forces, marching and camping. These are decided according to whether one's own side, and that of the enemy, is increasing or decreasing.

<sup>365</sup> King Pandu knew he would perish if he engaged in sexual intercourse. Nevertheless, he indulged in it with Madri and died.

<sup>366</sup> Anuhlada was Hiranyakashipu's son and Anuhlada had two sons named Baskala and Mahisha. There is no obvious story indicating that Anuhlada killed either Baskala or Mahisha.

<sup>367</sup> Aila means Pururava. Pururava hankered after some gold utensils used by sages. When he tried to forcibly take these away, the sages killed him.

<sup>368</sup> Vena was an insolent and oppressive king and the brahmanas killed him.

<sup>369</sup> This son is interpreted as Bali. That can't be right. If the word killed is taken literally, Bali wasn't killed. Nor was he proud. There is nothing to suggest that Bali's mother was Anayusha. Anayusha was Daksha's daughter, married to Kashyapa. In some accounts, she gave birth to nagas. Perhaps some naga was intended.

<sup>370</sup> This is a reference to the allegorical story in the Bhagavata Purana, where King Puranjaya was destroyed because of excessive addiction to pleasure.

<sup>371</sup> Perseverance from the crow, accumulation from the cuckoo, collection of taxes from the bee, patience from the crane, concentrated virulence from the snake, extension (of the kingdom) from the peacock, discrimination from the swan, arising at the right time from the cock and hardness from iron.

<sup>372</sup> Strike when the enemy is not aware.

<sup>373</sup> Accumulate like the ant.

<sup>374</sup> They will only manifest themselves at the right time.

<sup>375</sup> Like a courtesan, he must please many. He must be as delightful as a lotus and as brave as a sharabha. A woman with heavy breasts has delivered and nourishes her child. He must nourish like that. The word *shulika* causes problems. While the word can mean female hare, it is not obvious what can be learnt from a female hare. But the word *shulika* also means spiked. Perhaps the sense is that the enemy must be killed, as with a spike or spear.

<sup>376</sup> The traditional four means are *sama* (conciliation or negotiation), *dana* (bribery), *danda* (punishment) and *bheda* (dissension).

<sup>377</sup> He obtains a share in the good merits earned by citizens.

<sup>378</sup> That is, sannyasa.

<sup>379</sup> The wife must not be from the same *gotra*.

<sup>380</sup> The five sacrifices of a householder are to render offerings to gods, ancestors, rishis, humans and non-human creatures.

<sup>381</sup> Each manvantara has a different Indra and there are fourteen manvantaras in a kalpa. Hence, this means that he resides there for a kalpa.

<sup>382</sup> Ishta is religious rites, purta is civic works, suktas are hymns, shanti means peace, pushti is nourishment.

<sup>383</sup> Hantakara is the exclamation 'hanta'. Depending on the context, it can signify joy, surprise, compassion or grief.

<sup>384</sup> Hells that respectively mean darkness and blinding darkness.

<sup>385</sup> Dhatri and Vidhatri are both words used for the creator. Dhatri has the nuance of a creator who arranges, while Vidhatri has the nuance of a creator who determines destiny.

<sup>386</sup> The sun god.

<sup>387</sup> Bhutas.

<sup>388</sup> This is an unexpected guest, *atithi*. *Tithi* is a lunar day and there are guests who are invited and arrive on specific tithis, because these are festive occasions. These are expected and invited guests, visitors. *Atithi* means *a-tithi* and is therefore not any guest, but a guest who arrives uninvited and is unexpected. Though it is sometimes used in the sense of an instant, a *muhurta* is a measure of time equal to forty-eight minutes.

<sup>389</sup> Sacrifice (yajna) offered to men (*nri*).

<sup>390</sup> Respectively, regular, occasional and periodical.

<sup>391</sup> For example, the *samskaras*. There are thirteen *samskaras* or sacraments. The list varies a bit. But one list is *vivaha* (marriage), *garbhalambhana* (conception), *pumshavana* (engendering a male child), *simantonnayana* (parting the hair, performed in the fourth month of pregnancy), *jatakarma* (birth rites), *namakarana* (naming), *chudakarma* (tonsure), *annaprashana* (first solid food), *keshanta* (first shaving of the head), *upanayana* (sacred thread), *vidyarambha* (commencement of studies), *samavartana* (graduation) and *antyeshti* (funeral rites). After *samavartana*, one ceases to be a student and becomes (usually) a householder.

<sup>392</sup> Specific lunar tithis.

<sup>393</sup> Before any festive occasion, such as marriage, the ancestors known as *Nandimukha* are first worshipped.

<sup>394</sup> Without rendering offerings in the name of the *Vishvadevas*.

<sup>395</sup> Funeral rite for a deceased person.

<sup>396</sup> The *brahmana* who has been invited.

<sup>397</sup> This is a mantra from the *Yajur Veda*—*ye samanah samanash . . .* etc.

<sup>398</sup> There is a long list of those who are *sapindas*, such as, in the absence of a son, a daughter, a daughter's son, a father, a mother, a brother, a brother's son and so on.

<sup>399</sup> There is another such list.

<sup>400</sup> The grandfathers.

<sup>401</sup> *Darsha* is the night of the new moon. But this also signifies that the moon will now wax.

<sup>402</sup> Lepa means wiping, in this case, the wiping of the hand after pindas have been offered. The right to pinda stops with the third person in the lineage, the fourth is no longer entitled.

<sup>403</sup> Pinda for three generations, lepa for three and anulepa beyond.

<sup>404</sup> Impure as in ucchishta.

<sup>405</sup> Amavasya is the day of the new moon.

<sup>406</sup> The eighth lunar tithi, during *krishna paksha*. Ashtaka shraddhas are typically performed during the months of Margashirsha (also known as Agrahayana), Pousha, Magha and Phalguna. Margashirsha is roughly mid-November to mid-December, while Pousha is mid-December to mid-January. Magha is mid-January to mid-February and Phalguna is mid-February to mid-March.

<sup>407</sup> A sukta from the Sama Veda, typically recited at the time of a shraddha.

<sup>408</sup> ‘Trinachiketa’ is a part of the Yajur Veda.

<sup>409</sup> The first reference to Trinachiketa is to a person who knows the mantras, the second reference could be to one who follows the observances. Alternatively, the second Trinachiketa might mean a person who has kindled the Nachiketa fire thrice.

<sup>410</sup> The three verses in Rig Veda I.90.6–8.

<sup>411</sup> The *Taittiriya Aranyaka*.

<sup>412</sup> With four fires on four sides and the sun overhead.

<sup>413</sup> There is a typo, the text says friend (mitra) instead of enemy (*amitra*).

<sup>414</sup> While this means shudra, it also means outcast.

<sup>415</sup> Two blades of kusha grass used for purifying and sprinkling ghee.

<sup>416</sup> Of the brahmanas.

<sup>417</sup> The part of the hand between the forefinger and the thumb.



<sup>418</sup> Black antelope.

<sup>419</sup> Kind of ox.

<sup>420</sup> We have translated *kalashaka* as this (*Corchorus capsularis*), though it might mean something else.

<sup>421</sup> The son of a daughter who was married when she was eight years old, the latter being known as Gouri.

<sup>422</sup> This probably means an area that is populated by enemies.

<sup>423</sup> A kind of demon.

<sup>424</sup> Kalashaka.

<sup>425</sup> These are desired, but voluntary.

<sup>426</sup> There are twenty-seven nakshatras (asterisms), twenty-eight with Abhijit added. Nakshatras are not necessarily stars, they can be constellations too. The order in the list often varies, perhaps a reflection of precession of the equinoxes. If one begins with Krittika, the standard list is Krittika, Rohini, Mrigashira, Ardra, Punarvasu, Pushya, Ashlesha, Magha, Purva Phalguni, Uttara Phalguni, Hasta, Chitra, Svati, Vishakha, Anuradha, Jyeshtha, Mula, Purva Ashadha, Uttara Ashadha, Abhijit, Shravana, Dhanishtha, Shatabhisha, Purva Bhadrapada, Uttara Bhadrapada, Revati, Ashvini and Bharani. Bhadrapada is also known as Proshthapada. Except for the position of Abhijit, this is the order the text follows. However, Shatabhisha is ostensibly missing and the text has Varuna. That's because all nakshatras have names associated with divinities who preside over them and Shatabhisha's divinity is Varuna.

- <sup>427</sup> Havya is oblations offered to the gods and kavya is oblations offered to the ancestors.
- <sup>428</sup> The word used for this is sadachara.
- <sup>429</sup> Dharma, artha and kama.
- <sup>430</sup> In today's language, one would say a savings rate of 25 per cent and the savings must be invested.
- <sup>431</sup> To obtain ends in this world and in the next one.
- <sup>432</sup> A muhurta is a period of forty-eight minutes. Brahma muhurta is named after Brahma and is an auspicious time just before dawn, regarded as the last muhurta of the night. The precise hour depends on the time when the sun rises.
- <sup>433</sup> Both tirtha and kshetra are terms for sacred grounds. Tirtha is one with water, kshetra one without water.
- <sup>434</sup> Before rinsing the mouth.
- <sup>435</sup> The word used is guru. Hence, this can also be translated as preceptor.
- <sup>436</sup> The upper part of the body must be covered.
- <sup>437</sup> The word used is *pradakshina*, which is much more specific than a mere act of circling. This circling or circumambulation has to be done in a specific way, so that the right side (*dakshina*) always faces what is being circled.
- <sup>438</sup> The word chaitya has several meanings—sacrificial shed, temple, altar, sanctuary and a tree that grows along the road.
- <sup>439</sup> Made out of wheat flour, sugar, ghee and milk.
- <sup>440</sup> The text uses the respective expressions Agastya's direction and Purandara's direction.
- <sup>441</sup> Without the intention of offering it at a sacrifice.
- <sup>442</sup> After passing stool.
- <sup>443</sup> The parva days, like amavasya.
- <sup>444</sup> A mixture of honey and water, customarily offered to a guest.
- <sup>445</sup> Anumati is the personified form of the fifteenth lunar tithi.
- <sup>446</sup> We have translated *manika* as waterpot. The word also means jewel.
- <sup>447</sup> Shiva.
- <sup>448</sup> These tirthas are parts of the hand, sacred to specific divinities.

- 449 By sprinkling water over it.
- 450 With cow dung.
- 451 The fig tree.
- 452 A drona is a measure of capacity, given differently in different texts. The idea seems to be that to be used in any ritual, the paddy must amount to at least a drona.
- 453 Referring to the sun or the moon.
- 454 The cloth placed over the back or knees during yoga.
- 455 *Kurantaka*.
- 456 A woman who has just delivered.
- 457 *Pada* means a quarter and *krichchha* means hardship. So this is a hardship vow observed for four days. One has one meal on the first day, fasts on the second day, eats as much as one wants on the third day and fasts again on the fourth day.
- 458 Act of giving up one's life by fasting to death.
- 459 As is obvious, the duration depends on the varna.
- 460 A monthly rite continued for one year.
- 461 This probably means agnihotra every day and darsha and purnamasa at the end of every fortnight.

<sup>462</sup> Meaning Alarka.

<sup>463</sup> In Alarka.

<sup>464</sup> Alarka's kingdom and Subahu's father's kingdom.

<sup>465</sup> To Subahu.

<sup>466</sup> Of being a kshatriya.

<sup>467</sup> *Adhidaivika* (destiny), *adhibhoutika* (nature) and *adhyatmika* (one's own nature). These lead to three different kinds of misery.

<sup>468</sup> The tanmatras are the subtle five elements, beyond the body and the mind.

<sup>469</sup> *Buddhi* has been translated as intelligence. Ahamkara can be translated as ego.

<sup>470</sup> The son is born from the father's body and physically, the father is no different from the son. Therefore, there is an implicit suggestion that Alarka's elder brother and Alarka represent the same body.

<sup>471</sup> The tree of ignorance.

<sup>472</sup> These are terms used in Samkhya. Loosely, Pradhana is the primary seed that leads to material creation. Similarly, loosely, Prakriti is nature.

<sup>473</sup> Yoga has eight elements—*yama* (restraint), *niyama* (rituals), *asana* (posture), pranayama (breathing), pratyahara (withdrawal), dharana (retention), dhyana (meditation) and *samadhi* (liberation). That's the reason the expression *ashtanga* (eight-formed) yoga is used.

<sup>474</sup> Padmasana is the lotus position, with both the legs locked. Ardhasana means *ardha-padmasana*, with one leg locked. In svastikasana, the foot is placed between the thigh and the calf of the opposite leg.



<sup>475</sup> The five tanmatras, buddhi and ahamkara.

<sup>476</sup> Interpreted as, does not have to be born again.

<sup>477</sup> Yoga leads to eight major siddhis or powers. These are anima (becoming as small as one desires), mahima (as large as one desires), laghima (as light as one wants), *garima* (as heavy as one wants), prapti (obtaining what one wants), prakamya (travelling where one wants), vashitvam (powers to control creatures) and ishitvam (obtaining divine powers). In the list given here, *garima* has been replaced with kamavasayitvam. The explanations given in the text of these powers differs marginally from the standard ones given in the note.

<sup>478</sup> The state of emancipation, when everything is extinguished.

<sup>479</sup> Both of these are done so that living creatures are not killed.

<sup>480</sup> All three sources on the same day.

<sup>481</sup> The word used in the text is *yayavara*.

<sup>482</sup> *Saktu*, colloquially known as *sattu*.

<sup>483</sup> A mendicant carries a rod with three staffs tied together. Thus, he is a tridandi and the word is being used as a metaphor for controlling thoughts, words and deeds.

<sup>484</sup> As light as that of an ant.

<sup>485</sup> *Chit*.

<sup>486</sup> *Pluta*, drawn out in pronunciation.

<sup>487</sup> Probably meaning thought, words and deeds.

- <sup>488</sup> *Devamarga*, the meaning is not obvious.
- <sup>489</sup> The star Alcor, the faint double star that is the companion of Mizar (Vashishtha) in the constellation Ursa Major.
- <sup>490</sup> A Buddhist or Jaina mendicant.
- <sup>491</sup> Antaka is the one who brings about the end, Death or Destroyer. Usually, Antaka is a synonym for Yama. But here, the two names are listed separately.
- <sup>492</sup> Moonstone, it is believed to melt under the influence of the moon's beams.
- <sup>493</sup> Sunstone, it is believed to burst into flames under the influence of the sun's rays.
- <sup>494</sup> *Kapinjala*. In this context, perhaps the word should be taken as a pigeon.
- <sup>495</sup> Bodies die.
- <sup>496</sup> Small efforts matter.
- <sup>497</sup> Everything is destroyed.
- <sup>498</sup> Success comes gradually.
- <sup>499</sup> The importance of concentration and being steady.

- 500 The obvious interpretation is that Kroushtuki had just completed the period of brahmacharya.
- 501 Direct perception (*pratyaksha*), inference (*anumana*), comparison (*upamana*), testimony (*shabda*) and derivation (*arthapatti*). Sometimes, a sixth is also added.
- 502 The five senses and the mind.
- 503 Vaikarika ahamkara is the same as *sattvika ahamkara* and *taijasa ahamkara* is the same as *rajasika ahamkara*.
- 504 The five elements, Purusha and Mahat.
- 505 Prakriti.
- 506 Regions of the world, continents.
- 507 The five gross elements and the five subtle elements.
- 508 Prakriti.
- 509 Corresponding to the seven principles mentioned earlier.
- 510 The original Prakriti.
- 511 After universal destruction.
- 512 Purusha.
- 513 Meaning the field. This is a reference to Prakriti.
- 514 The one who knows kshetra. This is a reference to Purusha.

<sup>515</sup> A roundabout way of saying one parardha. One parardha is fifty years of Brahma's life. So two parardhas is 100 years of Brahma's life. Thus, this is more than 300 trillion human years. Usually, Brahma's lifespan is given as two parardhas. There may well be some typo in the text.

<sup>516</sup> Measured as years of the gods, *krita yuga* is four thousand years, *treta yuga* is three thousand years, *dvapara yuga* is two thousand years and *kali yuga* is one thousand years. This cycle is known as a mahayuga, but a mahayuga is more than ten thousand years. Each yuga has a *sandhi* at the beginning and an *amsha* at the end of the yuga. This is 400 years for *krita yuga*, 300 years for *treta yuga*, 200 years for *dvapara yuga* and 100 years for *kali yuga*. Hence, two thousand years are added to get twelve thousand years as the duration of a mahayuga. Four thousand mahayugas are Brahma's day and four thousand mahayugas are Brahma's night.

<sup>517</sup> A nimesha is the twinkling of an eye. The relative superiority of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva varies from Purana to Purana.

<sup>518</sup> All translations interpret this lord as Brahma. That may well be correct. But since nothing indicates that identification with Brahma, we have been careful in our choice of words.

<sup>519</sup> The self-creating one.

<sup>520</sup> The intervening period added to the beginning and end of the yuga.

<sup>521</sup>  $1000/14 = 71.43$ .

<sup>522</sup> 306,720,000 human years = 852,000 divine years. There is a typo in the text and the text gives it as 60,000 divine years. We have corrected it.

<sup>523</sup> The secondary destruction.

<sup>524</sup> There are actually fourteen worlds (*lokas*), seven above and seven below. The seven above are —*bhuloka*, *bhuvarloka*, *svarloka*, *maharloka*, *janarloka*, *taparloka* and *satyaloka* (*brahmaloka*).

<sup>525</sup> Narayana.

<sup>526</sup> The *matsya* and *kurma avataras*. The present kalpa is known as Varaha kalpa because of the *varaha* (boar) *avatara*.

<sup>527</sup> The word *naga* has been translated as vegetation. The word *mukhya* means primary.

<sup>528</sup> Anugraha means favours. This is interpreted as the creation of an inferior class of devas.

<sup>529</sup> Respectively, unnatural vis-à-vis natural.

- <sup>530</sup> Aja means the one without birth, Brahma.
- <sup>531</sup> From the word for protection, *rakshana*.
- <sup>532</sup> From the word for consumption, *yakshana*.
- <sup>533</sup> Reptiles and snakes, from the word for writhing around. But since reptiles are mentioned later, this probably means only snakes.
- <sup>534</sup> From the word for inferior or lean.
- <sup>535</sup> Gandharvas possess excellent voices.
- <sup>536</sup> The eight seems to mean suras, asuras, ancestors, humans, rakshasas, yakshas, sarpas and gandharvas.
- <sup>537</sup> The count seems to be (1) Rakshasas; (2) Yakshas; (3) Snakes; (4) Domestic varieties; and (5) Wild species.
- <sup>538</sup> Gayatri is a metre, trich is an affix (*pratyaya*) placed after the stem of a word, trivrit sama is a hymn from the Rig Veda and rathantara is a hymn from the Sama Veda.
- <sup>539</sup> Stomas are hymns sung in soma sacrifices, brihat sama is a mantra and ukthas are hymns from Sama Veda.
- <sup>540</sup> There is a repetition of stoma.
- <sup>541</sup> That is, humans.
- <sup>542</sup> The end of Brahma's night.



- <sup>543</sup> Tree that yields every object of desire.
- <sup>544</sup> Each unit is several times the previous one. They thus increase in size. It should be noted that these conversions are not consistent across texts.
- <sup>545</sup> Angula means finger.
- <sup>546</sup> A hasta is a cubit. The cubit is not measured with the fingers extended, but with the fingers closed at the root of the thumb.
- <sup>547</sup> That is, samghosha.
- <sup>548</sup> Some rose up, some didn't.
- <sup>549</sup> The fourteen will be listed later.
- <sup>550</sup> Respectively paddy, barley, wheat, millet, sesamum, saffron, camel's foot, *matar dal*, fennel, *urad dal*, *moong dal*, *masur dal*, corn, fine pulse, *arhar dal*, chickpea and hemp.
- <sup>551</sup> The first seven are from the village and the last seven are wild. Shyamaka and markataka are kinds of grain, gavedhuka and kuruvinda are species of grass.

<sup>552</sup> These were sages who were born through mental powers, Sanaka, Sananda, Sanatana and Sanatkumara. However, they were not interested in the act of creation.

<sup>553</sup> Brahma.

<sup>554</sup> Meaning Ruchi.

<sup>555</sup> All these names are personifications of attributes. We are skipping the details of what each word means.

<sup>556</sup> Lakshmi.

<sup>557</sup> Rourava is the same as Naraka.

<sup>558</sup> This seems to apply to Duhkha's sons.

<sup>559</sup> These require interpretation. Pointless cooking is clearly cooking for one's own self. Differences in cooking might well mean cooking that has not been completed. This is the way this statement is interpreted. What does pankti differences mean? Different categories of people sit down to eat in different rows (panktis). Does the text disapprove of these differences (the standard interpretation), or does it disapprove of these differences not being followed? Either interpretation is possible.

<sup>560</sup> Adhidaivika (destiny), adhibhoutika (nature) and adhyatmika (one's own nature).

<sup>561</sup> The cat is regarded as a hypocrite.

<sup>562</sup> Studying, sacrifices and donations.

<sup>563</sup> The converse of Lakshmi: penury, adversity.

<sup>564</sup> Where the house is overgrown with corn (nishpava).

<sup>565</sup> Actually anything with hair. So this might mean some other animal too.

<sup>566</sup> At the time of funeral rites.

<sup>567</sup> This line causes problems. Padma and mahapadma are respectively, lotus and large lotus. But these are also names for treasures and large treasures. Either meaning is possible. The text uses the word airavata. While we have translated this as white elephant, 'excellent elephant' is also possible. Finally, there is the matter of cows that eat sweet cakes, that is, cows are looked after well. Another possible translation of the text is, 'where the women eat fragrant and sweet cakes'.

<sup>568</sup> Therefore, you can go to them.

- 569 Duhsaha and Nirmarshti.
- 570 Dantakrishti is based on *danta* (teeth) and *akrishti* (attraction, drawing out).
- 571 In this, we have expanded on the translation, so as to make the meaning clear.
- 572 Hence, he is known as Ukti (speech/statement).
- 573 Meaning the one who causes turning around or exchange.
- 574 The one who attacks the limbs (anga).
- 575 Shakuna/Shakuni has multiple meanings. Hear, it means omens, indicated by the action of animals and birds.
- 576 Gandaprantarati, *ganda* means cheek.
- 577 Literally, the destroyer of a foetus.
- 578 Such as on amulets.
- 579 Literally, Sasyaha means the destroyer of crops (*sasya*).
- 580 This is about protecting the field—one wears old footwear in the field, keeps the field to the right when walking, makes a chandala enter the field and offers sacrifices outside the field.
- 581 The one who urges and impels.
- 582 One who causes conflict.
- 583 Literally, the one who herself steals.
- 584 One who causes bewilderment.
- 585 This probably means the ‘Prithvi (Bhumi) Sukta’ from the Atharva Veda.
- 586 Literally, the stealer of the menses.
- 587 Those chanting mantras.
- 588 Literally, the one who steals memory (smriti).
- 589 Bijahara, the one who steals seed.
- 590 The same as Vidveshini.
- 591 As we will see later, the number doesn’t quite add up. The number given is more.
- 592 Meaning prattling, foolish and malicious speech.
- 593 Meaning strife.
- 594 Different classes of demons.
- 595 The word used is *yatra* and the sense is probably more that of festival, rather than journey. There are different listings of such fourteen festivals and/or journeys.
- 596 After bathing, they have not bothered to wipe the water off.
- 597 The word means robber of breasts.
- 598 Vyanjanaharika means the one who steals *vyanjana*. Vyanjana means the marks of womanhood and, specifically, means the signs of puberty, or the female genital organ.
- 599 Alternatively, both man and woman suffer from diseases of the genital organs.

<sup>600</sup> One blue and red in complexion.

<sup>601</sup> From the root *rud*, meaning to weep or cry.

<sup>602</sup> Plus, there was the name of Rudra.

<sup>603</sup> Here, the text has a couple of shlokas that are interpolated and clearly do not belong. We have not translated these. The purport is that the learned do not stay in a place where Shambhu is shown disrespect. All brahmanas who hate Maheshvara are wicked in their intelligence and are not entitled to the Vedas. When kali yuga commences, they will be poor and will serve shudras.

<sup>604</sup> *Barhi* is sacrificial grass like kusha. Barhishad means someone who seats himself on barhi grass. The ancestors known as Barhishads maintained the sacrificial fire. The ancestors known as Agnishvattas did not maintain the sacrificial fire.

<sup>605</sup> Yogini is the feminine of yogi.

<sup>606</sup> Savarni, Daksha-Savarni, Brahma-Savarni, Dharma-Savarni and Rudra-Savarni.

<sup>607</sup> Priyavrata was Svayambhuva Manu's son.

<sup>608</sup> It is not clear that this sentence at all belongs. A variation is repeated soon.

<sup>609</sup> Agnidhra had nine sons, Prajapati means Priyavrata.

<sup>610</sup> Varshas are subregions of dvipas.

<sup>611</sup> Lokaloka can be interpreted in various ways, places where there is light versus places where there is darkness, populated places versus uninhabited regions, and so on.

<sup>612</sup> Nishadha to the south of Meru and Nila to the north of Meru.

<sup>613</sup> With Nishadha, Meru and Nila accounted for, the others are Himalayas, Hemakuta, Shveta and Shringi. Of these Hemakuta and Himalayas are to the south of Meru and Shveta and Shringi are to the north of Meru. Hemakuta is 90,000 yojanas long and the Himalayas 80,000 yojanas long. Shveta is 90,000 yojanas long and Shringi 80,000 yojanas long.

<sup>614</sup> White in the east, yellow in the south, black in the west and red in the north.

<sup>615</sup> For the four main directions, brahmanas in the east, kshatriyas in the south, vaishyas in the west and shudras in the north. Nothing is specified about the four sub-directions, north-east, south-east, south-west and north-west.

<sup>616</sup> Kadamba is *Stephegyne parvifolia*, jambu is the rose apple tree and both ashvattha and vata are holy fig trees.

<sup>617</sup> This is possibly a typo and the two Nishadhas cause confusion. This should probably be Rishabha.

<sup>618</sup> That is, Ilavrita.

<sup>619</sup> Himalayas.

<sup>620</sup> Probably the same as the Shitarta mentioned earlier.

<sup>621</sup> Probably meaning Shitarta.

<sup>622</sup> Probably the same as Shikharadri.

<sup>623</sup> We have taken Mahanadi to be a proper noun. It might also mean a great river.

<sup>624</sup> This has been given as the name of a river. However, Suraksha has been given as the name of a mountain. Therefore, this should probably read Suraksha.

<sup>625</sup> The same as Trikuta.

<sup>626</sup> A kulachala is a great mountain, but any great mountain is not a kulachala.



- <sup>627</sup> Possibly implying rebirth.
- <sup>628</sup> Ionians, Greeks.
- <sup>629</sup> This might be River Kabul.
- <sup>630</sup> We have translated Dhutapapa as a separate river. Dhutapapa means something that cleanses sins and this might be an adjective for Gomati, not a distinct river.
- <sup>631</sup> Probably Ramaganga.
- <sup>632</sup> If this is a typo for Vankshu/Vakshu, this would be the Amu Darya or Oxus.
- <sup>633</sup> Probably meaning Kali Sindh, not Indus.
- <sup>634</sup> This can't be the Venna, which is in the south. It might be the Banas.
- <sup>635</sup> Speculatively identified with Gandak or Rapti.
- <sup>636</sup> Identified as the river Parbati.
- <sup>637</sup> Chambal.
- <sup>638</sup> Betwa.
- <sup>639</sup> That is, Mahanadi.
- <sup>640</sup> The River Tons.
- <sup>641</sup> This might be the river Parsuni.
- <sup>642</sup> This is different from the Kshipra mentioned earlier.
- <sup>643</sup> Identified with Purna, or part of Tapti.
- <sup>644</sup> Speculatively identified as a tributary of Wardha.
- <sup>645</sup> Tapti.
- <sup>646</sup> Probably the one in Odisha.
- <sup>647</sup> Probably Brahmani in Odisha.
- <sup>648</sup> The river Bhima.
- <sup>649</sup> Distinct from the earlier Tridiva.
- <sup>650</sup> The River Nagavali/Langulya.
- <sup>651</sup> The river Vamsadhara.
- <sup>652</sup> Distinct from the earlier Rishikulya.
- <sup>653</sup> Not to be confused with shudra varna.
- <sup>654</sup> Geographically, this does not fit and should probably read Kulingas.
- <sup>655</sup> Pahlavas is repeated.
- <sup>656</sup> Dakshinapatha means the southern route, but is a term also applied to the southern region.
- <sup>657</sup> Meaning those who live in the west.
- <sup>658</sup> The first Karaskara is Kaaraskara, while the second is Karaskara.

- <sup>659</sup> Meaning Mrigashira.
- <sup>660</sup> Meaning Ardra.
- <sup>661</sup> Meaning Magha.
- <sup>662</sup> There are obvious geographical inconsistencies.
- <sup>663</sup> Not be confused with shudra varna.
- <sup>664</sup> Meaning Anuradha.
- <sup>665</sup> Meaning Jyeshtha.
- <sup>666</sup> Varuna is Shatabhisha and the two Proshthapadas are Purva Bhadrapada and Uttara Bhadrapada.
- <sup>667</sup> Ashvini.
- <sup>668</sup> Bharani.
- <sup>669</sup> Here, ‘popular sayings’ seems to mean the general understanding of portents.
- <sup>670</sup> Agni.
- <sup>671</sup> Of the tortoise—Mesha (Aries), Vrisha (Taurus), Mithuna (Gemini). Vrisha and Mithuna are in the mouth. The constellations overlap, so they are mentioned in more than one place.
- <sup>672</sup> Cancer and Leo.
- <sup>673</sup> Leo, Virgo and Libra.
- <sup>674</sup> Libra and Scorpio.
- <sup>675</sup> Scorpio and Sagittarius.
- <sup>676</sup> Dhanvi (Sagittarius), Makara (Capricorn) and Kumbha (Aquarius).
- <sup>677</sup> Aquarius and Pisces.
- <sup>678</sup> Pisces and Aries.

<sup>679</sup> Kali.

<sup>680</sup> The mountains.

<sup>681</sup> The qualities are normally stated as six—learning, austerities, wealth, physical beauty, youth and lineage.

<sup>682</sup> Shyama is mentioned twice.

<sup>683</sup> That is, Bhadrashva-varsha.

<sup>684</sup> Respectively gallinules and lapwings.

<sup>685</sup> The seat of kusha grass in personified form, in the feminine.

<sup>686</sup> There is repetition.

<sup>687</sup> That is, the brahmana.

- <sup>688</sup> Literally, the one with his own light.
- <sup>689</sup> Digits.
- <sup>690</sup> Marudhanva was her mother.
- <sup>691</sup> Instead of a proper noun, this can also be translated as the best among the Siddhas.
- <sup>692</sup> Alternatively, the weapon can be given the name of *hridayastra*, the heart (*hridaya*) of weapons (*astra*).
- <sup>693</sup> In other words, the weapon wasn't physical. It was released through his gaze.
- <sup>694</sup> The present Atharva Veda has twenty books and is believed to have had nine branches.
- <sup>695</sup> Ayurveda covers eight topics—general medicine, pediatrics, extraction of foreign objects, ENT (ear, nose, throat) ailments, pacification of spirits, toxicology, rejuvenation and aphrodisiacs.
- <sup>696</sup> Meaning Indivara, although Indivara means lotus and Indivaraksha means lotus-eyed.
- <sup>697</sup> Presumably a vimana.

<sup>698</sup> Treasures.

<sup>699</sup> The nidhis will obey because of this knowledge.

<sup>700</sup> A goose or a teal.

<sup>701</sup> Of the musk.



<sup>702</sup> Meaning the radiant one.

<sup>703</sup> The father was Svarochisha and the son was Svaarochisha.

<sup>704</sup> The father.

705 Svaarochisha, the son.

<sup>706</sup> Ruby.

<sup>707</sup> By extrapolation, he trades in these.

<sup>708</sup> *Kacchapa* means tortoise.

<sup>709</sup> Extrapolated, he trades in these.

<sup>710</sup> His descendants.

<sup>711</sup> The moon is married to all the nakshatras, Rohini being one. But the moon loves Rohini the most.

<sup>712</sup> Feminine of brahmana.

<sup>713</sup> As a son.

<sup>714</sup> The king obtains one-sixth of the share in the good merits of the subjects.

<sup>715</sup> The same as Utpalavataka.

<sup>716</sup> The text uses the word *shriphala*.

<sup>717</sup> As was customary, a wife did not directly take the husband's name.

<sup>718</sup> The past, the present and the future.

<sup>719</sup> Nanda.

<sup>720</sup> Your wife.

<sup>721</sup> Bhouma.

<sup>722</sup> The brahmana's name was thus Garga.

<sup>723</sup> Outtama means Uttama's son. The word *uttama* means best, excellent.

<sup>724</sup> Bhaguri is one of Kroushtuki's names.

<sup>725</sup> Swadhamas are those who reside in their own (*sva*) abodes (*dhama*).

<sup>726</sup> The word *shiva* means auspicious.

<sup>727</sup> One who has performed one hundred (*shata*) sacrifices (*kratu*).

<sup>728</sup> As mentioned earlier, 71.43.



<sup>729</sup> Presumably another king.

<sup>730</sup> Four fires in four directions and the sun above.

<sup>731</sup> Kind of deer.

<sup>732</sup> Because of the austerities.

<sup>733</sup> In other words, Sutapa is the same as Siddhavirya. Alternatively, Siddhavirya can be taken as an adjective, someone whose energy is successful.

<sup>734</sup> As in the darkness of ignorance.

<sup>735</sup> The sons.

<sup>736</sup> The hell is known as pum. One who saves (*trayate*) from pum is *putra* (son).

<sup>737</sup> From the sky.

<sup>738</sup> Revati nakshatra.

<sup>739</sup> An inferior brahmana.

<sup>740</sup> He was born from Parameshthi's (Brahma's) eye (*chakshu*). Hence the name.

<sup>741</sup> This demoness is known as Jataharini.

<sup>742</sup> Bhadra's son.

<sup>743</sup> Vikranta's child.

<sup>744</sup> To state the obvious, this implies an infant mortality rate of 333/1000.

<sup>745</sup> The same as Bhadra.

<sup>746</sup> Martanda, Ravi, Bhanu, Arka, Surya and Vivasvat are names of the sun god.

<sup>747</sup> Vilola means agitated and is a name for River Yamuna.

<sup>748</sup> Vishvakarma's.

<sup>749</sup> *Chhaya* means shadow. This was a shadowy image.

<sup>750</sup> Vishvakarma.

<sup>751</sup> Surya.

<sup>752</sup> The sons were Vaivasvata Manu and Yama and the daughter was Yamuna.

<sup>753</sup> Surya.

- 754 The one who creates light.
- 755 Out of a total of sixteen parts.
- 756 He was in the form of a horse.
- 757 That is, over the dead.
- 758 Nasatya and Dasra.
- 759 Savarnika means similar in complexion.
- 760 Shanaishchara means the slow-moving one. This is Saturn.
- 761 The ancestor of the Pandavas and the Kouravas.

<sup>762</sup> The text says Vasus. But Maruts may be intended.

<sup>763</sup> What this sentence means is not clear.

<sup>764</sup> The same as Savarnika.

<sup>765</sup> That is, Vaivasvata Manu.

<sup>766</sup> The thirteen chapters, from Chapter 78 to Chapter 90, constitute the *Devi Mahatmya* section of Markandeya Purana. *Devi Mahatmya* means the greatness of Devi, the goddess. These chapters amount to 590 shlokas. Some additional introductory shlokas are sometimes added to bring it to a total of 700 and this text is then known as *Chandi* or *Durga Saptashati* (seven hundred).

<sup>767</sup> That is, those kings allied with the Kolas.

<sup>768</sup> He was defeated and lost the other regions.

<sup>769</sup> Literally, the great illusion.

<sup>770</sup> The goddess who is in the form of the sleep (*nidra*) of yoga.

<sup>771</sup> Hari is Vishnu and Hara is Shiva.

<sup>772</sup> This is a famous prayer to the goddess, sometimes referred to as *ratri suktam*.

<sup>773</sup> Vishveshvari.

<sup>774</sup> The nasal sound in OUM.

<sup>775</sup> Great knowledge.

<sup>776</sup> Great intellect.

<sup>777</sup> Great memory.

<sup>778</sup> Great delusion.

<sup>779</sup> The illustrious one.

<sup>780</sup> The great goddess.

<sup>781</sup> The great lord.

<sup>782</sup> The night of destruction.

<sup>783</sup> The great night.

<sup>784</sup> The night of delusion.

<sup>785</sup> Some kind of catapult or sling.



- <sup>786</sup> Brahma.
- <sup>787</sup> Shiva and Vishnu respectively.
- <sup>788</sup> The wind god.
- <sup>789</sup> The moon god.
- <sup>790</sup> Shiva's.
- <sup>791</sup> Jayanti means the one who triumphs.
- <sup>792</sup> Agni.
- <sup>793</sup> Indra.
- <sup>794</sup> Varuna.
- <sup>795</sup> Surya.
- <sup>796</sup> Destiny or time.
- <sup>797</sup> Or shaped in the form of a serpent, *nagahara*.
- <sup>798</sup> The text uses both astra and shastra. These are both weapons and the words are often used synonymously. However, an astra is a weapon that is hurled or released, while a shastra is held in the hand.
- <sup>799</sup> Chariots, elephants, horses and infantry.
- <sup>800</sup> Companions/attendants, also used in the sense of hordes or demigods.

<sup>801</sup> This is addressed to Suratha.

<sup>802</sup> Humkara means to utter the sound ‘hum’, a sound believed to possess special powers.

<sup>803</sup> The word *mahisha* means buffalo and Mahishasura had this name because he could assume a buffalo’s form.

<sup>804</sup> Those who strike, being used as a synonym for ganas.

<sup>805</sup> Some asuras were presumably happy at his death.

<sup>806</sup> The negation of Lakshmi/Shri.

<sup>807</sup> That is, Vishnu.

<sup>808</sup> That is, Shiva.

- 809 Indra.
- 810 The great goddess.
- 811 Shiva, the auspicious one.
- 812 The fortunate one.
- 813 The terrible one.
- 814 The eternal one.
- 815 The fair one.
- 816 The one who creates.
- 817 The one who destroys.
- 818 Durga means someone who is difficult to reach.
- 819 The repetition cum refrain is in the text. *Namastasyai namastasyai namastasyai namo namah*.
- 820 We have translated jati as existence here, though it can also be translated as category, class and many other ways.
- 821 Surya.
- 822 Shiva was manifested from the cells in Parvati's body.
- 823 The word *kosha* means sheath. Ambika is the same as Shiva.
- 824 The dark one.
- 825 Brahma.
- 826 Kubera.
- 827 *Utkrantida* means something that grants an exit. The text uses the word *shakti*, which means javelin. The word *shakti* also means power. Alternatively, this can be translated as Death's (Mrityu's) powers of granting an exit having been taken away.
- 828 That is, Varuna.

<sup>829</sup> A khatvanga is a staff with a skull on top.

- <sup>830</sup> Literally, those with upraised weapons.
- <sup>831</sup> Literally, those who are variegated.
- <sup>832</sup> Literally, those who are unlimited in valour.
- <sup>833</sup> Literally, those who are like smoke.
- <sup>834</sup> Kartikeya/Kumara.
- <sup>835</sup> This is Vishnu in Varaha (boar) form.
- <sup>836</sup> One with Shiva as a messenger (*duta*).
- <sup>837</sup> Literally, mothers.
- <sup>838</sup> Hence the name is derived from *rakta* (blood) and *bija* (seed).

<sup>839</sup> The word used is *mahatmya*.

<sup>840</sup> Kshurapras (*kshuras*) are arrows with sharp edges.

<sup>841</sup> Of the daitya elephants.

<sup>842</sup> Inauspicious for the daitya soldiers.

<sup>843</sup> The text uses the word *ulka* (fire, torch, meteor). So Ambika could have used a mass of fire to repulse it, or a weapon that was like a great mass of fire.

<sup>844</sup> Probably because they hadn't thought the daitya was capable of fighting in this way.



- 845 This is a famous prayer to the goddess, recited often.
- 846 Interpreted as enjoyment in heaven.
- 847 Modesty.
- 848 Knowledge.
- 849 Faith.
- 850 Nourishment.
- 851 The permanent one.
- 852 The great night.
- 853 Medha.
- 854 One who grants boons of victory.
- 855 Meaning, the twenty-eighth dvapara yuga.
- 856 The one with the red (rakta) teeth (danta).
- 857 The one with one hundred eyes.
- 858 The one who bears vegetables/herbs.
- 859 The terrible one.
- 860 Bee, in the feminine.

<sup>861</sup> Adhyatmika, adhidaivika and adhibhoutika.

<sup>862</sup> The cosmic egg.

<sup>863</sup> The repetition occurs because there is a reference to the universal destruction, as well as to the periodical and cyclical destruction.

<sup>864</sup> This is separately addressed to the vaishya.

<sup>865</sup> This ends the *Devi Mahatmya* section.

<sup>866</sup> The one with one thousand eyes. Sahasraksha can be both an adjective and a proper noun.

<sup>867</sup> This seems to mean one hundred within each of the three categories just mentioned.

<sup>868</sup> Though not explicitly stated, these will be the three categories of gods. This is a description of the eleventh manvantara.

<sup>869</sup> Sukalinas are thus being identified as ancestors of shudras.

<sup>870</sup> Ashtaka is the eighth lunar day, but during krishna paksha.

<sup>871</sup> These are different categories of ancestors. For example, Ajyapas accept oblations of ghee and are regarded as ancestors of vaishyas. Somapas accept soma and are regarded as ancestors of brahmanas. Agnishvattas neglected the sacrificial fire on earth.

<sup>872</sup> Bhutida is mentioned twice.

<sup>873</sup> Hymn in praise.

<sup>874</sup> Planets are mentioned twice.

<sup>875</sup> *Hemanta*. The cold season is hemanta, between autumn and winter. Winter proper is shishira. Hemanta is the months of Margashirsha (also known as Agrahayana) and Pousha. Margashirsha is roughly mid-November to mid-December, while Pousha is mid-December to mid-January. Shishira is the months of Magha (mid-January to mid-February) and Phalguna (mid-February to mid-March). Vasanta or spring is Chaitra (mid-March to mid-April) and Vaishakha (mid-April to mid-May). Grishma or summer is Jyeshtha (mid-May to mid-June) and Ashada (mid-June to mid-July). Varsha or monsoon is Shravana (mid-July to mid-August) and Bhadrapada (mid-August to mid-September), while sharad or autumn is Ashvina (mid-September to mid-October) and Kartika (mid-October to mid-November).

- 876 Heat and cold and so on.
- 877 Agni. Several names for Agni are used in the hymn. It is obvious that they are Agni's names.
- 878 Anila is the wind and Anala is the fire.
- 879 Garhapatya, ahavaniya and dakshinagni.
- 880 Pavaka means the one who purifies.
- 881 *Hiranya* means gold and the word used for Agni is Hiranyagarbha, the origin of gold.
- 882 All these are different measures of time.
- 883 Agni's seven tongues/flames have been named—Kali (dark), Karali (terrible), Manojava (swift as thought), Sulohita (extremely red), Sudhumravarna (extremely smoky in complexion), Sphulingini (with sparks) and Vishvasrija (creator of the universe).
- 884 Hutashana.
- 885 Bearer of oblations.
- 886 Shiva.
- 887 Chandra.

888 That he should have a son and that he should be friendly towards all beings.



<sup>889</sup> The text doesn't make it clear whether this and the subsequent sentences are a reference to Brahma or Surya (Martanda). Either is possible. However, Surya has also been described as Brahma's own form.

<sup>890</sup> The great sound is OUM.

<sup>891</sup> This is thus a reference to bhuloka, bhuvarloka, svarloka, maharloka, janarloka, taparloka and satyaloka (brahmaloka).

<sup>892</sup> That facing the east.

<sup>893</sup> Hibiscus, *Rosa sinensis*.

<sup>894</sup> Metres.

<sup>895</sup> Abhichara.

<sup>896</sup> *Adi* means first.

<sup>897</sup> The egg.

<sup>898</sup> OUM and the nasal tone.

<sup>899</sup> The five elements.

- 900 This mention of Kaashyapa, distinct from Kashyapa, is unusual.
- 901 This could mean the gods, but probably refers to all the offspring.
- 902 Surya.
- 903 The maker of the day, the sun.
- 904 Both are Surya's forms.
- 905 The three.
- 906 The one who heats, Surya.
- 907 One without birth.
- 908 Yama.

<sup>909</sup> Portions can be understood as rays. The sun has one thousand rays.

<sup>910</sup> Refrain from any more austerities.

<sup>911</sup> A kind of fasting that follows the progress (ayana) of the moon (Chandra). On the full moon night, one only eats fifteen mouthfuls of food. For the fifteen lunar days following the full moon, this is decreased by one mouthful per day. For the fifteen lunar days following the new moon, this is increased by one mouthful per day.

<sup>912</sup> Bhaskara.

<sup>913</sup> Derived from *maritam* (killed) *andam* (egg).

<sup>914</sup> He performed the role of Surya.

- <sup>915</sup> This story has already been told once, in Chapter 74.
- <sup>916</sup> Hence known as Shraddhadeva.
- <sup>917</sup> The same as Yamuna.
- <sup>918</sup> The word chhaya means shadow.
- <sup>919</sup> Vaivasvata Manu.
- <sup>920</sup> Rituals and rites.
- <sup>921</sup> Narada is also the name of a gandharva.
- <sup>922</sup> Musical instrument like a pipe.
- <sup>923</sup> Shiva.

<sup>924</sup> Representing Dharma.

<sup>925</sup> The sun rises from behind Mount Udaya.

<sup>926</sup> Surya.

<sup>927</sup> That is, Yama.

<sup>928</sup> Meaning Skanda.

<sup>929</sup> By his father.

<sup>930</sup> Yama as a title, meant for someone who is the impartial judge of good deeds and bad ones. The lord of the dead and of ancestors.

<sup>931</sup> Though not explicitly stated, these are probably addressed to Revanta.

<sup>932</sup> There is inconsistency in the text and a confusion between Yamuna and Tapati. Yamuna, the river, has already been mentioned. Therefore, Tapati should have been mentioned now.



<sup>933</sup> The word used in the text is *dakshinatya*.

<sup>934</sup> Rajyavardhana's.

<sup>935</sup> The words used are *dina*, *lagna* and *hora*. Dina is day, lagna is the moment when the sun enters a specific rashi (zodiacal sign). Hora does mean hour loosely. More precisely, it is an auspicious moment determined through astrology.

<sup>936</sup> A *siddha kshetra* is a region (kshetra) where people have obtained success (siddhi) and become Siddhas. Guru-Vishala is such a propitious region.

<sup>937</sup> Since Kamarupa is to the east, abode can be interpreted in multiple ways.

<sup>938</sup> This is a rare instance of Svarbhanu being used as a term for Surya.

<sup>939</sup> The two words are ritam and satyam. Satyam is truth, while ritam can be interpreted in different ways, divine truth or divine law being one.

<sup>940</sup> Creator of radiance.

<sup>941</sup> There are many words for trees. Vanaspati is a large tree that grows in the forest. Specifically, it is a tree with fruit, but no visible flowers.

<sup>942</sup> The two forms are those of Surya and Chandra.

<sup>943</sup> Nabhaaga, the earlier one being Nabhaga.

<sup>944</sup> Sudyumna chanced upon Shiva and Parvati while they were alone. Hence, Sudyumna was transformed into a woman. The Sudyumna to Ila transformation is one that occurs in many texts. The earlier Ila to Sudyumna transformation is rarer. The subsequent Ila to Sudyumna transformation is also mentioned in many texts.

<sup>945</sup> The father was Karusha, the sons were Kaarushas.

<sup>946</sup> Desire and confusion.

<sup>947</sup> Manmatha is another name for Madana.

<sup>948</sup> The vaishya.

<sup>949</sup> That is, you can get married.

<sup>950</sup> The first wife must be a king's daughter. After marrying a kshatriya lady first, the next wife can be a vaishya.

<sup>951</sup> Nabhaga.

<sup>952</sup> There are eight forms of marriage and one of these is the rakshasa form of marriage. In this, the maiden is captured by force and married. This is a form that is normally frowned upon.

<sup>953</sup> Parivrat can also be taken as an adjective, someone who wanders around. The sage was travelling through the sky.

<sup>954</sup> There is a pun that Bhalandana is using. The word *go* means both cattle and the earth. As a vaishya, his mother has asked him to protect the former, but he wants to protect the latter.

<sup>955</sup> Nipa.

<sup>956</sup> The name is also stated in the text as Bhalanda.

<sup>957</sup> Another name for Vaishakha.

<sup>958</sup> Sudeva.

<sup>959</sup> Pramati's.

<sup>960</sup> *Kripa* means compassion. The two names Sudeva and Suratha may cause confusion. Kripavati was Suratha's daughter. In her next life, she was born as Sudeva's daughter, Suprabha.

<sup>961</sup> One deduces that Kripavati's friends had called Agastya's brother a vaishya.

<sup>962</sup> Milk, ghee, curd, urine, dung—*pancha gavya*.

<sup>963</sup> *Jrimbha* means yawn. Kujrimbha is someone who makes the earth yawn badly.

<sup>964</sup> Hence the mace is both strong and weak.

<sup>965</sup> Tvashta.

<sup>966</sup> There were two reasons for this name—the qualities of the mace Sounanda and because he was filled with joy (*sananda*).

<sup>967</sup> Meaning that it is for the parents to decide.

<sup>968</sup> If dvija is taken to mean brahmana, the other three would be inferior varnas. If dvija is taken to mean the first three varnas, the inferior varna will mean shudra.

<sup>969</sup> Vasundhara is a name for the earth, derived as that which possesses wealth (*vasu*).

<sup>970</sup> Respectively, ten thousand, ten million, ten billion.

<sup>971</sup> Prajati.

<sup>972</sup> The text probably has a typo. It says Munaya.

<sup>973</sup> The word used is *muni* (sage) and probably refers to priest (*purohita*), implying that the offices of priests and ministers were hereditary.

<sup>974</sup> Though the English sounds strange, we have translated this exactly. Khanitra is the true king. His brothers have small territories and as those territories get subdivided, their descendants progressively have smaller and smaller dominions.

<sup>975</sup> Such as a grandson's son.

<sup>976</sup> Ministers are not meant to only say agreeable things.

<sup>977</sup> Kritya. While the plural 'four' is used, the she-demon is referred to in the singular. She had four forms, or four faces.





<sup>979</sup> This probably means that those who earned a living from cattle didn't have to pay taxes. Alternatively, it might also mean that brahmanas who kept cattle didn't have to pay taxes.

<sup>980</sup> As taxes from other activities and from others.

<sup>981</sup> Three times a year.

<sup>982</sup> Vira's.

- <sup>983</sup> Literally, a world without a sun.
- <sup>984</sup> The word used is *pashu*, signifying sacrificial animal.
- <sup>985</sup> That is, Surya used to be a pashu earlier.
- <sup>986</sup> This is addressed to the first deer.
- <sup>987</sup> They lead to superior worlds in the world hereafter.
- <sup>988</sup> To the ancestors.

<sup>989</sup> From blowing through (*dhamana*) the hand (*kara*).

<sup>990</sup> Such as astrologers.

<sup>991</sup> *Aveksha*, the word used in the text, means to look at. The preceptor of the gods is Jupiter. Shukra is Venus. Soma is the moon, Soma's son is Budha (Mercury), Savitar is the sun, Bhouma is Mars and Shanaishchara is Saturn.

<sup>992</sup> Saturn.

<sup>993</sup> This is addressed to the astrologers.

<sup>994</sup> The two Ashvins.

<sup>995</sup> That is, Brihaspati.

<sup>996</sup> All of us are kshatriyas.

<sup>997</sup> The kings were speaking to each other.

<sup>998</sup> For instance, norms of dharma required that a single person should fight against only one person at the same time. Violating this, several kings fought against him simultaneously.

<sup>999</sup> The back is mentioned as an illustration of the violation of dharma.

<sup>1000</sup> That is, Vaishalini.

<sup>1001</sup> In this and the sentences that immediately follow, we have taken a few liberties with the text. Otherwise, the text is not very clear.

<sup>1002</sup> To Vaishalini.

<sup>1003</sup> She is addressing her father now.

<sup>1004</sup> Literally, whatever is wanted. Whatever (*kim*) is wanted (ichchhaka) is given to a suppliant.

<sup>1005</sup> The word used is Rajaraja, one of Kubera's names.

<sup>1006</sup> Since Avikshit had other wives, this sounds like a contradiction. What is meant is that Avikshit had given up all association with those other wives too.

<sup>1007</sup> From not having delivered what was promised.

1008 In a battle.

1009 The danava.

1010 Avikshit.

1011 Vetasapatra means the leaf (patra) of *vetasa* (reed/cane). This weapon was a javelin, sharp and pointed like the leaf of a cane.



<sup>1012</sup> As in a human woman.

<sup>1013</sup> The Maruts.

<sup>1014</sup> The god of the wind.

<sup>1015</sup> Avikshit.

<sup>1016</sup> Karandhama's.

- <sup>1017</sup> Samvarta did this, through the power of his austerities.
- <sup>1018</sup> Belonging to Marutta.
- <sup>1019</sup> The offerings were given so that they did not create such a nuisance.
- <sup>1020</sup> After that, they have duties as kings.
- <sup>1021</sup> Kings must constantly think about such things.
- <sup>1022</sup> The king obtains one-sixth the share of merits or demerits earned by subjects.

<sup>1023</sup> Samvartaka is the fire of universal destruction.

<sup>1024</sup> Marutta.

<sup>1025</sup> Ourva was born in the Bhargava lineage. Bhargava means Ourva.

<sup>1026</sup> Presumably indicative of Avikshit getting angry.

<sup>1027</sup> He should have let go of the bow before this act. In other words, Marutta was intractable.

<sup>1028</sup> Avikshit.

<sup>1029</sup> Kama (desire), krodha (anger), lobha (avarice), moha (delusion), mada (arrogance) and matsarya (jealousy).

1030 An officiating priest was required for donating from within the altar.

- 1031 Indrasena.
- 1032 The word *dama* means self-control.
- 1033 The past, the present and the future.
- 1034 We have corrected the typo in the text. The text says, king of the suras.
- 1035 Was the svayamvara an act of dharma or adharma, not the seizure?
- 1036 The gandharva form.
- 1037 Therefore, since she is already married, the rakshasa form cannot apply.
- 1038 Dakshinatya.
- 1039 Dama.
- 1040 Dama.

<sup>1041</sup> This is clearly the same Vapushman, but the Sankrandana must be different from the one mentioned earlier.

<sup>1042</sup> The yavana's.



1043 Yama.

1044 Vapushman's.

1045 The solar dynasty.

<sup>1046</sup> Not as inferior species.

<sup>1047</sup> The Vedas are mentioned twice.

## Acknowledgements

The corpus of the Puranas is huge—in scope, coverage and size. The Mahabharata is believed to contain 1,00,000 shlokas. The Critical Edition of the Mahabharata, edited and published by the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute (Pune), doesn't contain quite that many shlokas. But no matter, this gives us some idea of the size. To comprehend what 1,00,000 shlokas mean in a standard word count, the 10-volume unabridged translation I did of the Mahabharata amounts to a staggering 2.5 million words. After composing the Mahabharata, Krishna Dvaipayana Vedavyasa composed the eighteen *mahapuranas*, or major Puranas. So the belief goes. Collectively, these eighteen Puranas amount to 4,00,000 shlokas, translating into a disconcerting and daunting number of 10 million words. After translating the Bhagavadgita, the Mahabharata, the Harivamsha and the Valmiki Ramayana, it was but natural to turn one's attention to the Puranas. (All these translations have been, and will be, published by Penguin India.) As the most popular and most read Purana, the Bhagavata Purana chose itself as the first to be translated. That the translation was well-received was encouragement along the intimidating journey of translating the remaining Puranas and I am indebted to the reviewers of these various translations, including that of the Bhagavata Purana.

Without realizing it at the time, I had grown up with the Markandeya Purana. When I was a child, interpreted as less than ten years of age, I spent a fair bit of time with my maternal grandparents, waiting for my parents to pick me up on their way home after work. In their house, my grandparents had a puja room. They performed their own individual pujas, not together. Especially with my grandmother, her cat and I sat and watched her perform the puja. My grandmother fondly believed the cat was a great devotee.

However, every day, there was a little bit of prasad, a banana and some milk. The cat got the milk, I got the banana. As both of us waited, we heard her recite from ‘Chandi’, a part of the Markandeya Purana. Each of my maternal grandparents possessed their own individual copies of ‘Chandi’. These books were illustrated and I was fascinated by images of the goddess destroying demons. In particular, the picture of Raktabija’s severed head has stuck with me. Growing up, like many Bengalis, for me the advent of Durga Puja was announced through the voice of Birendra Krishna Bhadra, chanting from the Markandeya Purana. The Durga iconography owes a lot to the 15–16th century scholar, Raghunandan Bhattacharya. But the liturgy and mantras are from the Markandeya Purana, read in the eastern parts of the country as ‘Chandi’ and in the northern parts as ‘Durga Saptashati’. Even while I was translating the Bhagavata Purana, it was almost as if an unseen hand was guiding me towards the choice of the next Purana to be translated. Through chance, rather than by design, my wife and I got opportunities to visit a succession of temples dedicated to the goddess, from the west to the east and from the north to the south. The Markandeya Purana isn’t only about the goddess though. There is a lot more. For example, I hope this or other translations motivate readers to read Madalasa’s song in the original Sanskrit.

The journey of translation hasn’t been an intimidating one only for me. Penguin India must also have thought about it several times, before deciding to go ahead, especially with the Purana translations. Most people have some idea about the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. But the Puranas are typically rendered in such dumbed down versions that the market has to be created. However, Penguin India also believed in the Purana Project, which still stretches into some interminable horizon in the future, almost two decades down the line. For both author and publisher, this is a long-term commitment. Bhagavata Purana and Markandeya Purana have been published, Brahma Purana comes next. I am indebted to Penguin India. In particular, Meru Gokhale and Ambar Sahil Chatterjee have been exceptionally patient, persevering and encouraging. But for them, the Purana Project might not have taken off. Paloma Dutta has been the editor

since the days of the Mahabharata translation. That makes life a whole lot easier. She knows my style and I know hers, just as I have come to know the Vedavyasa style. There is a Paloma hand in the product, even though it won't be detected and isn't meant to be. These Purana volumes have been brought alive by the wonderful cover designs and illustrations and I thank the illustrators and the designers.

Ever since this translation journey started in 2006, my wife, Suparna Banerjee Debroy, has been a constant source of support, ensuring the conducive and propitious environment for the work to continue unimpeded. As the Markandeya Purana says, in obtaining success in the pursuit of dharma, artha and kama, the wife and the husband are each other's aides. When they are devoted to each other, they become a true wife and a true husband. धर्मार्थकामसंसिद्धै भार्या भर्तुः सहायिनी । या च भार्या च भर्ता च परस्परमनुव्रतौ (19.70). Sometimes, the wife desires the husband. Sometimes, the husband desires the wife. In a couple, it is extremely rare to find both deeply devoted to each other. अभीष्टा कस्यचित्कान्ता कान्तः कस्याश्चिदीप्सितः । परस्परानुरागाढयं दाम्पत्यमतिदुर्लभम् । (69.10).

All of us owe our origins to the goddess. In the immediate, my wife owes her origin to her mother, who coincidentally, is named Uma. For the love and affection she has showered on me, this translation is dedicated to my mother-in-law, Uma Banerjee.