

Damayantī and Vedavatī to be staying helpless in the temple of Śrīkaṇtheśvara.

At this time the hermit Gālava reached the temple of Śrīkaṇtheśvara. He saw Damayantī and Vedavatī and felt pity on them. Next day Gālava started for Saptagodāvara to take a bath in Kārttika. Damayantī and Vedavatī followed the hermit. They reached Saptagodāvara and dipped in Puškara bath. Under water they saw several Virgin fishes gathered round a whale begging him for love. The whale was saying harsh words to them rejecting their request. The fish virgins again told the whale. "Don't you see the hermit Gālava going about with two beautiful damsels. If this righteous hermit does not fear slander, why should you, who live under water fear it?" The whale replied. "Gālava doesn't fear people because he is daring and blind with love." Hearing these words of the fishes, Gālava became ashamed of himself. So without coming up he stayed under water. The two girls finished bath and got on the bank, and waited for Gālava. Viśvakarmā's daughter Citrāṅgadā, who had reached the place earlier, met the two girls. They told each other their stories. "As Ṛtadhvaja had prophesied, Damayantī the daughter of Añjana and Vedavatī the daughter of Parjanya have arrived." Thought Citrāṅgadā. "If Devavatī the daughter of the asura Kandāramālī, also is come, I could unite with my husband Suratha." Citrāṅgadā became glad. At this time Devavatī, the daughter of Kandāramālī, ran to the spot, being chased by the Viśvakarmā monkey.

The reader might remember that Damayantī had written a poem on the wall of the temple at Śrīkaṇtheśvara when she had gone there at the instruction of Jābālī who had been tied on to a branch of a tree. At noon on that day Ṛtadhvaja had gone to the temple at Śrīkaṇtheśvara and happened to see the poem. Then only did he understand that his son Jābālī had been tied to a tree by a monkey. By then five hundred years had elapsed. Ṛtadhvaja was aware of the fact that the only person capable of liberating Jābālī, was Śakuni the son of Ikṣvāku. Ṛtadhvaja reached Ayodhyā instantly and told Ikṣvāku. "Oh, mighty King! hear me, please! A monkey has made my virtuous and learned son Jābālī, a captive and bound him on a tree, within the boundary of your kingdom. Nobody in the world except your son Śakuni will be capable of rescuing him." Śakuni accompanied Ṛtadhvaja to the forest. They saw the tall huge banyan tree with bulky roots hanging on all sides and on the top of the tree, on a lofty place, the son of Ṛtadhvaja entangled and entwined by creepers. Seeing the network of creepers around the body of the hermit's son, Śakuni began to send arrows one after another and cut off all the creeper's knots. Ṛtadhvaja climbed up the tree. Seeing his father, Jābālī bowed his head to his father. Ṛtadhvaja was not capable of extricating his son. The prince put down his bow and arrow and tried to untie the knots of the creepers that held his body to the branch. Though a sturdy man he could not do it. At last they cut the branch close to his body and got Jābālī down. A piece of the branch was stuck to his back. Thus with his son Jābālī bearing a piece of lumber on his back and Śakuni bearing bow and arrows, Ṛtadhvaja came to Kālindī.

Ṛtadhvaja, Śakuni and Jābālī wandered about for years in search of Damayantī and the others. After nearly a

hundred years, with despair Jābālī bearing the lumber on his back, went with his father to Kosala. The king of that country was Indradyumna, the son of Manu. He welcomed the hermit with hospitality. Ṛtadhvaja talked about Damayantī. Indradyumna claimed that he had once saved a young woman by his arrows from the branch of a tree. They all started in search of the girls. They reached Badaryāśrama, where they saw a young hermit. From the conversation it was revealed that the young hermit was Suratha. When he learned everything he stopped penance and accompanied them. Under the leadership of Ṛtadhvaja, they reached Saptagodāvara and saw Citrāṅgadā.

In the meanwhile Ghṛtācī, sad and miserable, was wandering over the mountain of the rising sun, searching for her lost daughter Citrāṅgadā. She met the cursed monkey form of Viśvakarmā and asked it, "Oh! monkey! have you seen a girl?" The monkey told her every thing that took place. Ghṛtācī also reached Saptagodāvara. The monkey followed close behind her. As soon as Jābālī saw the monkey he got angry and jumped forward to wreak vengeance. Ṛtadhvaja checked his son and told him the history of Viśvakarmā. The monkey separated the piece of the branch from the back of Jābālī, who had been bearing it on his back for the last thousand years. Ṛtadhvaja was immensely pleased at this and asked the monkey what boon he wanted. The monkey said. "Brahman, if you wish to give me a boon, please recall your curse. Great hermit! I am Viśvakarmā the father of Citrāṅgadā. I became a monkey because of your curse. Let all the sins I have incurred because of the mischief of a monkey, be remitted." Hearing this Ṛtadhvaja said. "Your curse will end when you get a strong and sturdy son by Ghṛtācī."

Hearing this Ghṛtācī rose up in the sky. The monkey also jumped up and followed her. The monkey was attracted by the beauty of Ghṛtācī. Later, on the mountain named Kolāhala, the monkey enticed Ghṛtācī and wooed her. She consented and they lived thus for a long time. Then they went to the Vindhya mountain. On the bank of the Godāvarī, a sturdy son was born to them. This son was the strong sturdy huge monkey Nala, who helped Śrī Rāma.

On the birth of a son Viśvakarmā regained his former form. He returned to Saptagodāvara with Ghṛtācī. Gālava also came there. With the hermit Gālava at the head, the priests made burnt offerings and began the performance of the marriage ceremony. The Gandharvas sang and the celestial maids danced. The first marriage was between Devavatī the daughter of Kandāramālī and Jābālī. Then Indradyumna married Vedavatī. Next, Śakuni married Damayantī, the daughter of Añjana, and lastly Suratha married Citrāṅgadā. (Vāmana Purāṇa, Chapters 63 and 64).

### 3) Other details.

(i) Viśvakarmā shines in the assembly of Indra, in the form of a hermit. (M.B. Sabhā Parva, Chapter 7, Stanza 14).

(ii) The palace of Yama was built by Viśvakarmā. (M.B. Sabhā Parva, Chapter 8, Stanza 34).

(iii) Viśvakarmā lived in water and built the palace of Varuṇa. (M.B. Sabhā Parva, Chapter 9, Stanza 2).

(iv) Viśvakarmā stays in the palace of Brahmā and serves him. (M.B. Sabhā Parva, Chapter 11, Stanza 31).