

giving him the requisite amount. The King accepted everything the hermit said without any objection. Viśvāmitra compelled him for payment. The King requested for time. Viśvāmitra allowed time till sunset that day.

As soon as Viśvāmitra had gone Hariścandra walked on with bent head, calling out. "Does anybody want me? Will anybody buy me for price?" Instantly Yamadharma came there as an outcaste and bought Hariścandra. The name of the outcaste was Pravira. He bought Hariścandra to guard the funeral ground and to collect tax on dead bodies. Viśvāmitra quickly ran to the place. The outcaste gave Viśvāmitra ten yojanas of land which yielded jewels, in the region of Prayāga and severed his connection. Viśvāmitra went on his way. The outcaste King took Hariścandra to the funeral ground. Day and night Hariścandra had to guard the entrance of the funeral ground.

At this juncture Hariścandra's son died of snake bite, while he was playing with other children on the bank of the Ganges. His mother Candramatī fainted and fell down, the moment she heard about it. As soon as she recovered, she lamented over the death of her son for a long time. Then she requested her master for permission to go and see the dead body of her son. But she was not given permission. She repeatedly pleaded crying all the while. Then the Brahmin, her master, got angry and said. "You slave! If your son is dead, let him be dead. Is it any loss to you? It is my money that is lost. You go and do your work. If not I will operate this whip well on you. Remember that. You know the biting pain of this whip. Stop wailing and lamenting."

Candramatī persisted in her request to allow her to go and see the dead body of her son. Not only did he refuse to allow her to see the dead body of her son, but also beat her. With tears she turned to her duties. It was night. The Brahmin took his meals and lay down to sleep. Candramatī was sitting at his feet massaging his legs. When it was nearly midnight that stone-hearted old Brahmin said. "Now you may go. Complete the funeral and return before dawn. Your usual work in the morning should not be left undone. If so, you know the consequences."

Hearing these words, Candramatī ran to the place where the dead body of her son lay. The son lay on the grass dead and stiff, with the face and body turned blue due to poison. She saw that face in the flash of a lightning. She cried aloud. Hearing the cry people of the neighbouring houses ran to the spot. Candramatī did not give any reply to their questions. Some thought her to be a ghost. Some wanted to kill her. Some caught her by the hair. Some struck at her. At last they tied her with a rope and dragged her to the funeral place. They asked Hariścandra who was standing there, to cut her into pieces. He refused to kill a woman. The outcaste King came there and giving Hariścandra a big sword asked him again and again to cut her into pieces. Candramatī and Hariścandra did not recognize each other. At last, finding it difficult to disobey his master, Hariścandra raised the sword to cut her.

Then Candramatī shouted. "You outcaste. My son is lying dead on the bank of the Ganges near this town. Let me bring his body and cremate it. Allow me this much time. After that I will come and sit here to be

cut into pieces by you." Hariścandra agreed to it. Crying all the way Candramatī went to the bank of the Ganges and brought the dead body of her son to the cremation place. Seeing her pitiable condition Hariścandra went close to the dead body and removing the shroud looked at the corpse. Because of poison the body of the child was blue and ugly and as Hariścandra and Candramatī had undergone so thorough a change they did not recognize each other. But from her lamentation and talk, he understood that the woman was his wife Candramatī. He also cried aloud. Candramatī recognized her husband. Still Hariścandra said that if the child was cremated without collecting the usual fee, it would be deceiving his master. At last both of them decided to commit suicide before the night ended.

Without loss of time Hariścandra gathered half-burned fire-wood, and built a pile big enough to burn the child's body and for them to jump into it. He laid the child on it and set fire to it. Hari candra and Candramatī stood with closed eyes ready to jump into the burning fire. Then Brahmā appeared there and prevented them from jumping into the fire. Indra and the Devas showered Amṛta (Ambrosia). The child came to life and got out of the fire. The King and the queen regained their shining bodies and royal garments and ornaments. The outcaste who was the master of Hariścandra was really, Dharmadeva. All the Devas blessed Hariścandra and Viśvāmitra returned the kingdom to the truthful Hariścandra. Their subjects were overjoyed at the return of their King and queen. After that Rohita was anointed as the King of Ayodhyā and the Devas went with Hariścandra to heaven. (Devī Bhāgavata, Skandha 7).

6) *Viśvāmitra and the brothers Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa*. See under Rāma, Parās 5, 6, 7 and 8.

7) *Weapon Training*. Viśvāmitra had proficiency in wielding all types of weapons. He taught Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa all that he knew about weapons. See under Astra.

8) *Cursing Rambhā*. Once Viśvāmitra was doing very severe penance. Indra feared him. So wishing to hinder the penance of Viśvāmitra somehow Indra called Rambhā to him and said to her. "Rambhā, you dress well and dance before Viśvāmitra. Somehow his penance must be hindered. I shall take the form of a cuckoo, and help you by singing."

Indra and Rambhā reached the forest of penance. The cuckoo began to sing and there was the atmosphere of spring season. Rambhā danced before Viśvāmitra. The concentration of the hermit was broken. The hermit got angry and cursed Rambhā and changed her into a rock. She entreated for redemption from the curse. The hermit told her that after ten thousand years a Brahmin named Bhūritejas would touch the rock, by which touch she would get her original form. (Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa, Bālakāṇḍa, Sarga 64).

9) *Viśvāmitra and Triśaṅku*. See under Triśaṅku.

10) *Viśvāmitra and Menakā*. See under Śakuntalā and Kadalīgarbhā.

11) *Cursing Vidyutprabhā*. Once Viśvāmitra did penance to obtain the position of Kubera, who employed the celestial maid Vidyutprabhā to obstruct the penance of Viśvāmitra. She came to the forest in which Viśvāmitra was doing penance and tried to entice the hermit by her beauty. But when she saw that her beauty did not attract the hermit, she assumed a fearful form. Seeing