

His disciples translated his talk to the King. The King was awe-stricken and he asked for the granthas. But by that time he had already burnt six lakhs of granthas containing six stories. He gave to the King the remaining one lakh of granthas. After that, bidding farewell to the King, Guṇāḍhya jumped into the fire and abandoned his life on earth and went to the presence of Śiva.

King Sātavāhana accompanied by the disciples of Guṇāḍhya came to his palace carrying the 'Bṛhatkathā' containing the story of Naravāhanadatta. He gave presents to Guṇadeva and Nandideva who explained to him the book in Sanskrit. King Sātavāhana added a preface to the book to explain to the public how the book came to be written in satanic language. The book very soon got world fame. (Pīṭhānūlambaka Kathāsarit sāgara).

**GUNAKEŚĪ.** Daughter of Mātali, charioteer of Indra. She was more beautiful and well-behaved than many other girls. Mātali went about in search of a suitable husband for her in all the three worlds. At last he met Nārada going to the presence of Kubera. He told Nārada about this and Nārada took Mātali to Pātālaloka to search for a suitable bridegroom. Then they found out a serpent boy named Sumukha (good looking) worthy of his name who was the grandson of Āryaka and son of Cikura born of the family of Airāvata. But Sumukha was in danger at that time. Garuḍa had taken a vow that he would eat Sumukha the next month. Āryaka told Nārada about this. Nārada took Sumukha to the court of Indra. Mahāviṣṇu was also present there. When Nārada told the story there Indra blessed Sumukha and granted him long life. This made Garuḍa angry and he went to the court of Indra and rebuked Indra. Mahāviṣṇu who was present there then did not like this act of Garuḍa and he called the latter to his side and asked him whether he could bear the weight of one of his arms. With arrogance Garuḍa said 'yes' and Viṣṇu then placed one of his arms on the shoulder of Garuḍa. But Garuḍa found the weight unbearable and begged pardon of Viṣṇu, bereft of all his arrogance. The marriage of Sumukha with Guṇakeśī was then conducted. (Chapters 97 to 105. Udyoga Parva.)

**GUṆAMUKHYĀ.** A celestial maiden who took part in the birthday celebrations of Arjuna. She gave a dance there then. (Śloka 61, Chapter 122, Ādi Parva).

**GUṆANIDHI.** A Purāṇic character who lived a sinful life and yet attained Svarga. In the country of Kosala there was once a noble brahmin named Girinātha who was rich, erudite and well-versed in the Vedas. Considering his greatness people called him Girināthadikṣita. Guṇanidhi was his son.

When Guṇanidhi grew up he started his education under a preceptor called Sudhiṣṇa. Sudhiṣṇa had a wife named Muktāvalī. After some time Guṇanidhi started having clandestine relations with Muktāvalī. This developed so much that Guṇanidhi gave poison to his guru and killed him. His parents came to know of this and they came and reprimanded him. Evil-natured Guṇanidhi thought that the presence of his parents would be an annoyance to him in future. So Guṇanidhi and Muktāvalī planned together to kill his parents and one day they poisoned them.

After some time Guṇanidhi and his wife lost all they had and gradually Guṇanidhi turned himself into a thief and drunkard. Nobody in the village liked the couple and all the villagers combined together and sent the couple away from the place. Guṇanidhi and Muktāvalī went to the forests and there they started a life of looting the travellers. After some years of a sinful life Guṇanidhi one day died lying beneath a Rudrākṣa tree. Servants of both Yama and Śiva came to claim the soul of Guṇanidhi. The servants of Yama said that the right place of Guṇanidhi the sinner, was in hell but the servants of Śiva said that even if he was a great sinner his place was in heaven because he died lying beneath a Rudrākṣa tree. In the end the Śivadūtas won and took Guṇanidhi to heaven.

This story was once told by Śiva himself to demonstrate the glory of Rudrākṣa. (Skandha 11, Devī Bhāgavata)

**GUṆAŚARMAN.** A character of the Purāṇas well versed in all arts and sciences. He was the son of the brahmin Ādityaśarman of Ujjayinī. The birth of Guṇaśarman bears a story. Once Ādityaśarman went to the forests and by his spiritual powers made Sulocanā, a celestial nymph, to merge with him. A son was born to them and he was named Guṇaśarman. Ādityaśarman became a deva. Even from boyhood he became very erudite. Once Indra came to see Ādityaśarman. Ādityaśarman who was in deep thoughts did not see Indra and so did not rise up when Indra came. Indra felt insulted and cursed him to be born again on Earth. Ādityaśarman prostrated before Indra and asked for pardon. Indra then said that it would be enough if his son was born on Earth in his stead. So Guṇaśarman was born on Earth to bear the curse of his father.

At that time Ujjayinī was being ruled over by a King called Mahāsenā. He had a very beautiful wife named Aśokavati. Guṇaśarman became gradually an intimate friend of the King. Knowing that Guṇaśarman was well versed in all arts the King and queen asked him to give them a performance in dancing. The dance was so excellent that the King engaged Guṇaśarman to teach dancing to Aśokavati.

Once a royal attendant tried to give poisoned food to the King and Guṇaśarman finding it out saved the King. From that day onwards the King loved him more. When once Mahāsenā was imprisoned by his enemies Guṇaśarman by his magic powers released him. In return for this help the King gave Guṇaśarman a thousand villages.

Then to the misfortune of all Aśokavati fell in love with Guṇaśarman. Guṇaśarman bluntly refused her love. Embittered at this Aśokavati started talking ill of Guṇaśarman and the King at last sent Guṇaśarman out from the palace. The servants of the King tried to capture him and put him into prison but Guṇaśarman escaped from the royal servants by his magic powers.

He then went and stayed in the house of a brahmin named Agnidattā and married his daughter, Sundari. Then on the advice of the brahmin Guṇaśarman did penance to propitiate Subrahmanya and got many more powers from him. Guṇaśarman equipped with these additional powers conquered Mahāsenā and his country and became King there. He then sent Mahāsenā and his wife Aśokavati, out from the country. (Sūrya-prabhāmbaka, Taraṅga 6, Kathāsaritsāgara).