

about it to Indra. Indra promised to bring her back and to restore her to Bṛhaspati by whatever means possible. Accordingly he sent a messenger to Candra. Compromise talks with Candra ended in failure. So preparations were started for a dreadful war between Indra and Candra. Śukra, the preceptor of Asuras also joined the side of Indra. Brahmā who came to know of all this, came riding on his swan and reconciled Indra and Candra. As directed by Brahmā, Candra agreed to restore Tārā to her lawful husband, Bṛhaspati, (Devi Bhāgavata, First Skandha).

36) *Indra and Prahlāda*. The great King Prahlāda once conquered Heaven. Indra, who lost his kingdom and glory, accepted Bṛhaspati's advice and went to meet Śukrācārya. Śukra told Indra that Prahlāda was the noblest person and that he had earned that nobility by his good qualities. Indra decided to acquire those good qualities from Prahlāda.

Indra disguised himself as a Brahmin boy and approached Prahlāda with a request for moral and spiritual advice. Prahlāda accepted him as his pupil and gave him moral and spiritual advice. Pleased with the pupil's devotion, Prahlāda agreed to give him whatever boon he wanted. The pupil said that he wanted only the good qualities of the Guru. Prahlāda agreed to it. Then a shadow-like figure appeared to emerge from Prahlāda's body. Prahlāda who was puzzled asked the figure :—"Who are you" "The figure answered :—"I am your virtuous character. Now I am leaving you and entering this boy's body." Saying thus it left Prahlāda's body and entered Indra's body. Following it, all the good qualities of Prahlāda, like charity, truth, glory etc. entered Indra's body one after another. It was only in the end that Prahlāda came to know that the cunning pupil was Indra. Thus from that day, Prahlāda began to decline in his good qualities and Indra began to prosper. (M.B. Śānti Parva, Chapter 124).

37) *Indra and Gautama*. There is a story in the Mahābhārata, of how Indra restored life to a dead Brahmin. Gautama was a Brahmin who had left his own home and settled down to live in the village of Dasyus (an aboriginal tribe). He married from a low caste and followed the customs of Dasyus. At that time another Brahmin happened to come there. He ridiculed Gautama who had lost his caste. Next morning Gautama left his residence and went to another place. Tired after his long journey, he fell asleep under a banyan tree. A King of birds named Nāḍijaṅgha lived on that tree. Nāḍijaṅgha who was the son of Kaśyapa, became very friendly with Gautama. He brought fish from the river Gaṅgā to feed Gautama and fanned him with his wings. Gautama told the bird that he was a poor Brahmin and that he was anxious to get some wealth. There was a wealthy Rākṣasa King named Virūpākṣa in that country, who was a close friend of Nāḍijaṅgha. Nāḍijaṅgha sent Gautama to Virūpākṣa with a request to give Gautama some wealth. Virūpākṣa gave plenty of gold to Gautama. He returned to the foot of the banyan tree carrying the gold on his head. Gautama who was quite tired after his long walk, was hospitably received by Nāḍijaṅgha. That kingly bird lay asleep close by Gautama. An evil desire to eat the flesh of Nāḍijaṅgha dawned upon the mind of Gautama. He killed

that King of birds in his sleep. Virūpākṣa who came to know of this, killed Gautama and gave his flesh as food for Dasyus. Virūpākṣa, with tears in his eyes, made a funeral pyre and cremated Nāḍijaṅgha's body. At that time, as directed by Brahmā, Surabhi caused milk to flow from heaven and revived Nāḍijaṅgha. Virūpākṣa told the whole story to Indra who came there at that time. Indra said that Nāḍijaṅgha died as the result of Brahmā's curse. He had offended Brahmā on a former occasion by refusing to attend Brahmā's assembly, although he was invited. Nāḍijaṅgha who was restored to life, was noble enough to request Indra to bring back Gautama also to life. Accordingly Indra revived Gautama. Nāḍijaṅgha returned the gold to Gautama and sent him away with his good wishes. Indra returned to heaven. (M.B. Śānti Parva, Chapter 173).

38) *Indra and Ahalyā*. Indra, once fell in love with Ahalyā, the wife of Gautama. Sage Gautama who came to know of it, cursed Indra. For further details, see under Ahalyā.

39) *Indra turned into a Fox*. Once a haughty Vaiśya knocked down a young sage named Kaśyapa, with his chariot. The disgraced sage decided to commit suicide. Knowing this Indra went to the sage in the form of a fox and spoke to him, dwelling upon the evil aspects of suicide. At last the young sage gave up the idea of committing suicide and returned to his hermitage. (M.B. Śānti Parva, Chapter 130).

40) *Indra and Subrahmanya*. Long ago the Asuras led by Tārakāśura, persecuted the gods in many ways. Tārakāśura had received a boon from Brahmā that only the son born to Śiva could slay him. So, to distract Parameśvara from his penance, in order to make it possible for him to beget a son, Indra sent Kāmadeva (god of love) to him. But Kāmadeva was burnt up in the fire from the third eye of Śiva. After that Pārvatī won Śiva as her husband as a result of her austere penance. She prayed to Śiva that Kāmadeva should be brought back to life and that a son should be born to her. Śiva replied to her :—

"Kāma was born from Brahmā's mind. As soon as he was born, he asked Brahmā "Kaṁ Darpam ?" which means—whom shall I tempt and conquer ?" So Brahmā called him "Kandarpa". Brahmā had advised him even at that time that he should never tempt me. Disregarding that advice he came to attack me and I burned him up. Now it is not possible for him to be born in a physical form I shall beget of you a son with my spiritual power. I do not need the urge of Kāmadeva for this, as in the case of ordinary mortals".

As they were discussing this problem, Indra and Brahmā arrived there. At their request Śiva agreed to beget a son by Pārvatī. Since it is not desirable that all living beings should perish, Śiva allowed Kāmadeva to be born in the minds of all creatures. Brahmā and Indra returned quite happy. One day, Śiva and Pārvatī began their amorous dalliance. They did not stop it even after a hundred years. The whole world began to shake to its very foundations. Fearing that the world might perish, the devas, as ordered by Brahmā prayed to Agni, to interrupt the amorous play of Śiva and Pārvatī. Agni, who understood that it was not possible to achieve their object, fled and concealed himself under water. The Devas went out in search of Agni. By that time, the creatures in the water who