

Bhūmi and Pātāla. They blessed the wicked and killed the virtuous. It was the time when Śiva was sadly roaming about in search of his lost wife Satī.

All the devas headed by Indra went and complained to Brahmā. Brahmā said:—"After all, this calamity is not without remedy. There is an escape from the boon I have given him. Tārakāsura himself has allowed him to be killed by a seven-day-old babe. If there should be such a babe it should be from the virility of Śiva. Tārakāsura thinks that since Śiva is observing brahmacharya after the death of Satī there is no chance of a babe being born to him. That was why he was prepared to allow that clause in that boon. I shall therefore suggest a plan. Satī herself should be born as the daughter of Himavān and Menā in the name of Kālī. Kālī should do great penance and break the vow of celibacy of Śiva. If Śiva accepts her as his wife and a child is born to them we are saved."

Śiva was all this time spending his time thinking of Satī. Once during this time Śiva bathed in the river Kālindī and then the waters of the river Kālindī became black and the waters remained black ever since that.

Indra and others on their return from Brahmā went to Bṛhaspati to think about further procedure in the matter. Bṛhaspati said:—"No obstacle would ever come to any act of the devas. Himavān was doing penance for a long time to obtain a child and by the grace of Śiva, Satī has already been born as the daughter of Himavān. (Skanda Purāṇa in its Sambhava Kāṇḍa states thus about the birth of Satī as Pārvatī. "Satī before jumping into the fire meditated on Śiva and prayed that she should be born in her next birth as his wife. Śiva granted that request. It was at that time that Himavān along with his wife Menā went to the vicinity of Amṛtasaras and started doing penance to get a child. One day when Himavān and his wife were bathing in the saras they saw a gem of a girl in the waters and they took it. Then they found the child with four hands and all other emblems of goddess on her. They praised her with verses from Vedas and soon the divine emblems faded away and Himavān gave the child to his wife.") Brahmā never wanted Tāraka to know that the child was an incarnation of Devī and so he made the babe black by sending Niśā to do so. Niśā entered the womb of the pregnant Menā while she was sleeping with her mouth open one day. The child was like a sapphire idol. Himavān was surprised to see the child. The child will do severe penance and obtain Śiva as her husband. Śiva and Satī will never be separated in any of their births. Oh Indra now go and try to get Śiva interested in a married life."

Himavān and Menā had three daughters and a son. The devas were watching who among the three—Rāgiṇī, Kuṭilā and Kālī—would become the consort of Śiva. All the three were interested in penance. The devas took Rāgiṇī to Brahmā and showed her to Brahmā and the latter declared that Rāgiṇī was incapable of bearing the virility of Śiva. Rāgiṇī got angry and Brahmā cursed her and made her into Sandhyārāga and she took her place in the sky. Then the devas took Kuṭilā to Brahmā and the latter said that she was also incapable of being a mate of Śiva. Kuṭilā also got angry and Brahmā made her into a river and kept her in Brahmāloka. Menā was greatly distressed at

the loss of her two daughters and so she advised Kālī, her third daughter to go home, discontinuing the penance. She at first said Umā (Mā=do not) and so she got the name of Umā. She was the daughter of a Parvata (Himavān is a parvata (mountain) and so she got the name Pārvatī (mountain-girl) also. Kālī later went home. But after some time the natural inclination in her led her to start a severe penance again.

The young Kālī, who was only a small girl then, accompanied by two of her girl companions went to the shores of a river deep in the forests and started practising austerities. In summer she would sit in the midst of Pañcāgni (five fires) and in the rainy season she would sit in water and do penance. The penance lasted for a thousand years.

Śiva who was roaming about in search of Satī went once to the palace of Himavān. Śiva agreed to stay there for some time at the persistent request of Himavān. During his stay there Śiva understood that one of the daughters of his host was doing penance meditating on Śaṅkara. Curious to know more about her, Śiva one day went to the āśrama of Kālī. Kālī saw Śiva and she stood up bowing before him. Śiva was pleased with her. But before Kālī could have another look at Śiva, he vanished from there.

Kālī was disappointed and continued her penance again. Years went by and one day there came to her āśrama a Vaṭu (a brahmin brahmacāri). Kālī and her companions stood up and worshipped the Vaṭu who looked brilliant with ashes on his body and wearing rudrākṣa and akṣamālā (berry of a tree and rosary made of it) and carrying in his hand a daṇḍa (stick) and a Kamaṇḍalu (water pot). After formal introduction the Vaṭu asked Kālī the purpose of her penance and Kālī told him all about it. Then the Vaṭu asked her in tones of surprise why such a beautiful girl like herself born to be the wife of a king, should go after a crudely dressed aged man like Śiva who goes on the back of a bullock always. Pārvatī resented the statement of the Vaṭu and got angry with him. Then Śiva appeared before her in his real form and married Pārvatī (Kālī alias Umā) in the presence of devas and maharṣis.

3) *Pārvatī changes into Gaurī.* Śiva and Pārvatī spent their honeymoon travelling throughout the world. Years went by like that. One day Śiva in a spirit of sport called Pārvatī 'Kālī, Kālī'. Kālī meant black one and Pārvatī was as black as sapphire. Pārvatī misunderstood Śiva addressing her thus two times and thought, perhaps, Śiva did not like her black body and trembling with grief said "If a wound is made by an arrow it will heal in due course; if the top of a tree is chopped off it will again blossom when the season comes; but the wound in the minds of others by harsh words is never healed. It was not my fault that I was born black and I would never again come near you with this black body. I am going." Saying thus with a firm determination, she rose up into the air and travelling for some time reached a big forest. She created by her reciting the smaraṇamantra four attendants for her named Somaprabhā, Jayā, Vijayā and Jayantī and started doing penance there. She practised severe austerities standing on one foot for a hundred years and then Brahmā appeared before her and sought the reason why Pārvatī, wife of Parameśvara should do such severe penance and then she narrated to him all that had happened. Brahmā after hearing her story told her thus:—