

TĀRAKA II. Śiva Purāṇa mentions about a Tāraka, son of the minister of Bhadrāsena, a King of Kashmir. This Tāraka was the rebirth of a he-fowl. Bhadrāsena had a son named Sudharmā. He was the rebirth of a monkey. There is a story regarding how this fowl and the monkey came to be born in Kashmir as above.

Once in the village of Nanda there was a prostitute named Mahānandā. Though she was a great devotee of Śiva she was living the life of a prostitute for her livelihood. She was having a monkey and a he-fowl as pets. She would adorn the necks of her pets with the rudrākṣa necklace (rosary) made of berry beads favourite of Śiva and when she sang songs in praise of Śiva those pets danced to the tune.

One day a Vaiśya came there. He had a diamond Śiva liṅga with him. Mahānandā felt a great fancy for that and so promised the Vaiśya that if he gave her the diamond liṅga she would remain a faithful wife to him for three days. The Vaiśya agreed and the diamond liṅga was kept in a very secure place. That night when both the Vaiśya and Mahānandā were sleeping tired after a hectic amorous sport, the house got fire and the diamond was burst into pieces. The Vaiśya greatly grieved by the loss of the diamond, jumped into the fire and committed suicide. Mahānandā faithful to the promise that she would remain his wife for three days started to jump into the fire and abandon her life. At once Śiva appeared before her in person and said thus: "Oh, Mahānandā, do not commit suicide. I came to you disguised as a Vaiśya to test your devotion. You can now ask of me any boon."

With tears of joy running down her cheeks she said she wanted to live with Śiva. So Śiva carried her soul to Kailāsa. Not only that, Śiva blessed the fowl and monkey and said they would be born as devotees of Śiva in their next birth and attain mokṣa at the end of their life on earth. Accordingly the monkey and the fowl were born in Kashmir as Sudharmā and Tāraka.

TĀRĀKṢA (TĀRAKĀKṢA). A son of the demon Tārakāsura. This demon was the lord of a golden city called Tripura. Śiva killed him during Tripuradahana (burning of the Tripuras). See under Tripuradahana. (Chapters 33, 34, Kārṇa Parva).

TARALA. A place of habitation of ancient Bhārata. This place was conquered by Kārṇa. (Śloka 20, Chapter 8, Kārṇa Parva).

TARANTUKA. A Yakṣa. This Yakṣa is installed on the boundary of Kurukṣetra. If one spends one night in this holy place one would get the benefit of giving away a thousand cows as gifts. (Chapter 83, Vana Parva).

TĀRKṢYA I. Garuḍa. See under Garuḍa.

TĀRKṢYA II. A sage. He was a member of the court of Indra. He was known as Ariṣṭanemi also. He had no fear of death. He once discussed with Sarasvatīdevī about the soul. (Chapter 184, Vana Parva).

TĀRKṢYA III. A Kṣatriya youth of the country of Tārṣya. He came to the Rājasūya of Yudhiṣṭhira and gave much wealth for the purpose. (Śloka 15, Chapter 53, Sabhā Parva).

TĀRKṢYA IV. A synonym of Śiva. (Śloka 98, Chapter 17, Anuśāsana Parva).

TARUṆAKA. A serpent born of the family of Dhṛtarāṣṭra. This serpent was burnt to death at the Sarpā-

satra of Janamejaya. (Śloka 19, Chapter 57, Ādi Parva).

TĀṬAKĀ. A fierce demoness. It was because of a curse of the sage Agastya that Tāṭakā became a demoness.

There was once a great Yakṣa named Suketu, a son of Surakṣa. He did penance to propitiate Brahmā to get a child and by the blessing of Brahmā Suketu got a daughter named Tāṭakā. Brahmā gave her the strength of a thousand elephants. Tāṭakā was by nature interested in cruel and violent deeds and doing deeds of magic. She made Sunda, son of Jharjha, her husband. She got two sons named Mārīca and Subāhu. They also became mighty ones great in deeds by magic.

Once Sunda attacked the āśrama of Agastya in a mood of intoxicated arrogance. Sunda was burnt to death in the fire of his fury. Tāṭakā coming to know of the death of her husband got angry and attacked the āśrama of Agastya with her sons. Agastya cursed them and made them into demons. Tāṭakā and her sons who immediately turned themselves into fierce-looking demons went first to Pātāla with Sumālī, father of the demon race and then went with Rāvaṇa, King of the demons, to Laṅkā and stayed there. With the help of Rāvaṇa, Tāṭakā conquered the great deep forest near Kārūṣa and stayed there with her sons. None, devas, demons or men, dared to step into that forest. Even the Sun or Clouds avoided passing above that forest.

It was at that time that Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa came to that forest with Viśvāmitra. Tāṭakā attacked Śrī Rāma and Rāma killed her with one arrow. The heavy body of the demoness fell to the ground like a big mountain. Her soul then rose up as a beautiful Gandharva lady and Tāṭakā who was thus released from the curse praised Śrī Rāma and left the place. Chapters 24 to 26 of Bāla Kāṇḍa, Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa and Kāmba Rāmāyaṇa).

TĀṬAKĀYANA. A Brahmavādī son of Viśvāmitra. (Śloka 56, Chapter 4, Anuśāsana Parva).

TĀṬAṆKA. The name of Simhadhvaja, King of Simhala, in his previous birth. (See under Simhadhvaja).

TEJAŚCAṆḌA. A deva who adorns the god Sūrya with a flower garland daily. The idol of Tejaścaṇḍa is also used to be installed in temples. The idol is figured as one with a huge face and holding a sword and a lotus in his hands. (Chapter 51, Agni Purāṇa).

TEJASVATĪ I. A heroine in a story in Kathāsaritsāgara intended to show that all happenings either good or bad are but the workings of fate.

Tejasvatī was the daughter of king Vikramasena of Ujjayinī and was very beautiful. She never liked any male and so never wished to marry. One day while she was sitting upstairs in her palace, she happened to see a young man passing that way and surprisingly was attracted by him. She sent her companion to him and informed him of her liking for him. He did not like the idea first, but the clever persuasions of the maid made him agree to a clandestine meeting with the princess at a temple at night that day. Tejasvatī anxiously waited for the night to come.

About that time a Rajput prince greatly grieved at the loss of his father and subsequent loss of his kingdom started on a tour to see an old friend of his father. That night, by sheer accident, he came and rested in the same temple where the rendezvous of the princess was fixed. When night fell the princess came to the temple