



# Stories about the divine couple

# Stories from the Puranas Retold

Written : Nalini Sahay  
Edited : Deepak Sahay  
Cover  
Design : Nalini Sahay  
Artists : Shijo Jacob  
Folk and Tribal Artists  
Layout : Govind Yasa  
Ashok Yadav

**deepam**  
**India**.com

© Copyright. 1999 - 2000 DeepamIndia.com  
All rights reserved.

Fax : +91-11-6828383  
Email : [info@deepamindia.com](mailto:info@deepamindia.com)



## Contents

Marriage to Sati

Marriage To Parvati

Game of Dice

How Shiva could not live without Parvati?

An Equal Marriage

Ardhanarnari - Complete Wo/Man



## Introduction

Our gods and goddesses have strong and vibrant personalities as described in the hymns of the Vedas and the stories in the Puranas. Most Hindus have heard these stories in childhood and have an easy familiarity with the ways of life and living that the gods display in their various Avatars. There is always a take-away message in the stories - sometimes it is ambiguous and leads to more questions; sometimes the message simply defines good and evil, right and wrong - but always, there is the possibility of relating to ones own personality and ones own situation. No doubt, this is why the stories have endured. I for one carry a sense of comfort that there is a special god/goddess to recall in a certain situation. The stories actually hold our faith, allowing us to accept all the gods as one and the one god as many.



There is also the matter of images. In a way the images of India - the great idols in worship, the wayside shrines, the calendar art images, the great and the small sculpture - are abstraction of the stories and the personal message of the stories.

In this book, written entirely for the web, the stories have been cast in a simplified mould. The intent is to familiarize the new visitor and to aid recall for the old friend.

All the images were commissioned by me with Tribal and Folk Artists. We had only to tell them the story and they drew the pictures. They knew the stories! Language was no barrier. Some readers may be familiar with the styles of Indian Folk and Tribal Art and will instantly recognize the Madhubani, the Warli, the Oriya and Bengal folk art. For others, given below is a chart :

An attempt is made in the stories to show the harmony between the gods and goddess; time coalesces and the gods are present at each others life events, a general value system emerges; the invocation is of god love rather than god fear.

We hope the reader enjoys this presentation of ancient text and is encouraged to delve deeper into our well of faith.



Andhra leather puppet and folk art



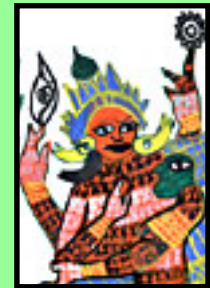
Madhubani style



Bengal folk art



Warli style



Madhya Pradesh  
tribal art



# Marriage to Sati



Shiva led the life of an ascetic, abandoning worldly life and choosing mountains and cremation grounds as his home. He kept the company of his ganas(followers), notorious for their unruly behaviour, with no sense of social obligations.



## ...Marriage to Sati



His disregard for rituals obligatory for both Gods and humans and his absolute indifference to social life alarmed the gods, especially Brahma. Brahma and Vishnu agreed that only a woman could divert Shiva from his ways. So, they asked the Mother Goddess to take birth as the daughter of Daksha, the son of Brahma, and who was the master of all sacrifices and ceremonies.



## ...Marriage to Sati



The Goddess was named Sati. From the very beginning she knew that her destiny was to marry Shiva, although her father did not entirely approve of Shiva's non-conformist ways and his blatant disregard for ritual. He had very little say in the matter however, as his daughter was bent on marrying Shiva. Daksha reluctantly agreed to the marriage, and the wedding was consecrated in the presence of all the gods.





## ...Marriage to Sati



At Shiva's abode Kailash, Sati saw the Moon and his consorts passing by. They told her they were going to participate in Daksha's sacrifice (Yagya).



## ...Marriage to Sati



Sati went to Shiva and told him about it and suggested that they should go for her father's yagya. Shiva told her that since he was not invited he would not go. But Sati insisted that she wanted to go and if Shiva would not she would go alone.



## ...Marriage to Sati



When Sati arrived at her father's palace she saw the grand preparations for the yagya. All the other gods except Shiva were invited and present. When Daksha saw Sati, instead of welcoming her, he insulted her in front of the gods. He told her that neither Shiva nor anyone who worshipped him was welcome to his yagya. All the gods and sages kept a studied silence. Furious at this insult, Sati immolated herself in her own inner fire.

Upon hearing of Sati's tragedy Shiva was overcome with grief and anger. In rage he plucked out a tuft of his hair. Two fierce deities came into being. They were Bhadrakali and Veerabhadra. They entered Daksha's sacrificial area with an army of rabid dogs, ghosts, ghouls, demons, fiends and spirits. They wrecked the hall, kicking sacred vessels, burning the pavilions, tearing tapestries and beheading the gods.



## ...Marriage to Sati



They dragged Daksha to the sacrificial fire, cut off his head and threw it into the flames. Shiva himself came and picked up the charred body of Sati and wandered through the universe. His grief threatened the very existence of the Cosmic Order. To distract Shiva Vishnu used his chakra to cut Sati's body into 51 parts. Shiva then regained his calm, restoring life to Daksha and the dead gods.



# Marriage To Parvati



After the death of his first wife Sati, Shiva immersed himself in his own world of yogic practices and solitary meditation. The gods needed Shiva and wanted his presence. To bring him back into the world, Sati was reborn as Parvati the daughter of Himavat, the King of the Himalayas.



## ...Marriage To Parvati



The goddess Parvati, came into being with the sole intention of uniting with Shiva. For years and years she performed extreme austerities and prayers to impress Shiva. She had help from Gods as well - by Brahma's orders Kamadeva, the God of Love, tried to shoot his arrows of desire at Shiva to make him fall in love with Parvati.



## ...Marriage To Parvati

An irate Shiva, however, turned his third eye at Kamadev and reduced him to a pile of ashes. Parvati's prayers and meditations were so sincere, however, that Shiva soon found it difficult to ignore her. Finally when Parvati's prayers exceeded all limits, Shiva disguised himself as an old saint and visited her. After praising her beauty, he questioned her single-minded devotion. He asked her if Shiva was worth the effort.



## ...Marriage To Parvati



He even described his impossible habits: drunken revelry, intoxication, his ascetic excesses, his fascination for cremation grounds and so forth. He tried to persuade her not to be stubborn and to seek someone young and handsome instead. The indignant Parvati defended all her lover's eccentricities. Convinced by her devotion and faith in him, Shiva revealed his true form and agreed to marry her.





## ...Marriage To Parvati



Parvati insisted on a big wedding, and persuaded Shiva to take the form of a handsome young man and meet her father to ask for her hand in marriage. Impressed by him, Himavat accepted Shiva's proposal.

But on the day of the wedding, Shiva went to Himavat's palace in his normal form. He was dressed in tiger skin, covered with ashes, garlanded with snakes, and seated on his bull, Nandi. He was also accompanied by his notorious ganas.



## Thank You for previewing this eBook

You can read the full version of this eBook in different formats:

- HTML (Free /Available to everyone)
- PDF / TXT (Available to V.I.P. members. Free Standard members can access up to 5 PDF/TXT eBooks per month each month)
- Epub & Mobipocket (Exclusive to V.I.P. members)

To download this full book, simply select the format you desire below

