

## 2. Kirataarjuneeyam

The narrative in this musical is believed to have occurred during the "ARANYA PARVA" or the exile of the pandavas in the forest. During this time sage Vyasa visited the pandavas in order to console them & having initiated a mantra to Yudhisthira, and asked him to pass on the same to Arjuna. Vyasa also suggested Yudhisthira to send Arjuna to Northern Quarter to acquire the Pasupata(astra) from Lord Siva through rigorous penance and also powerful weapons from the Lord of Heaven the Indra.

Sage Vyasa also added that the acquisition of those great astras was a must in order to win the forthcoming war against the wicked Kauravas. Yudhisthira readily accepted the suggestion & prompted Arjuna to achieve the task at hand. Arjuna took a vow and left for the Northern Quarters. On reaching Indrakeeladri he met Indra in the guise of a pious Brahmin. When Arjuna requested Indra to shower his blessings in the form of great weapons, Indra advised him to first obtain Pasupata from Lord Siva. Arjuna set about



performing rigorous penance that lasted for four whole months. Pleased with his penance, Lord Siva appeared along with, Parvathi & Bhootaganas disguising himself as the leader of the Kirata (hunter) group. He provoked Arjuna mischievously to hunt a wild boar (which was also Siva's creation). Arjuna puts up a tough fight but was finally defeated by Lord Siva. Arjuna in all humility prayed for the great weapon. Lord Siva, praising him for his valor, showered his blessings & handed over the weapon cautiously to Arjuna.



The Dikpalas Yama, Varuna, Kubera arrived to congratulate Arjuna & handed over their weapons to him while Indra invited him to Heaven to receive the other magnificent weapons. On reaching Heaven, Arjuna was put to a solid test by the celestial dancer Urvashi so that Indra could assess the control Arjuna had over his senses. When Arjuna succeeded in the test & did not fall for the enchantress, she cursed him to become a Eunuch (shanda). Indra pleased with Arjuna, gifted

him with all the magnificent weapons & also reduced the intensity of Urvashi's curse restricting it only to a year so that it might help Arjuna during his Agnaatavasa. Glowing with the power of weapons & blessings of the celestial beings Arjuna became unparalleled to face the forthcoming war with the Kauravas.

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