

8. Srinivasa Kalyanam

This is the story of how LORD VISHNU descended himself onto the earth, took the name of SRINIVASA and married PADMAVATHI, a reincarnation of his beloved Goddess LAKSHMI.



Scene-1:

Srinivasa or Venkateswara is the principal deity of TIRUMALA-TIRUPATI Temple in the state of Bhrgu and other sages start performing a Yaga-- a Vedic Sacrifice --for the well-being of mankind. NARADA, the divine musician sage and a cunning precipitator of events on earth and in the heavens arrives and asks the sages, "Who, amongst the trinity of the Gods, BRAHMA, the creator VISHNU, the preserver and SIVA, the Destroyer should be appeased by this sacrifice?" While the sages debate on this, NARADA suggests that each of the Gods should individually be tested for their composure and BHRIGU is the right choice for it. BHRIGU accepts the challenge.

Scene-2:

BHRIGU first goes to Satyalokam the abode of BRAHMA, and finds Him and his beloved SARASWATHI, the Goddess of Knowledge in an amorous mood. BRAHMA shows his annoyance at the sage's presence. The sage gets angry and curses BRAHMA not to have any temples or worshipping. BHRIGU then goes to Kailasa. The abode of SIVA and finds Him and His wife PARVATI the Goddess of Strength, deeply involved in a cosmic dance. Feeling insulted, the sage curses SIVA not to have a human form and to be worshipped with ashes and leaves.

Scene-3:

BHRIGU then proceeds to Vaikuntha, the abode of VISHNU, and finds Him and his wife LAKSHMI, the goddess of Wealth, engaged in an amorous adventure. They ignore the sage's presence. The Sage outraged by the continued insults he received from the Gods, kicks VISHNU on the chest. LORD VISHNU, far from being annoyed by the indignity, begs the sage for forgiveness and massages the sage's foot for the pain it suffered, and in the process He removes the EYE OF EGO AND IGNORANCE from it.



BHRIGU suddenly realizes his mistake and praising the LORD, returns to the earth as a chastened person. LAKSHMI, in the meantime, feels that her place in the Lord's body has been insulted. Enraged that her husband instead of punishing the sage for the indecency, was nice to the sage, leaves Viakuntha with bitter emotions. NARADA adds fuel to the fire. VISHNU unable to bear his beloved's separation also lands on the earth in search of LAKSHMI.

Scene-4:

LAKSHMI is doing penance on the earth to purify herself, NARADA accompanied by BRAHMA and SIVA informs her that her husband is now at the foot of Seshachal mountain pining away for her without food and water. While regretting for the separation, she feels that the ordeal had not ended. She requests SIVA and BRAHMA to take the forms of a cow and a calf and tells them of a plan to help VISHNU.

Scene-5:

LAKSHMI appearing in the form of a cowherdess sells the cow and the calf of CHOLARAJA, the king of the land.

Scene-6:

While grazing, the cow strays away from the herd and shed milk into the Lord's mouth to quench his thirst and hunger.

The King, angered by this, orders the cowherd to drive away the cow. The cowherd hurls his axe at the cow. The cow flees away and the axe lands on the Lord's forehead. The cowherd falls dead.

The King repents and asks the Lord to show mercy on him.

The Lord ordains him to be born as AKASARAJA and he would marry his daughter, PADMAVATHI. The cowherd also comes to life. The Lord goes in search of His beloved.

Scene-7:

VAKULA, the Lord's mother in one of His previous incarnations, now awaits His return. The Lord returns to her and she names Him, SRINIVASA. NARADA feels happy at the reunion.



Scene-8:

AKASARAJA's daughter PADMAVATHI, now a beautiful maiden, celebrates the arrival of spring by singing, dancing and playing with her maids in the royal gardens.

While playing hide and seek, she accidentally meets SRINIVASA and falls in love. He too falls in love with her.

Scene-9:

Deeply in love, SRINIVASA neither could sleep nor eat. VAKULA tries in vain to find the reason. NARADA appears and understands the situation. SRINIVASA feels that AKASARAJA would not marry his daughter to a commoner. NARADA suggests SRINIVASA to go to the King in the guise of a fortune-teller and arrange the marriage between Him and the princess.

Scene-10:

AKASARAJA and the queen discuss their daughter's love for SRINIVASA.

The fortune-teller comes and proclaims that PADMAVATHI's marriage with SRINIVASA is pre-ordained and hence it is inevitable.

The queen protests. NARADA then appears and allays her doubts.

VAKULA arrives and requests the king to marry the princess to her son. He accepts.

SUKA, the parrot sage, fixes an auspicious time for the divine marriage.

SRINIVASA, being poor, requests KUBERA, the Protector of the Divine Treasury, for a load, KUBERA accepts.

SRINIVASA arrives with GARUDA, his eagle escort, in the lead. The marriage of PADMAVATHI and SRINIVASA is celebrated with joy and pomp. The Lord ordains that those who witness this story are bestowed with abundant health and wealth.

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