

Stories retold by P.R.Ramachander

Second story of Vetala

There was a Brahmin called Agni swami. . He had a very pretty daughter called Mandarawathi. When she attained marriageable age, three very eligible Brahmin boys sought her hand. Each of them claimed that they are deeply in love with her and would die, if they are not able to marry her. As fate would have it, Mandaravathi, became sick and died. Her body was cremated. One of the Brahmin boys built a hut in the cremation ground and stayed there. Another of the Brahmin boys collected her bones and went on a pilgrimage to dip them in all sacred waters of India, The third became a sage and started travelling all over India.

One day the sage was partaking in a feast offered by a Brahmin. When he was eating food, the baby child of the Brahmin started crying. His mother got very angry with the child and threw the baby in a raging fire. The baby was burnt to ashes. The Brahmin sage refused to eat the food served to him. Then the baby's father chanted a Manthra and sprinkled water on the ashes of the baby. The child woke up as if he was sleeping. The Brahmin sage learnt that Manthra and returned back to the village of Mandarawathi. At the same time, the Brahmin who had gone on pilgrimage also returned with the bones. Then the bones were kept on the ashes and the Brahmin sage chanted the Manthra. Mandharavathi became alive again. All the three Brahmin boys claimed that she should marry them. The Vetala asked, Oh Vikramadhithya, whom should Mandarawathi marry?"

Vikramadhithya replied, "The man who guarded her ashes would marry her. This is because, the Brahmin sage by giving her life, became like her father and the man who carried her bones had the role of her son."

As soon as Vetala heard this, it freed itself and again to the Drum Stick tree and started hanging there.

Third story of Vetala.

There was a poor Brahmin. He had three sons. They were connoisseurs from birth. Their father wanted to do a yaga. For performing the yaga, they needed to bring a tortoise from the sea.

The first son said, "I will not touch this tortoise because I am a connoisseur for food. If I touch the tortoise, I will never be able to eat food again."

The second son said, "I am a Connoisseur of woman and my sensibility would be affected, if I touch the tortoise."

The third son said, "I am the connoisseur of sleep. If I touch this tortoise, I will never be able to sleep."

Since they were not able to reach any agreement, the three sons went and approached the king for judgment.

The king wanted to test them. He first took them and asked his servants, to serve the food prepared for him. While the second and third son enjoyed it, the first one refused to eat it saying, "That the rice prepared had the scent of a corpse." the king was aghast. But

when enquiries were made, they came to know that the rice indeed was grown in a land which was once upon a time a cremation ground.”

Then the king chose one of best ladies from his harem and sent her to be with the second son. But the second son told, “Take her away or I will die. A goat’s smell is coming from her.”

Again the king made enquiries and found that that girl grew up by consuming goat’s milk.

That night a special bed was prepared for the third son. Twenty softest beds of the kingdom were arranged one on the top of the other. Over them ten softest bed sheets were spread. But after spending one night, the third son complained that the bed was a little rough in one place. When they examined it, they found that between the first and second bed, there was a hair of the lady.”

Vetala asked, “That king was not able to judge who was the real expert, Can you?” Vikramadhithya replied, “It is obvious. The first and second so were awake and their senses were sharp when they made the judgment. But in case of the third son he was sleeping. So the greatest expert is the third son.

Immediately the Vetala disengaged itself and went to the Drum stick tree,

Fourth story of Vetala

Vikramadhithya again went to the drum stick and caught hold of the Vetala. Along with it he started walking to the Saint’s place. Then the Vetala told the following story.

In the southern country there was a wise Brahmin who was the minister to the king. He had a very intelligent son and a very pretty and intelligent daughter. The name of the daughter was Swayamprabha,

When Swayamprabha grew up , she told that she will marry a man who is either an expert in science, or a valorous hero or a very wise man. Her parents and her brother agreed to these conditions.

Once the Brahmin minister had to travel to a different country. There one Brahmin boy called Sastri approached him and sought the hand of Swayamprabha. The Brahmin told her condition. Then Sastri told that he was an expert of science. To prove this he constructed a plane which was flying in the sky. The Brahmin was happy and agreed to celebrate the marriage next Monday. Sastri brought the Brahmin in his plane to the southern country.

Meanwhile a Brahmin called Soora approached the brother of Swayamprabha and sought her hand. Her brother told the condition. Then Soora claimed he was valorous hero. He fought bare handed with a lion and killed it to prove his point. Then Swayamprabha’s brother promised her in marriage to Soora, the next Monday.

While this was going on a Brahmin called Rishi approached Swayamprabha’s mother and requested the hand of Swayamprabha. Her mother told about the condition. Then Rishi proved to her that he knew the past, present and future. So the mother promised to celebrate the marriage next Monday.

On Monday Sastri, Soora and Rishi reached the marriage hall. But by that time Swayamprabha had vanishes. Rishi by his powers found out that she was taken away by a fierce Rakshasa who was staying in a forest one thousand kilometers away. Sastri built a fast moving plane full of weapons. Sastri, Soora and Rishi travelled to the forest. There

Soora fought with valour and killed the Rakshasa . They then brought back Swayamprabha to her home.

Now Rishi told that Swayamprabha was his because , without him they would not know where to search. Sastri claimed her as his because without him they could not have gone there. Soora claimed her, because without him, they could not kill the Rakshasa.

Now Vetala asked, “Oh king, to whom should Swayamprabha be given?”

The king replied, “Of course to Soora. For love belongs to valour and it is the duty of science and knowledge to serve valour.

The Vetala then freed itself and again started hanging on the drum stick tree.

Fifth story of the Vetala.

Again Vikramadhithya caught hold of the Vetala from the Drumstick tree and started walking towards the house of the sage. The Vetala told its fifth story

There was a young man called Rama in a great city. He was very handsome and a great devotee of Durga. One day when he was travelling on business, he saw a very pretty girl called Janaki. He immediately fell in love with her. Nearby was a temple of Durga. He entered the temple and told the Goddess, “Oh divine Goddess, I am in love with Janaki and want to marry her. Please help me do it. If you help me , next time when I come to this temple, I will sacrifice myself before you.”

After this he enquired about Janaki and found out her whereabouts. When he returned back home he was very sad and listless. His father asked him, :”Rama what is the matter? After the last trip, you are very sad.” Then Rama told him about his love to Janaki. Immediately Rama’s father contacted Janaki’s father and the marriage was arranged. It took place almost immediately. Rama and Janaki lived a very happy life. Janaki had a brother called Krishna. One day Krishna came to Rama’s house and invited Rama and Janaki for a festival in their village. Rama accepted the invitation and accompanied Krishna. On their way was the Durga temple. Rama got the chariot stopped and went inside the temple . As soon as he saw Goddess Durga, he remembered his earlier promise. So he took the sword of the goddess and cut off his own head. When he was not coming out, Krishna came to enquire. When he saw that Rama had cut off his head, he also cut off his head. After some time Janaki came in. Seeing both her husband and brother dead, she also decided to sacrifice herself. When she took the sword, Goddess Durga appeared before her and told, “Janaki , I am so much happy with your devotion to your husband and brother. Please join their heads to their bodies., they will become alive. “

Janaki thanked the Goddess and did what she was told. But in the hurry she did a mistake. She joined Rama’s head to Krishna’s body and Krishna’s head to Rama’s body.”

Vetala asked, Hey king who should be the husband of Janaki? “

Vikrama replied, “It should be the person having Rama’s head. This is because it is the brain that dictates the actions wishes of a person.”

Vetala immediately disengaged itself and went back to the Drumstick tree.

Sixth story of the Vetala:-

Again Vikramadhithya caught hold of the Vetala from the Drumstick tree and started walking towards the house of the sage. The Vetala told its sixth story.

In the city of Patna there was a king called Vikrama. He had a parrot as a pet. This parrot was a very wise one and gave him proper counsel, whenever he needed it.

According to its advice he married Princess Chandra of the Magadha kingdom. She had a talking Myna as a pet. This bird was also extremely wise.

After the marriage the parrot and Myna were kept in the same cage. One day after being attracted by the Myna, the parrot requested her to marry him. Then the Myna told, "All males are very bad people. So I do not want to marry." Then the parrot told, "What you say is not true. On the contrary all, females are cruel people."

They started fighting with each other and there was a lot of noise. Then after lot of arguments they decided to leave the matter to king Vikrama.

First Myna told the king, "All men are cruel"

The king asked "How do you say that?"

Then the Myna started reciting the following story:-

There was a rich merchant who had a son called Dhanadhatha. Dhanadhatha was a spend thrift and a man of loose morals. He used to drink, gamble and spend the money for unnecessary things. Due to this he lost all his wealth. So he decided for going to some other country, where no body will know about him. He reached a city of Chandanapura and met a rich merchant. That merchant was impressed by the personality of Dhanadhatha and gave his daughter in marriage to him. That merchant gave lot of dowry and also gave very large quantity of ornaments to his daughter. Dhanadhatha then told his father in law that he needs to go to his place along with his wife. On the way he told his wife. "Travelling with so many ornaments is risky. Please remove them and hand it over to me." she did it. After travelling some more time, he pushed her in to a well and vanished with all her ornaments. The merchant's daughter was saved by another way farer and returned home. She did not tell the truth to her father. She told her father that they were attacked by a gang of thieves, who removed all her ornaments and have taken away Dhanadhatha as a slave. The merchant became sad but consoled his daughter. Dhanadhatha after spending all the money, again came back to the merchant to ask for more money. But the merchant's daughter saw him first and took him back to her home. That night Dhanadhatha killed his wife and stole all her new ornaments and ran away. "Oh king", asked the Myna, "does this not prove that all men are cruel."

Then the parrot to prove his point started telling another story.

There was a very rich lady called Vasudatha. Her father gave her in marriage to another rich man called Samudhra Datha of the neighboring country. Samudhra Datha loved Vasudatha very much and gave her, what all she wanted. Once she wanted to visit her father. He sent her to her home as he was busy with his work. In her home town Vasudatha saw a very strong and pretty man. She wanted to make love to him. So they reached an agreement. After some time Samudhra Datha came to take her wife away. That night, after he was asleep Vasudatha, went outside to meet her lover. She was wearing lot of ornaments. One thief who had come to her house to steal her ornaments followed her. When she reached the spot where her lover had promised to meet her., Vasudatha found that her lover had died. But a Vetala which had entered his body, made his limbs move. Thinking that her lover was alive, Vasudatha embraced him. Then the Vetala made her lover open his mouth and bite away the nose of Vasudatha. Vasudatha ran back home. The thief also followed her. After reaching there, she started shouting that her husband had bitten her nose off. The husband was produced before the king who sentenced him to death. The thief then went to the king and told, "Sir Samudhra Datha is

innocent. This girl has a secret lover and his body is lying in the garden. You can see her nose in his mouth.” The king sent some people and found that the thief was telling the truth. Samudhra Datha was released and Vasudatha was sentenced to death.

The parrot asked , “Oh king Vikrama, does this not prove that all women are cruel?”

The Vetala then asked Vikramadhithya, “Who is correct-the parrot or the Myna?” Vikramadhithya replied, “The parrot is correct. The cruelty of a wife to her husband is baser than the cruelty of the husband to his wife.”

Vetala immediately disengaged itself and went back to the Drumstick tree.