



THE SUN GOD'S GIFT

Sage Jamadagni was an archer. He loved to shoot arrows that flew a long distance. He would hold the bow at an angle, draw the arrow with all his might, and let go. His heart would soar just like the arrow.

His wife Renuka would run like a deer chasing the arrow. She would gather all the arrows she could find and bring them back to her husband. By that time, another arrow would be in the air, and Renuka would run after it.

One day, Jamadagni noticed that his wife was limping. She had just returned with the arrows she had collected, Beads of sweat had appeared on her beautiful face.

Jamadagni, no doubt, loved to shoot arrows. But he loved his wife even more. He could see that the poor girl was panting for breath. Her feet were scorched as she had to run on the land heated by the sun. She was sweating all over.

Jamadagni was furious with the sun who had caused her such misery. He aimed an arrow at the sun!

The Sun God got worried. He had to act quickly. He appeared before Jamadagni, disguised as an old hermit. Seeing the hermit, Jamadagni lowered the bow and greeted the visitor.

"I saw you aiming the arrow at the sun," said the visitor, with a smile.

"Yes," replied Jamadagni, and explained why he was upset with the sun.

The hermit laughed, "Respected Sage, don't you think it's better if you stopped shooting those arrows so that your wife doesn't have to run behind them?"

Jamadagni was furious. But he had to be polite to his guest. "Shooting arrows is something I love to do. It is in my nature."

The hermit smiled, "And it is in the nature of the sun to provide heat to this earth. Have you considered what would happen, if the sun is destroyed?"

His words brought the angry Jamadagni to his senses. Because of the sun, sea water moves up as moisture to form clouds which come down to earth as rain watering the plants. Yes, the sun was the life giver and he was going to destroy it!

Jamadagni dropped the bow.

The hermit revealed himself as the Sun God.

"Sage, I appreciate your love for your wife. I offer you two gifts that would protect her from me," he said.

The Sun God gave Renuka an umbrella to protect herself from the heat, and a pair of sandals to protect her feet.

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