

6 Sudama

Scene 1

(A broken down cottage.

Sudama's wife is sweeping and doing other household chores.
Sudama is worshipping tulasi and saying his prayers.)

Sudama's wife (to herself) O Lord, we have 'nt been able to eat for the last three days. I am not worried about myself. But look at my husband, he has become so thin and weak. Yet he is always engaged in serving the Lord with love and devotion.

Sudama's wife gets up and goes to her husband who is reading the scriptures.

Wife My dear husband, I would like to ask you something.

Sudama (looking up) Yes my dear, what is it?

Wife Is it true that the Supreme Lord Krishna, the husband of the goddess of fortune is your personal friend?

Sudama Yes. We studied together at the ashram of Sandipani Muni. Oh! I feel so happy just remembering those wonderful days.



- Wife Do you know that the Supreme Lord is very compassionate to brahmanas and willing to grant them His shelter? You are such a pure saintly brahmana. Please approach Him. He will certainly give you abundant wealth.
- Sudama But my dear wife, I don't think I need wealth.
- Wife Please listen to me. Lord Krishna is now staying in Dwaraka. It is said that He bestows all prosperity and material enjoyment on His sincere devotees.
- Sudama These material things are not very desirable.
- Wife (begging) Please, please go there. Even if you don't ask for anything you can still go.
- Narrator Sudama's wife tried to convince her husband to go to Dwaraka. Finally he agreed.
- Sudama Yes, it is true that to see Lord Krishna is indeed the greatest achievement in life. I will certainly go.
- Wife (happily) Oh my dear husband!
- Sudama But..... I would like to take a gift. Is there anything in the house?
- Wife No. But don't worry. I will go and borrow some chipped rice from the neighbours.
- Narrator Sudama's wife goes to the neighbour. She returns with a few handfuls of chipped rice tied up in a torn piece of cloth.

Wife Please take this as a gift for your beloved friend.

Narrator Sudama sets off on the journey to Dwarka.

Scene 2

(A palace with guards outside.)

Sudama I wonder if I will be able to see Krishna. There are so many gates and guards here.

Narrator Sudama was so happy that he was going to meet his friend. He completely forgot everything else. The guards tried to stop him at the final gate. But suddenly Lord Krishna appeared, upon seeing His dear friend, he ran forward and embraced Sudama with great pleasure and with tears of joy.

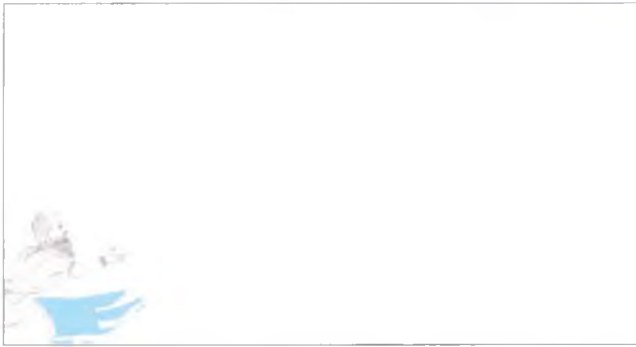
Krishna Oh my dear friend Sudama, I am so happy to see you again!

Narrator Krishna took Sudama by the hand and led him to the innermost part of the palace, to His own bedroom.

Krishna Please be seated, you must be tired after your long journey.

Narrator Krishna welcomed his friend in different ways. He personally washed His feet and sprinkled the water on His own head. Then He anointed Sudama with sandalwood and other scented paste. After this, He offered lamps and incense. A great feast was laid out for Sudama.

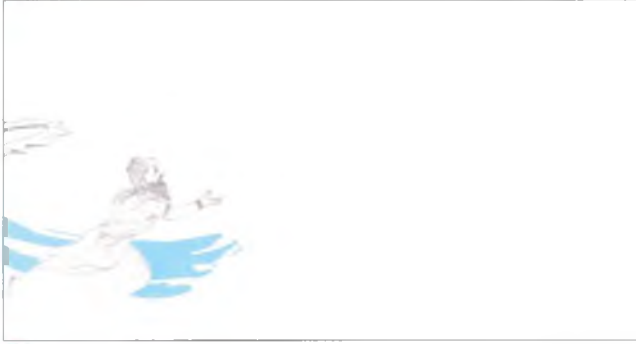
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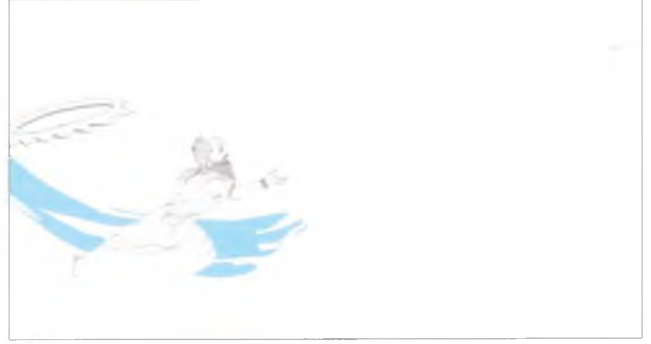
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1



Narrator The servants and others were surprised to see Rukmini, the goddess of fortune, herself fan the brahmana with a yak tail fan.

(The servants and the other people are watching the scene with astonishment)

1st maid Who is this poor brahmana? Look at his torn and (to another) dirty clothes.

2nd maid He looks so weak and thin.

3rd maid He must have performed many great pious acts.

1 senior maid Yes, the Supreme Personality of Godhead has embraced him as if he were an older brother.

Narrator Krishna and Sudama sat down and happily talked about

the time they had spent together in the school of their guru.

Krishna I can see that although you are involved in household affairs, you are not spending too much time in collecting material wealth. Instead you have dedicated your life in spiritual activities. O Sudama, do you remember the time when our guru's wife sent us into the forest to fetch firewood? We were caught in a terrible storm with fierce rain and harsh thunder. Remember how we lost our way in the dark forest? We spent the night huddled together.

Sudama Yes, we stayed there and at sunrise our guru Sandipani Muni sent his disciples to search for us and showered so many blessings on us.

Krishna By the grace of the Spiritual Master, a person can fulfill the purpose of life.

Narrator In this way, Krishna and His friend talked to each other for a long time. Then suddenly the Lord smiled and said:

Krishna Oh brahmana, what gift have you brought for me? Whatever my devotees offer me with pure love, pleases me. If one offers Me with love and devotion, a leaf, a flower, a fruit or water, I accept it.

Narrator Sudama felt very embarrassed to show his simple gift and kept his head bowed down. Then Krishna snatched the little bundle of chipped rice from Sudama.

Krishna

What is this my dear friend, you have brought this for me?



Narrator

Krishna opens the bundle and happily eats the rice.

Krishna

Your gift has given me extreme pleasure. Indeed these few grains of rice will satisfy not only me but also the entire universe.

Narrator

He is about to take one more palmful but Rukmini, the goddess of fortune stops Him.

Rukmini

Oh my Lord, you have shown so much mercy to this brahmana. Now please leave something for me, my friends, the other queens and servants.

Scene 3

Narrator

Sudama spent that night in the palace. The next day he set off for home. Krishna accompanied Sudama on the road for a short distance and then both of them embraced and finally parted. Sudama had apparently received no wealth from Krishna but just being with

the Lord he was completely satisfied.

Sudama Who am I? A poor sinful brahmana. And who is Krishna? The Supreme Personality of Godhead, full in six opulences. Yet He has embraced me lovingly with His two arms. He treated me just like one of His brothers making me sit on the bed of his beloved queen who personally fanned me with a yak tail chamara.

Actually, now I realize if the compassionate Lord had granted me even a little wealth I might neglect the service of His Lotus feet.

Narrator Thus thinking of himself, Sudama finally came to the place where his cottage had been earlier. But now there stood a beautiful palace with high towers, beautiful courtyards and gardens filled with colourful flowers, fruits, trees and lotus ponds full with flocks of birds. Well-dressed men and women were moving about.

Sudama
(looking around
in amazement) Where am I? Whose palace is this? Where is my cottage?

Narrator Suddenly well dressed servants came forward to welcome Sudama. Some people played musical instruments. Sudama's wife comes running. She's beautifully dressed and bows down to her husband.

Sudama Oh my dear wife, the supremely opulent chief of the Yadu dynasty, Lord Krishna, has showered His mercy on us.

With tears in his eyes, Sudama comes forward and shares his thoughts.

Sudama

My dear friend Krishna, I am sure He knew that I secretly wanted to beg from Him. He said nothing about it when I stood before Him. Yet just like a merciful rain cloud he bestowed upon me the most abundant riches. He accepts and glorifies even a small service rendered to Him by His devotee. He was so pleased even with a little chipped rice. Oh, my dear Lord, I pray that I may serve you lovingly life after life.

Narrator

Sudama and his wife lived together in the palace for many years. Even though they were surrounded by material opulence, they remained unattached. They spent their time chanting and worshipping the most merciful Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Shri Krishna.





Activity Time

Discussion:

Close your eyes. What do you think is in the box? Imagine you could have anything you wanted. How do you feel when you get a gift? Who would you like to receive this gift from? It is not the gift that matters, but also the person giving it and the thought behind the gift. A real gift is chosen with love and care and is meant to please the person who is going to receive it.



Do you know which is the best gift one can give?

Mona has been sick and missed school for a month.

The best gift you could give her

- Send her a get well card.
- Buy a game for her
- Visit her and help her with her school work.



Your mother is expecting many guests and has a lot of house work to do.

The best gift you can give her is

- Go out and play so that she is not disturbed.
- Ask her if you can help to clean the house or do any other job.
- Buy a bunch of flowers for her.



Ramu and Shyamu are both friends but for some reason they had an argument and are not talking to each other.

The best gift you can give them is

- a) Stop talking to them because they fight with each other.
- b) Become very friendly with only Ramu or Shyamu.
- c) Bring them together and make them friends again.



Why do you think Krishna was so pleased with Sudama's gift?



Give a Gift

You can give a little gift to your friends wrapped up in pretty wrapping paper made specially for them.

Make a stencil out of chart paper.

Draw a design like a lotus, tilaka or the word "Hare Krishna".

Cut out carefully.

Take a sheet of plain wrapping paper and spread it out.

Put the stencil firmly on one corner.

Paint in the cut out design using paint or sketch pens. When one design is complete, carefully pick up the stencil and place on another part of the gift paper.

Repeat this until the whole of the paper is covered.

You can decorate the space in between the patterns with glitter, sequins or spray paint. Keep it to dry.

Use it for wrapping a gift or covering a file.