

STORY #61

Soil gives life to a tree and the tree continues to live as long as it receives nourishment from the soil. Our soul gives life to our mind and our mind will live elevated and purified only to the extent that it inclines towards our soul. To elevate and purify our mind we should contemplate scriptures, repeat japa, pray, and keep good company. These practices will eliminate the dreadful shadow of sorrow.

A MOTHER CONVERTS HER WAYWARD SON

NILAMBA WAS THE ONLY beloved son of a widowed mother. He was also strong willed and disobedient. He wandered about in his youth and didn't complete his studies. He joined a group of rough young men, people with bad characters. He gambled, drank, stole, and fought. These were his favorite activities.

His mother's name was Haripriya. She was extremely unhappy with the bad karmas of her son. Again and again she spoke to him with great love,

"My son, you were born into a high family. Your father was a respected citizen of our city. Your actions are dishonoring his name. Please stop."

Each time her son responded with anger when he heard these words.

"Stop talking to me! You're talking too much! Keep your thoughts to yourself!"

Haripriya was devastated by her son's uncontrollable behavior, but she kept silent. She finally resorted to quiet prayer in front of her favorite deity. Often she sobbed.

One day, Nilamba was having a secret conversation with his rough friends. Haripriya was in the next room and she knew the group was up to no good. She hid herself close to the wall where she could hear their conversation and she was stunned to hear her

son say that he was going to kill a man. He had made a bet with his friends. Haripriya had never dreamed, not in her wildest imagination, that her son had sunk to such a level of violence.

Night came. Haripriya couldn't sleep. At midnight Nilamba came out of his room ready to kill a man. It was pitch black. Nilamba opened his bedroom door quietly, certain that his mother asleep.

But Haripriya was sitting by the front door wide-awake. She had lit a small lamp in the house and Nilamba saw his mother in the light next to the door.

"My son," Haripriya begged, grabbing Nilamba's feet. "I know what you're going to do. Please stop; don't do this thing. No one is dearer to me than you. I have little regard for my life other than to love you and keep you from harm. I'm begging you. Stay home tonight. Don't go out and carry out your plans."

Haripriya's words pierced the heart of her young, violent son, but his promise to his friends won out and he roughly pushed aside his elderly mother, first lightly and then with all his strength to free his feet from her grasp.

Haripriya fell back and struck her head with great force against their stone steps. Nilamba stepped over her with no regard whatsoever for her condition, but then he too tripped and fell.

"My son," Haripriya called in the darkness with great tenderness. "Are you hurt?"

Nilamba got up and then he saw the blood streaming down his mother's face. Her eyes were full of tenderness for him and in that moment his heart opened and arrogance left him, defeated by love. He bent down and embraced his mother and wept for his wasted life and his heart was transformed.

He carried his mother inside and there she died from the blow to her head. Nilamba wept bitterly, his heart shattered to pieces. He gazed at his mother's face and bowed down to her.

"Mother," he whispered. "I've given you nothing but pain and suffering my whole life, but now I repent. I'll give peace to your soul. I'll make my character pure. I'll become a saint. I'll always remember I'm the son of a Divine Goddess."

And that is what he did.

The seeker who serves his mother and attains her blessings is truly a man of good fortune.

