

# The GOLD LOTUS

*Thousands of Cupid's Arrows  
on the Battlefield of Love*



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# Prologue

“How long have I been floating in this pool of amniotic fluid? Only darkness lingers around me.” His small hands touched his almost naked body. “Why am I covered in saline waters – are these water drops or tears? I can clearly see memory lines carved deep into this gold pistil, probably pollinated by bees of a preceding era. Where do I come from, who am I?”

Yearning to unearth the truth about his origins, having just recently opened his unique eyes, one of pure, radiant gold and the other a shining sapphire, he figured he was sheltered in an enclosed gold lotus drifting into oblivion. He, who had no name, touched one of the dazzling stigmas.

Then a bright, golden light glided toward the pistil as the gold lotus flower began to fall apart; stamens, petals, sepals dropped into the cosmic sea. The capillary receptacles began to swell as the fertilised ovule at the base of each pistil developed into a seed. The receptacles broadened and slowly began to ripen. The first peduncle to mature manifested the origin of all creation.

A large white dragon with countless coils upon coils floated on the ancient undifferentiated waters. Upon his gigantic coils lay Iswara, the Original One, plunged in yoganidra – the great slumber. All the elements, all creation, all of time were withdrawn into the Blue God and layed dormant like fire slumbering in a piece of wood. The three gunas – virtue, passion, and darkness – were perfectly balanced and nothing stirred anywhere. Perfect equilibrium held all things in immaculate abeyance. The Ocean was infinite, as was the white dragon afloat upon it, and the sleeping Blue God lying on the coils.

Then kaala, the spirit of time, disturbed the balance in the three gunas. Passion thrust out from the Blue God’s navel as a slender

stalk, a fine umbilicus. The stalk reached high into the firmament and unfurled in an immense, brilliant crystal lotus that shed its conscious light everywhere.

Iswara, the Source of all creation’s spirit, flashed up through the stalk and entered the refulgent goliath lotus. Then he created another form: Brahma.

Brahma thought he was born of himself. He found himself alone and self-learnt the ancient dharma (Vedas). With wide eyes, he looked around him and found that he gazed in all directions simultaneously, for he had four heads.

All he saw was shimmering, blue water stretching away endlessly. Brahma saw he was seated above a giant crystalline lotus. He peered down the stalk of the flower, white and gleaming, but could not see from where it sprouted. He went down the tubular stalk for what felt like ages but did not find its root. As he was ready to give up, the waters of the infinite sea spoke to him through their waves, saying, “Tapa, Tapa, asceticism, asceticism.”

Brahma shut his eyes and sank into a plumbless meditation. For a hundred cosmic years, Brahma sat immersed in soul-searching. Then he suddenly saw the Creator of all creators, the Blue God, whose eyes stared at him as if the moon and the sun were showering refreshing and brilliant lights. Brahma was instantly enlightened; he knew his life mission was to serve his only Master and manifest an endless sea of possibilities – multiple worlds and multiple beings.

Before the almighty Blue God disappeared, he shared a few words. Upon hearing his Master’s heavenly voice, Brahma’s body trembled with emotion, for the ambrosia of the Almighty’s speech was so sweet he wished he had been created with thousands of auricles.

The Origin of all manifestation shared, “I have imbedded all knowledge into your heart. Listen carefully and manifest all realms according to your mental capacity. When the stage is set and the constellation of divine love perfectly aligns with the lethal star of destruction, I, the Almighty One, will personally dive into this creation to reset the endless play.”

Brahma stretched out like a staff at his Master's lotus feet. The Blue God vanished. Brahma understood that this universe was only one of an infinite number of subjective realities. With a sincere desire to please his Master, he thought, "I have to manifest a variety of flavours so my God can relish them when he personally visits this creation". He thus fashioned fourteen realms; the lowest was Patalaloka and the highest above all was his personal dimension, Satyaloka. Only his personal assistant whom he fashioned first – Saraswati, the Goddess of Knowledge – could reside by his side. To prevent any disturbance, he created an impassable barrier, known as the Vija River, and fashioned two, four-headed Fu dogs as its protectors. Earth was located at satya, the connecting middle belt of this universe.

The created beings' lives drew shorter as they manifested toward the middle girdle and extended in time and existential years as they expanded from below as above. The lower and the higher sections were equally balanced, creating two inverted triangles joining at the connecting points of the satya and atala realms. The celestial worlds' triangle pointed downward while the hellish worlds' triangle pointed upward. He created good and bad with equal powers and planted a devotional creeper into each and every one of his expressions.

The child with the gold and blue eyes could fathom the origin of the manifested creation but still couldn't understand who he was. "Why am I lying on an endless stretch of soundless waves?" As the question popped into his mind, one of the lotus seeds started flashing. Curious, he touched the peduncle with his soft thumb, but before he could pick it up in his delicate hand, the sky filled with illuminating sceneries – one flashing after another.

"This is the story of my origin."



Thousands of Cupid's arrows

Lying on the battlefield of my heart

Have I won or have I lost?

One note of his flute

Ruptured Cupid's bow

A Second note of his flute

Sprouted my sleeping soul

The Third note of his flute

Shattered my karmic chains

The Fourth note of his flute

I have gone insane

Have I won or have I lost?



# Imperial Heavenly Realm's Distress

The Emperor of the Imperial Heavenly Realm sat in a marble pagoda embellished with mosaic inlays. Strings of pearls adorned the golden arches that were surrounded by thousands of aromatic blue lotuses scenting intoxicating breezes. Celestial hummingbirds hovered over the luscious flower bank, drawing honey with their tubular beaks. Birds of exotic plumage roosted in the unearthly trees of every hue, bloom, and fruit, while ubiquitous breezes softly caressed the epic surroundings. Spring took eternal refuge in this auspicious, age-defying Realm. The silken yet eminent Jade Moon waterfall echoed timeless melodies when its fluid green body massaged the precious stones of serenity.

Sitting on a jewel-encrusted chair, the Emperor of all the celestial worlds was playing the abstract strategy game of Go with Muniji, a minstrel saint capable of effortlessly travelling the fourteen Realms throughout the three Worlds and beyond. The Emperor seemed in a daze in the dancing reflexion of the ephemeral lotuses. His mind was captured in deep thought and could not find its way back to reality, as he contemplated the profound mystery of how the Creator of all creation could fall into the net of fleeting love, reflecting on how the all-powerful could be made a drunken fool at the buffet of amorous exchanges.

Muniji, who could hear thoughts in the minds of all beings, perceived that the master of creation desired to manifest an unprecedented abstruse pastime of divine love. With a quizzical smile, he asked, "What deep conundrum is bewildering your mind?"

The Emperor suddenly moved his profound gaze toward the one and only person who could solve this puzzle. The heavenly Emperor, now sixty-thousand years of age, had had his fair share of



love affairs. As the almighty Emperor ruling over the celestial worlds and elements of the middle worlds, he abided by their elaborate ritualistic codes but had never really paid attention to their genesis. As a matter of fact, he would mechanically follow his priest's directives without ever questioning the purpose of their inception. Yet on this very lustrous morning, maybe because of his saintly association and a mixture of his passionate yearnings, this strange thought about the Creator had emerged in his mind and, like a mistress, it wouldn't release its vigorous embrace. Muniji was his escape door. In a timid manner, the Emperor mustered his thoughts and asked, "How can the Creator of all creation fall in Love?"

"My dear Emperor, if the Creator has the desire, everything and anything is possible." The great saint musingly continued, "By his will we are all manifested, maintained, and destroyed and by his powers we are all slumbering on the lap of the mindboggling enchantress of misconceptions. If the Creator so desires, he can cast an illusory veil powerful enough to capture the original fisherman in his very own net. He can submerge himself, breathless, deep in the ocean of passionate romance or better yet be bound by the chains of despair."

The Emperor, whose mind was constantly absorbed with material desires, realised this conversation had gone beyond his mental comprehension, simply nodded his head, and resumed their game.

A towering gong struck the peaceful surroundings. Its puissant tone vibrated harshly in the ethers while abruptly painting the azure firmament with a saffron hue. An Imperial army general appeared at the entrance of the pagoda and fell on his knees to deliver baleful news. The Emperor was about to chastise the warrior for his rudeness, but the general cried, "There is a crisis in the middle worlds! Earth, the blue-green planet, has been overrun by hellish Rakshasas from the lower planetary systems. They are being led by the Lord of Darkness himself, Yaksha, the mighty ruler of all the hellish worlds."

The Emperor clapped his soft hands on his healthy waist; the jewels on the hilt of his mighty sword prevented his heart from bursting out of his chest. His mighty father, the first ruling Emperor

of the Imperial Heavenly Realm who skilfully united all the celestial worlds under one banner had made him fight his first battle against evil when he was just a young God, at the age of fifteen thousand. He claimed victory that day, but deep in his heart he knew it was only by the bravery of his friend – the one now called the God of War – that he had escaped an early defeat. It had been many moons since his last battle. What he feared the most, what kept him up late at night was the prognostic that a Demon could somehow receive the boon of immortality.

Understanding the severity of this urgent situation, the Emperor rose, politely excused himself, and left for the great hall to meet with his trusted celestial army commanders. There, the Emperor took his place on his high and mighty gold throne. With his black hair perfectly tucked into his gold crown and his inky eyes as sharp as the tip of a brush, he looked dignified, exactly how one would frame the ruler of the Imperial sky.

It had been a quarter of a century since the gong of war had been struck. Now everyone in the Imperial Heavenly Realm had been notified by its clarion call and they all feared the worst. The war gong tinged the God's ethereal blue sky with a gloomy, reddish colour. Messenger birds sped through the ethers, announcing, "All the august leaders from each of the celestial worlds are urgently requested to appear at the great hall to discuss retaliation strategies against the Demon Yaksha, Lord of Darkness, and his vicious army of Rakshasas."

The Fairy King and Queen arrived on a scented bed of flowers, while the Fire Realm royalties blazed out of their flaming-horse chariot that could travel at the speed of light. The Water majesties disembarked their dolphin water boat capable of smoothly navigating all types of dangerous oceans and skies. The Moon King and Queen gently landed their celestial swan chariot, which glowed even in the darkest night. The God of War, God of Rites, Goddess of Destiny, the God of Medicine, all the other heavenly advisors, and the great army generals were already seated in the great hall, awaiting their instructions.

All those present understood that the next conquest for the war-mongering Demons would be the celestial worlds, and everyone in the great hall exuded worry. Their faces paled with anxiety as they exchanged their concerns. The God of War, whose eyes looked like dark cavities, sat calmly, patiently waiting for the opportunity to rise to the occasion and demonstrate his unflinching courage and bravery. Once all the dignitaries had taken their respective places in the great hall, the Emperor demanded complete silence. He then asked in a firm voice, "Who can lead our armies? We need to descend to the Earthly Realm and defeat the Demons before they wipe out the middle worlds and begin their siege of the heavens."

The triumphant God of War, sitting just one row below the Emperor, stood and walked to the middle of the assembly, fell to one knee, and exclaimed in a robust voice, "I will lead our armies and defeat those Demons, as I have done countless times in past centuries."

Everyone murmured the same concern: "A created being cannot kill the Demon Yaksha. Even if we can live hundreds of thousands of years, we are still bound by the wheel of birth, death, and rebirth, as none of us are self-manifested. How can any Gods or Goddesses defeat this Yaksha who received a special boon?"

While everyone in the hall was sharing their ill-fated concerns, Muniji arrived, plucking the golden strings of his seven-stringed vina, vibrating songs of hope. Everyone became silent. Knowing his exalted position, they offered their respects as he glided effortlessly toward the Emperor. While strumming his transcendent instrument, he glanced at the God of War, who immediately stood up and walked back to his exalted seat. Muniji advised the heavenly assembly that the only solution was to perform an epic fire sacrifice, a yagna, with great devotion and sincerity so the Almighty Creator could personally manifest and rescue all living entities from the heavenly to the earthly realms.

Everyone in the assembly began excitedly speaking. The God of War pronounced with assuredness, "We do not need any help! I can defeat Yaksha myself." The Emperor shouted, "Everyone must listen!"

Trusting the great saint's words, the Emperor asked, "How can we call upon the Creator of all creation to help"? Muniji replied, "There is a simple and direct process. However, in order for it to be effective, deep sincerity is required. To prove your devotion, you will all need to sacrifice your heavenly crowns and ablate them in the fire of purification."

Everyone looked shocked, as they were all overly attached to their ancestral crowns, by which their high status as Gods and Goddesses were displayed. Muniji then explained that offering their golden crowns would prove to the Creator that they were genuinely taking his divine shelter and expressing true humility. Material detachment and faith in his higher power was of the utmost importance, especially at this time of extreme calamity. Muniji advised that, according to his insight, the sacrificial fire must last for seven days without interruption and on the last day, during the auspicious alignment of the favourable Anuradha constellation, the Lord of all creation would manifest and save everyone from the onslaught of these hellish Demons.

One by one, every God, Goddess, king, queen, general, administrator, and advisor threw their golden crowns and priceless headpieces into the middle of the assembly. The centre of the great hall suddenly looked like a golden mountain encrusted with peerless gems. The Emperor, seeing everyone's sincerity, rose up and threw his heavy crown atop the precious mountain. The Empress, attached to her imperial crown, had remained seated. While returning to his royal seat, the Emperor looked directly at her and with his intense glare, pointed toward the golden mound. Begrudgingly, she finally got up and placed her crown on top of the heap.

The only one who had not relinquished his crown was the God of War. Refusing to accept the protection of the Creator because of his great pride and flustered by this turn of events, he abruptly left the assembly. Muniji smiled as he saw him leave. The Emperor ordered the God of Rites and the Goddess of Destiny to organise a large fire ceremony in front of the great hall. All saintly priests were

summoned to chant the ancient Vedic mantras while offering the celestial crowns to the fiery pit. According to Muniji's prognostications, the fire had to start immediately. To protect the fire yagna, the Emperor ordered his trusted commander, accompanied by the celestial army, to guard the auspicious flames day and night.

The fire sacrifice arena appeared as a mandala layered with colours—bright, red fire in the middle, surrounded by the saintly priests draped in simple yellow robes. Beyond them, the apsaras – heavenly dancers – in pink silk dresses, rotated like a garland of peach blossoms. The master musicians, outfitted in dark green silk, played their sacred drums as swiftly as hummingbird wings, resonating the landscape with pulsating triumphant sound. The Imperial army with their black and silver armour created the perfect outer border for this otherworldly yagna. From the heavens above, Gods and Goddesses flew over the sacrificial arena. Mesmerised by the grandeur, they threw showers of scented petals in a celestial manifestation of divine auspiciousness.

To ensure that the Imperial Heavenly Realm was not attacked during the seven-day period of the fire, the God of War, with the Emperor's approval, prepared his army to depart for Earth to fight and delay the arrival of the inevitable horde of Demons threatening the entire upper planetary system. The God of War's right-arm commander, Xinren, who had followed his master since he could pick up a sword, assisted him in putting on his armour made of the strongest woven threads. As the prideful God of War tightened his crown, he smirked at his reflection in the mirror, declaring, "No one will make me take off my headpiece." He walked out of his palace looking like a powerful bolt of lightning, ready to destroy an entire planetary system. As strong and undisturbed as the Himalayas, he arrived at the entrance gate of the Imperial Heavenly Realm and pulled out his demon-quelling sword, which instantly inspired fearlessness in his assembled Imperial army. They shouted in adulation, "All hail the God of War!"

He then transformed himself into a large dragon, black as a

moonless sky. His roar declaimed an imminent death sentence upon his enemies. He had killed countless Demons and had never been defeated. Flying high and mighty while shaking the clouds with his commanding movements, he took the lead as his army began their journey to Earth, located in the middle worlds. Descending into the Earthly Realms, the Imperial army appeared like a cloud of black deadly arrows covering the sun, ready to rain down upon the evil Rakshasas who occupied the blue-green planet.

Yaksha saw the Imperial army covering the entire sky and growled a large roar mixed with laughter and amusement that resonated far and wide, causing the incoming celestial soldiers to tremble apprehensively. Yaksha shouted, "Finally, I can have some real action! These fools came all the way here for their defeat."

The God of War remembered what the Emperor had confided to him prior to his departure: On Earth, the relative passing of time was scaled differently; one day in the Imperial Heavenly Realm was equivalent to one year on Earth. To protect the fire sacrifice ceremony, the God of War needed to hold off Yaksha's army for seven consecutive years.

The God of War informed everyone, "We are standing here today as the last hope for all creation. We need to fight this war and last as long as we still have breath in our bodies." He then sounded the heavenly conch, which reverberated throughout the sky, to which the Demons responded with an eerie moaning howl that made everyone's skin quiver in fright. Within a few short seconds, armies clashed in the air, creating a terrific blast; tsunamis burst upon the shorelines, the sky was stained with red and black stripes, and mountains crumbled as the Earth shuddered under the tumultuous rumble of war.

Yaksha ordered Mayik, ruler of the Realm of Illusion and Queen of Bewilderment, to cast a live screen so he could follow the exciting war scenes from the comfort of his sumptuous palace. Many terrified, earthly women served him while he enjoyed every violent spectacle. Yaksha held no regard for his regiments of expendable Demons

being killed. He laughed and commented on everyone's movements as if he were watching a sporting match, all while shouting, "Kill them! Kill them all!"

