

Lords Buddha and Ganesha Do Battle in the Mythical Forest of Nails

The forest was small, but lush, green and thick with a canopy that turned day to night and night to pure darkness. But it could change. Without warning, the grass and greenery transformed. In an instant, sharpened points of steel, like nails, were jutting up, out, and all around you making movement impossible. This is where the two gods would meet...

No one really knew why they were fighting, what led to the dispute between Lord Buddha and Lord Ganesha, after having been friends for as long as anyone could remember. All they knew was that it was bad. Rumors flew of course, "I heard Gan seduced one of Bodhi's disciple lovers down by the river, his favorite one!" "My friend told me Bodhi got drunk on rice wine at a party and was heard telling people that one of Gan's heads might be like an elephant, but the other one is more like a mouse!" Whatever the truth was, it didn't matter anymore. What everyone was talking about now was the fight that would take place. Again, no one knew who challenged who, but it was clear that this was going to be an epic battle. No one had even ventured into the Mythical Forest of Nails for centuries, having become a sort of "no-go" zone among djinns, angels, demigods, gods, and goddesses ever since one of their own, the much loved Lordess Karmala met her doom within the sharpened greenery of the forest. She had gone there to meet her lover, a very un-well kept secret, and was greeted instead by her husband Lord Yusuf who is believed to have summoned the forest awake and then thrown the lovely Karmala into its spiky green clutches.

On the day of the fight, an area at the edge of the forest which provided easiest access to its interior, and so presumed to be the entry point for Lords Buddha and Ganesha, had a festive atmosphere with jugglers, magicians, carnival rides, and vendors selling everything from forgiveness funnel cakes to holy hot dogs to celestial snow cones. The gods and goddesses are known for their kitschy and clichéd approach to marketing and advertising, shameless sellers of themselves and their ideologies. Anticipation was running high, and the atmosphere was electric. Lord Abraham, nicknamed "Buzz" for his talents with electronics equipment, had braved the forest wearing a special suit made out of leather, layers upon layers of it forming a thickened exterior difficult for anything to penetrate beyond perhaps the first three layers, created by his tailor brother and special shoes made with 15 cm thick, solid steel soles created by his shoemaker cousin, so he could strategically install the necessary lights and audio-visual equipment such as microphones and cameras to transmit the fight from the forest's interior to the large plasma screens with surround sound he had placed at the forest's edge where all were gathered. Everyone thought he was crazy, until they saw the fruits of his madness, after which they thought he was genius.

Lord Buddha and Lord Ganesha arrived simultaneously, though separately, and proceeded through the crowds towards the forest's edge. Lord Buddha wore a saffron-colored robe with a turquoise trim and "the bOMber" written in deep maroon on the back. Lord Ganesha's robe was a sapphire blue with an ivory trim, and written in emerald green on the back was "Got Obstacles?" Shameless sellers. Both seemed calm, even as the spectators began cheering and yelling out their loyalties, "Stick that freak's nose up his

daal-shitting ass Lord Buddha!” “Crush that Om-stuttering, emaciated asshole’s bones into dust Lord Ganesha!” Reaching the edge, Lord Buddha motioned to Lord Ganesha, “After you Gan.” Lord Ganesha replied, “Please Bodhi, I insist” and followed Lord Buddha into the forest.

There was a space of about five meters between them, and they walked some ways in silence. The crowds at the outer edge had since also fallen silent, and clustered around the plasma screens, some nervously biting their nails while others kept looking away, muttering little prayers under their breath. Lord Buddha and Lord Ganesha finally stopped and faced each other in a small opening, clear of trees, the thick, tall grass littered only with small shrubs. Buzz had anticipated this to be the proverbial “ring” as it was the first clearing one came upon after entering the forest from where they had all gathered. He had therefore rigged this area with extra cameras and microphones so as not to miss a thing. The sound quality and different angles presented were much appreciated by the crowds, and as people looked to each other nodding their heads in approval, it was finally settled that Buzz truly was genius.

“I don’t really know how it has come to this Bodhi” said Lord Ganesha, sadly. “I guess all that matters now Gan, is that it has” replied Lord Buddha, equally moved. A wind seemed to pick up. It could be heard first high in the treetops, slowly making it’s way down into the center of the forest. It became strong, almost violent, and suddenly, without warning, the tall grass became long, sharp nails, lunging themselves upwards, outwards, and every which waywards towards the two gods. At this moment, Lord Buddha and Lord Ganesha both leapt, above the nails, and flew towards each other, meeting in mid-air. As they made contact, practically colliding, a loud, cracking sound pierced the silence, and the ears of the gathered crowds, while a bright blue-white light filled the air, blinding the spectators as they watched.

And then the screens went dark...