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EVENING COLLEGE

(Affiliated to Bangalore Central University)

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Chapter – 6

How Kacha Got the Secret

-Thangam Krishnan

## About the Author



Born in the year 1949, Thangam Krishnan had a humble beginning with schooling in and around Tirunagar, Madurai. Storytelling was always his cup of tea. Also had a passion for writing magazine and even the company magazine were his platforms. He emerged as the gold medalist of his college in the year 1970. He has more than 25 years of experience in Marketing with companies like Sarabhai Chemicals, Max India Limited, Edu Business (Dubai) and 20 years of industrial management with HI Tech Arai limited, Madurai, Chennai Management Services, Clarion Cosmetics, Haneda Infra Private limited, Chennai.

# Critical Summary

A Puranic tale is better understood when placed in its larger context of other stories. Just to take this particular story as an example, Kacha and Devayani's story is clarified in the motif of the quest for immortality, which is the perennial bone of contention between devas and asuras, (who are cousins).

Of course, when one is telling the story, the story of Yayati inevitable looms large, given that he is the future spouse of the heroine of this story; especially his mad quest to extend his youth.

Another important part of this story, as it is of Puranic lore in general, is the efficacious power of language. Given that the author clarifies that his story takes place before the churning of the ocean, the only way of reviving the dead is through Sanjivini mantra. Mantra is a verse form, which by its strict metrical precision can bind even the gods (rhythm can bind gods, Nietzsche says in his 'Gay Science', while talking about archaic Greek hymns).

Here Kacha emerges out of his teacher (presumably his mouth) causing his death. Here this is Kacha's rebirth, which causes the death of his 'father' and his teacher. But ultimately it is Kacha again, who saves Shukra, already evoking the theme of a son 'putra' saving his father, extending his life, thus connecting the tale to Yayati's furtherance of youth through his son.

There is also the theme of filial betrayal here.