

Śrī Hansaduta

1

Let my heart become the abode of that eternal delightful Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Who is attired in garments more lustrously yellow than orpiment, the bottoms of Whose feet are comparable only to the crimson jaba flower and Whose lotus face perpetually radiates indescribable and extraordinary beauty through a graceful smile.

2

Since the day Hari left King Nanda's house and started for Mathura in the accompaniment of Gandhini's son Akrura, Śrīmatī Rādhārāni has been thrown into a fathomless river of remembrance which is filled with waters of suffering and punctuated by whirlpools of dizziness.

3

One day Śrīmatī Rādhārāni went to the bank of the Yamuna with Her dearest friends, being desirous of extinguishing the fire of separation in which She was burning. However, upon seeing a cottage which was the site of Her many meetings with Kṛṣṇa, She again became intensely absorbed in those memories. At that time Her friend Susupti (Deep sleep) came and rendered Her unconscious to protect Her from the agony of remembrance.

4

Rādhārāni's sakhis lay Her motionless body on a bed of soft lotus stems and, surrounding Her, began to fan Her with lotus leaves. Due to their intense love for Her they began to fear that some great adversity was imminent and they began to cry with such intensity that the waves of the Yamuna began to break higher and higher with their tears.

5

Lalita then held the quiet Rādhā against her breast and sprinkled Her with the Yamuna's water from the lotus leaf with which she was fanning. Rādhā's throat quivered with the faintest signs of breathing, at which sight the sakhis, relieved, rejoiced loudly.

6

Lalita again put Śrīmatī Rādhārāni down to lie on the lotus bed and rose to bring water for Her from the river. As she stepped forward she saw a beautiful, dazzling white swan moving towards her most gracefully while making a sweet sound.

7

Lalita became a little encouraged at the sight of the charming bird and welcomed him respectfully. Stepping lightly toward him out of curiosity she became more and more eagerly hopeful and began to believe that this bird was a suitable qualified messenger to convey the depressed state of their minds to Kṛṣṇa in Mathura.

8

Thinking of Kṛṣṇa's cruel departure to Mathura and abandonment of Rādhā and

the other cowherd girls, Lalita felt intolerant. In this mood of loving enviousness she began to explain her heartfelt wishes to the swan. One should not think that there is any fault in her appealing to a dumb animal like this for the nature of Kṛṣṇa prema is that it makes one innocent, and thus, seeing Kṛṣṇa everywhere, the devotee has faith in everyone in the whole universe.

9

Lalita then addressed the swan, saying, "Oh king of the birds! You reside in the pure water of the holy sites of pilgrimage and you take pleasure in feeding upon the stems of the lotuses and are hardly interested in the ephemeral things of this world. Thus, we recognize you to be a great soul. With this belief in mind, and considering your magnanimity, I seek your help for I am a very distressed and weak woman. Kindly oblige me for I know that one who seeks the shelter of a noble person is never disappointed.

10

Kṛṣṇa is famous for His romantic nature but we know that this is His deception. He has thrown us into oblivion so long ago and gone to live happily in the city of Mathura while we are being constantly scorched by the fire of separation. Please take pity on us and immediately rush to Mathura and narrate the condition of our pained hearts to Him.

11

Oh dear swan, I bless you that your journey to Mathura will be safe. God speed you on your way. Kindly have compassion on us and don't delay a moment. Spread your wings in the sky with a joyous heart and let the playful children of the cowherd men run beneath you with their eyes cast at you flying above.

12

Oh, king of the birds! Please give me your attention as I shall explain to you the route to be traversed. Follow the universally famous road to Mathura along which the merciless Akrura speedily led the most beautiful youth Who is the master of our lives.

13

Oh bird! Go along that path upon which you see the gopīs whose cheeks are drenched in the tears gushing from their doe-like eyes. Even now they are suffering from intense absorption in the desire to be reunited with their lover. Follow that road, marked with the wheels of the chariot, which exulted at the touch of His lotus feet.

14

Oh friend, please drink the fragrant waters of the Yamuna which are as blue as the jambu fruit, and satisfy yourself with some tender lotus stems which are soft and as cooling as camphor. Then rest a while under the deep shadows of a large-branched tree before starting for Mathura.

15

Oh feathered friend! When Akrura charioted away the master of our hearts, the gopīs followed to a great distance, grieving loudly. Follow the path they took on that day and I guarantee you that your achievement of the highest perfection of spiritual life will be assured. You shall truly become worthy of the name "paramahansa".

16

Oh dear swan! One day Kṛṣṇa suddenly stole our garments while we were bathing

in the Yamuna and climbed up a kadamba tree. Then he made us reveal our till then secret love for Him. You may enjoy resting on the branches of that tree whose thick foliage prevents the sun's scorching rays from penetrating therein.

17

In this place Kṛṣṇa distributed the loveliness of His form in the ten directions as He began the Rāsa dance by playing sweetly on the simple flute which kissed His lips, expanding waves of supreme joy. He wore His peacock-feathered head-dress and a most precious silk cloth which glowed like gold; His body was a glossy black like the tamal tree. How sweet were He and the sound of His flute on that day!

18

That site of Hari's rāsa lila is decorated by the blackness of the musk which dripped from the bodies of the cowherd maidens as they danced, engrossed in those loving pastimes with their Lord. That place where the gopīs danced in circles is still shining with broken malati flowers. Oh swan! When you see this Rāsa sthali you will experience divine bliss.

19

Nearby to the rāsa playground stands Govinda's passion pavilion, shaded with creepers of madhavi flowers. I warn you, do not cast your eyes at that retreat of Hari's lest your heart should erupt in celestial joy, for then you will become rooted to the spot and shall never be able to proceed to Mathura. If that should happen, we gopīs shall surely die.

20

No, no, never mind. Take a look at that place of Kṛṣṇa's most intimate pastimes because such a vision will purify your heart. Even though your being delayed will interfere with the speedy fulfillment of our desire, still it will not go in vain, for anything, any quality, is only of value if it helps one to remain conscious of Kṛṣṇa always.

21

Upon hearing the irresistible sounds of His melodious flute only once the gopīs used to hastily rush towards Govardhana Hill to meet with Kṛṣṇa. There many flowered cottages cover the hill just for Kṛṣṇa's enjoyment of the intimate loving companionship of the gopīs and thus Govardhana is an eyewitness of all these goings-on.

22

Kṛṣṇa used to lie on the large stones of the hill when taking the cows out to pasture there, for Govardhana is the well-wisher of the cows. Feast your eyes on that mountain, for it will arouse great delight in you at a single glance. Govardhana became a knower of rāsa due to having received the touch of Kṛṣṇa's hand. We believe that Govardhana Hill is the greatest of all the mountains on the earth. He established the truth of his own name when he vanquished the enemy of his own clan, Indra, who had cut off the wings of the mountains which were previously able to fly.

23

At the foot of Govardhana is a tamal tree upon seeing which the tribal women have become agitated; their bodies have become empassioned due to constantly remembering Govinda. When you fly past them the wind stirred by your wings, moistened with Yamuna water, will instantly soothe them, even if only for a moment.

24

Not far from there is another grove of kadamba trees where Rādhā's lover displayed His expertise in the arrangement of exciting ways of dealing with women by demanding taxes from the gopīs in a spirit of amorous argument. If you rest under those kadamba trees for even a moment you will experience rapturous bliss. If not, then your reputation as an enjoyer of rāsas will all be in vain.

25

On the outskirts of Vṛndāvana you will see the dried skull of the Aristasura demon, as white as the clouds of the autumn season. These decaying bones are often mistaken for the Mount Kailāṇa by the servants of Kuvera and companions of Śiva who try to ascend to its peak.

26

The condition of the gopīs has become extremely acute due to their separation from their Lord. Seeing them one would not think that they are still alive. I humbly request you to proceed to Mathura while singing sweetly, as that sound will pass for the sound of Hari's ankle bells, which, when heard by the gopīs, will cause the return of the life airs which have now all but deserted their bodies.

27

Dear messenger! I request you to dwell for some time upon the deep blue coloured branches of the Bhandira tree which looks so brilliantly beautiful in the bright sunshine. While you sit there inundated by the sun's rays it will appear as if Narayana has appeared holding the conch and disc and is about to cover the sky in His form as Trivikrama. (The tree here is being compared to Narayana, the swan to His conch and the sun to His disc.)

28

Oh most clever one! If you go to the place where the grasses were sprinkled with the pure tears of love which flowed from Brahmā's eyes as he sang Kṛṣṇa's praises, then the forest sylphs will assume that Brahmā himself has returned on his swan carrier.

29

On the occasion of Kṛṣṇa's fight with the serpent Kaliya, the gopīs rushed anxiously to the Yamuna to see what was going on, but the path became so slippery from the tears which poured in streams from their eyes that they became unable to proceed steadily as they stumbled and fell. Thus delayed, their anxiety increased so much that the state of their minds became quite indescribable.

30

But Murari was simply dancing on the heads of that monstrous serpent Kaliya, displaying His superhuman talents as well as heroism. At that time the ruby-red jewels from the snake's foreheads fell into the Yamuna's bluish waters producing a beautiful violet effect. Oh dear one, please taste the holy waters of that lake which is scented by the fragrant pollen of the kadamba trees which stand on its banks.

31

In a spot near Kaliya lake you will come across the goddess Vrinda Devi who lives there in the shape of a tulasi plant. Her body is wilting due to the fire of separation from Kṛṣṇa; her lamentation increases when she sees the new flowerbuds appearing on her branches. For she knows that Kṛṣṇa is not here to enjoy them. Only she can really appreciate the anguish of the gopīs and therefore you must honour her with all humility and reverence.

32

Thus you will traverse the eleven groves of Śrī Kṛṣṇa where the peacocks' melodies are echoing and you shall reach the twelfth forest known as Madhuvana which is densely shaded by mango trees. There stands gloriously the capital of the Yadu dynasty, whose fame purifies the earth.

33

There in that city you shall find innumerable grand mansions as tall and glorious as Mount Kailaṣa adorned pleasingly with colourful stone pillars. The gardens there are resplendent with trees and you will derive great delight when you see this pleasing abode of the Yadus, beautifying the banks of the Yamuna.

34

At some place in that city of Mathura you will see the bull on whom Lord Śiva mounts, Nandīśvara, grazing on tender grasses. Elsewhere, Lord Brahmā's swan carrier is eating the stems of lotus flowers. Somewhere you will find the peacock mount of Kartikeya grappling venomous serpents and in another place again you will be able to see the elephant carrier of Lord Indra, Airavata, happily munching the leaves of the sallaki tree.

35

When Kṛṣṇa first entered Mathura, the ladies of the town were heard to speak in the following way: "Oh dear one, can't you feel that your apparel has loosened? Aren't you aware that the jewels from your necklace are sliding off one by one and falling on the road? The litany of Govinda's glorious acts has inebriated you so much that even the town harlots will mock at your hard-earned reputation of chastity."

36

Another Mathura beauty said, "Oh foolish one, there is no more need of dressing up now! Stop, I know that my left foot has not been painted with vermilion, even so I must go right away. I can hear the loud noise of the crowds of women out in the street as they come out to look at Vṛndāvana's personified Cupid passing by.

37

Looking at Kṛṣṇa one maiden said: "When the destroyer of Kamsa, adorned with lustrous Ashoka flowers, rides His chariot, the avenues of the town are flooded with ecstasy by His glances." Hearing her, her girlfriends said, "Oh dearest friend! Why are you pushing us aside to occupy the entire window alone gazing with fixed eyes? Won't you allow us to also have a glance at what you see?"

38

"Dear friend, what are your eager eyes searching for in the void? What are you absorbed in, sitting here alone? You don't heed the hundreds of messages spoken to you by your friends. Oh lotus-eyed one, from such gestures we can guess that youthful Śyāmasundara, who is the colour of a beautiful new black cloud, has crossed the field of your vision.

39

"Dear friend! Don't allow the helpless tears to roll down your cheeks any more. Kṛṣṇa will shortly come to accept your affectionate glances." In this way the ladies of Mathura talked amongst themselves when Kṛṣṇa came into the town on the first day He arrived there.

40

"Oh dear swan, the women of Mathura can always see the eternally delightful form

of Hari and thus enjoy heavenly bliss, little caring that they have placed the burden of endless calamities squarely on the heads of the cowherd maidens of Vṛndāvana. A view of these women is sure to make you happy, giving all satisfaction to your eyes.

41

"Oh dear swan, passing by the palace of the Vṛṣṇis you will find your way into the interior of Kṛṣṇa's house, so famous for the complexities of its construction. Its glamour is increased by the countless banners atop it fluttering in the wind and decorating the sky.

42

Along the pinnacles of the turrets on that splendid palace are a great number of crystal swans whose beaks and feet are beset with gems. When Brahmā comes to Mathura, his swan carrier takes them to be his brothers and offers them the proper greetings and respects.

43-44

The gopīs gave a pair of parrots to Uddhava to be presented to Kṛṣṇa to remind Him of them. That parrot couple can still be heard in the streets of Mathura plaintively repeating this conversation from Vṛndāvana. "When will I see that killer of the Mura demon again? He couldn't be found by the continuously searching gopīs in the forests on the Yamuna's banks where He surely went to hide. Oh friend, when will He who upon seeing me would break into a smile which would sway the whole universe with joy appear before me again?"
"Oh Radhe! Shake off your mood of depression! Kṛṣṇa promised that He would be coming back. He wouldn't lie to us. Very shortly the light of your heart is sure to be reunited with you, sporting a new peacock feather in His hair."

45

On the top of Hari's palace you will see whirling vine-like clouds of incense smoke, so dark and blue that the peacocks mistake them for rain clouds and greet them heartily. Oh prudent swan! If by this sight you become fearful of the imminent thunderbolts of the rainy season and wish to fly off to Manasa sarovara like all swans do at that time, then I'll be able to understand that you have been living in the association of dull-brained persons.

46

Thus you should proceed to the inner portion of the palace, where you will find Kṛṣṇa's private pleasure chambers. The windows are bedecked with swaying locks of pearls and there are white crystal pillars. Around the edges of the walls descriptions of Kṛṣṇa's own pastimes from the tenth canto of the Śrīmad Bhāgavatam have been engraved in gold.

47

At one end of the verandah by His private quarters is a perch made of emeralds meant for the peacocks who sleep away the night on it. Free from anxiety, and thus resting, wait for a suitable opportunity to speak with the Lord of the Yadus.

48

Oh dear swan, there you will notice Hari, the fountainhead of all beautiful things in the universe, sitting on a bed with sublime and sparkling white cotton sheets. He is relaxing there, leaning slightly to the left with both elbows resting on the moon-like pillows before Him. Charming jewelled earrings in the shape of dolphins are gracing His cheeks; the splendour of His silken dress eclipses the

lustre of gold and His blackish bodily hue is as pleasing as the black waters of the Kalindi. Should you chance to see all this beauty of Mukunda's, an ecstatically maddening ambrosia will flood your eyes.

49

There you will find Bikadru, one of the elders of the family, sitting near Him singing many amusing songs from the Purānas. By the side of a dazzling pillar you will see the hard-hearted Akrura (the very utterance of whose name sends a shiver of fear through the breasts of the gopīs) elaborately chanting the history of the Kurus.

50

You will also see Satyaki, the most glorious of the Sini clan of Yadu fighters, as well as the renowned Kṛtavarma fanning Kṛṣṇa gracefully on either side with royal yak tail fans. Bṛhaspati's disciple Uddhava will surely be seen massaging Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet as he kneels on the golden floor before Him.

51

There you will find Garuda with folded hands and a heart brimming with love and veneration, awaiting the order to go off somewhere quickly. When that great bird flies on his missions the students of the town desert their arguments on the correct pronunciation of Vedic mantras upon hearing the sound of his flapping wings.

52

When even one as clever as Brahmā finds himself unable to properly depict the magnificence and beauty of even a single toenail of Damodara's feet, then how could an ordinary woman like myself ever hope to portray it? It is only because my intelligence has become influenced by His transcendental charms that I venture to do it.

53

Hari's feet are gleaming gracefully. Lord Brahmā himself fell before the tips of those toes, covering them with the upper part of his crowns when he was plagued with guilt over the act of stealing the cowherd boys and calves. The great sage Nārada laments for those poor souls who have attained liberation but have been deprived of the great ecstasy which is derived by looking at those lotus feet for just a moment.

54

The lotus flowers are envious of the rosy hue of Kṛṣṇa's beautiful lotus feet and so have taken the vow of performing austerities, living in the water. All glories to the winter season which comes every year and punishes them for their improper attachments by causing them to wilt until finally they lose their lives.

55

The glaze of Hari's legs outshines the glamour of emerald coloured banana trees destroying their pride in their own beauty. The hearts of the gopīs are bound to them, though intensely restless, in the same way that powerful and restless wild elephants are bound by force to a stout pillar.

56

Oh dearest of birds! The lake of Madhusūdana's navel is the prime source of life for the gopī's minnow-like eyes. Before the creation of this universe a lotus grew in that lake; in that lotus's stem the fourteen worlds have been accommodated and Brahmā also took his birth in the whorl.

57

When mother Yaśoda tied Kṛṣṇa up with a piece of rope it left a mark of three lines which still beautify His belly. Within that belly She was twice favoured to have a look at the entire universe populated by men, gods and serpents when she looked into His mouth.

58

When the slender beauties of the creation gaze upon the chest of Kṛṣṇa then Cupid immediately appears in their minds. The kaustubha jewel sits there and, although it possesses a radiance equal to that of millions of suns, upon His brilliant chest it appears to be no brighter than a firefly.

59

His arms are more brilliant than two sapphire pillars set with precious gems. These arms remove the darkness of the whole world. It was with these arms that He annihilated the demon Keśi, and the mark of that demon's teeth still makes a decorative band around His arm. With these arms, which possess the aroma of musk, He always used to embrace the necks of the gopīs.

60

His face conquers the empire of the most wonderful waves of nectarean loveliness which flow throughout the entire universe; His sweet smile is the abode of ever new ambrosial mellows and it unfolds a wreath of glittering pearl-like teeth. His eyebrows dance like a vine in the breeze and one can see He is happily absorbed in romantic thoughts. When you go to Mathura you will have the fortune to behold His face.

61

Oh friend, in short, the sum and substance of what I have to say is this: you can understand that He, the slightest glimpse of who instantaneously inundates your heart with supreme delight, is none other than our Kṛṣṇa, the killer of Madhu.

62

Oh dear swan, you are well acquainted with intrigues of the heart through your experiences with your sweet singing lady-swan friends. You may find Kṛṣṇa similarly absorbed in such affairs with new women He has become involved with since arriving in Mathura. If so, you should narrate our suffering to Him because He will not be interested in us who are inexpert village girls. That person who has gotten a taste of nectar never wishes to give it up to drink whey.

63

Oh feathered friend, if, on the other hand, the cuckoos should have encircled Him, singing melodiously, and cool breezes blow gently, carrying the fragrance of Govardhana's flowers scenting the air, and if all these things remind Him of the sweetness of Vṛndāvana, then only should you convey to Him the distress of our hearts.

64

This is my message, please repeat to Him exactly what I say to you now: "Oh Lord of the gopīs! Please lend Your ears to that which is now being submitted to You by Lalita who is the dearest friend of that gopi whom You loved above all others when You resided here in Vṛndāvana. She pays You Her respectful obeisances at Your feet.

65

Murari, that calf You so carefully reared by feeding her the fresh leaves and stems of lotus flowers has now given birth to her first calf, and the weight of her udder is

so great that the teats hang down below her knees. How beautiful she looks.

66

Do you remember that madhavi sapling You took from the kadamba grove and replanted by the mango tree as if to make it the mango's lifelong wife-like companion? It was only a foot long with two or three leaves on it then. Now it has grown so big. Yet, in Your absence she sheds tears constantly in the form of sap which gushes down her side; seeing her deplorable condition we are also pushed to the brink of tears.

67

There was once a child who took birth in the womb of Yaśoda and who was to become the abode of the greatest happiness for the cowherds of Vṛndāvana. Another child was born in the stone like womb of Gandini who was to ... Oh Śiva! Śiva! ... put an end to the glory of the land of Gokula.

68

Oh Murari! The demons You killed seem to have returned one by one: Aristāsura seems to have shaken the beautiful-eyed gopī girls and thrown them to the brink of calamity; Tṛnavarta has returned as the grasses covering the unused playgrounds of the Lord and Vyomāsura has returned by making the whole area of Vṛndāvana seem as empty as outer space.

69

Oh Kṛṣṇa, under no circumstance should You come to Vṛndāvana, for its trees have become so dreadfully poisonous that the whole area is dangerous. If that were not so then why is it that the gopīs seem to be falling unconscious just by breathing the perfumed air? It must be toxic fumes from the flowers. What else could it be?

70

Oh Yadunatha! We are but ordinary country women and therefore You should not waste Your time thinking of us when the princesses of Mathura are at Your service. Gone is that time when You would wander in the forests at night, secretly making Your way into our houses to meet with us or even just to catch a glimpse of us.

71

Oh Lord! We do not blame You for having forsaken us, because persons possessing a dark complexion can rarely give up their deceitfulness. Just consider the case of the cuckoos: the crow rears them from the time of their incubation, but even so, as soon as the cuckoos' wings have developed and they become able to fly they forget even such a dear benefactor as the crow forever.

72

Oh undisputed Lord of Vṛndāvana! I have finished my preamble. Now listen to the drama which is even now being enacted here. First, however, I must ask You one question: "Do You ever remember the two unfortunate syllables, Rād-hā?"

73

Oh Kṛṣṇa! You used to be so attached to Your "household affairs" in the caves of Govardhana and the forest groves. What anguish it is for me that everyone is whispering about the misfortune of the gopīs, for She who was formerly supreme in Your estimation has now been reduced to nothing more than any other common-place woman.

74

Oh foremost of the Yadu clan, it is impossible for Śrīmatī Rādhārāni to live if You

remain forgetful of Vṛndāvana. She is thinking that if death does not favour Her soon then how will She be able to pass the days seeing the picturesque landscape which was formerly the abode of joy for Her, but is now simply a source of endless torture in Your absence.

75

But death does not favour Her either. Her tears have formed a river whose waves have become even more forceful than those of the Yamuna, which in comparison looks pale. Considering this, Yamarāja, the Yamuna's elder brother, has become envious and does not oblige Śrīmatī, even when She cries out, "Oh Lord of Death, please have mercy on Me, as I do not wish to live another moment!"

76

Our dearest friend Rādhā saw Your inexplicably attractive form engaged in different sporting activities only once and immediately She lost Her sense of discrimination as to what is beneficial or harmful for Her. Like a moth speedily enters into a flame She has entered helplessly into a blazing fire of love for You, giving up all hopes of ever being happy again.

77

Oh Kṛṣṇa, You are to the residents of Vṛndāvana what the moonlight is to the waterlilies. I cannot say anything more than that Rādhārāni is a victim of Her own foolishness, for even now She has not been able to remove from Her heart even slightly the memory of that person who is responsible for Her distress. All these afflictions of Hers are self-imposed.

78

Kubja now freely enjoys the pleasure of carefree residence in Your heart, so who can be more fortunate than her? My simple friend Rādhā has somehow become bereft of Her pious activities because She is no longer able to enter into that abode for even a moment.

79

Oh destroyer of the Mura demon! When Śrīmatī faints at the whistling sound of the bamboos in the wind (remembering the sound of Your flute) the elderly persons become puzzled and search for the cause of Her malady. Some fear that She has been possessed by spirits, some think that She was bitten by some cruel serpent (not knowing that actually yes, She has been bitten by that snake Akrura). Others ascribe the cause to epilepsy, but no one actually knows.

80

Oh most beautiful one! Your form is like honey for the starving eyes of the world. You left for Mathura so long ago and Rādhā has become most anxious due to not getting any news about You. Lately, new waves of ominous fear are dancing constantly in the inner chambers of Her mind.

81

Listen, I shall tell You how She passes Her days. Sometimes She offers Her respects to those sages whose words are known to be unfailing, in hopes of getting advice as to how She can get You back; She sometimes tries to please the mystics who know various spells (thinking that there must surely be some mantra She can chant which will force You to come back); sometimes She humbly renders service to those who know the art of using potions in order to get their help; on some occasions She prays to Parvatī Devī for the benediction of seeing You again. Oh Kṛṣṇa! that poor girl sees nothing of merit anywhere in this world due to being

distressed by Your absence.

82

Oh enemy of Kaṁsa! My dearest friend spends all Her time these days by Nandīśvara, worshipping You as She remembers You as the protector of the animals in Vṛndāvana, as one sporting a fresh peacock feather in His headdress, as one engaged in such whimsical sports as would cause the cupidity of all women to increase; as one whose form is more beautiful than that of a new rain cloud and who is always enjoying new loving affairs. All She wants is to be able to have You by Her side again and that is all She prays for — to either You or to Śiva or any other god.

83

Rādhā has become so confused that, drawing a captivating image of You on the ground with the juice of the Tamal tree, She embraces the neck of that image with Her vine-like arms and falls to the ground unconscious. Alas! She is no longer able to distinguish reality from non-reality.

84

Oh Kṛṣṇa, thinking of You has completely stunned the senses of Rādhā and often She even thinks that She has become You! Even so the fire of separation does not stop burning Her. This intolerable suffering does not let up for even a moment.

85

Although You have so cruelly thrown Rādhārāni into an ocean of suffering, still She constantly thinks of You and Your activities even now. That most perfect of chaste women thinks that Your heart must be broken due to separation from Her and thus Her own heart breaks day by day.

86

Oh destroyer of Kaṁsa! Our sweetest friend Rādhā has become absorbed in deep yogic trance because She has heard that You always reveal Yourself to such meditators. She is preparing Herself for the hardest of austerities because She thinks that in this way people are favoured by Your appearance before them.

87

Oh Kṛṣṇa! Our dear friend causes all Her associates to become despondent because She remains constantly bathed in tears as She calls out Your names: "Oh Murari! Mukunda! Hari! Oh son of Nanda!" She also sings of Your qualities: "The hue of Your body is no different from that of a blue lotus blossoming in the waters of the Yamuna. You are the delight of the house of Nanda Mahārāja and You are the jewel amongst the gods.

88

The blazing fire of separation from You is burning up the forest of Rādhā's body; it has surrounded the doe of Her life and to make matters worse, Cupid is like a hunter mercilessly shooting his arrows at Her. All these circumstances have become so overpowering that I fear this doe shall be forced to abandon the forest of Rādhā's body within a day or two. (Therefore, if You wish to see Her again in this life You had better come quickly for there is not much time left.)

89

Radhika has now surrendered Herself fully to Śiva whose body is the white colour of the foam on the ocean of milk and who is crowned by the moon. Since he is the subduer of Cupid it is beyond the power of Eros to do Her any harm. Only You for some reason remain tormenting Her constantly for the sake of Your own

amusement.

90

Oh jewel of the Yadu dynasty! You do not know the intensity of the feelings of the cowherd maidens; neither do we know what magic causes us to go on loving You despite Your cruelty. Your friend Uddhava (who was known as a madman in his childhood because of his absorption in love for You) has tried to mitigate our suffering with many spiritual teachings from the scriptures, but frankly, such utterances only aggravate the anguish of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī.

91

That Uddhava, who is a true follower of his teacher Brihaspati, now holds the post of prime minister in the Yadu court. Our friend Yamuna is the sister of the Lord Yamarāja. These two are therefore no longer actively pursuing our interests and, oh chief of the Yadus, who else is there known to us in Your court who will be able to properly narrate Rādhikā's sorrows and thus appease You.

92

Due to throwing Herself on the ground in agony Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī has become bruised externally as well as internally. She is enwrapped in great hopes that have yet to be fulfilled and Her bodily colour has become pale. She finds no joy in anything and thus even Her conversation and amusements in the association of Her girlfriends have come to an end. Oh Kṛṣṇa, You are like the moon. When will You come and revive Rādhā with the touch of Your feet, just as the moon revives the lily with the touch of its rays.

94

Oh Hero! For so long my sakhi has hoped against hope for reunion with You, and only for that reason did She make any effort to protect Her life against innumerable threats. Now, however, the faintest hope for such a reunion has deserted Her as the expected date of Your return has long since passed. She is calmly gazing at the mango buds in expectation of a quick demise. Previously She would not dare to look at things which promote the memory of You, Her beloved, but now She is looking at them thinking they will expedite Her dying.

95

Rādhikā's end is near, and Her friends have long since given up efforts to save Her, for they can see that Cupid has causelessly chosen to make Her his enemy and torment Her and it is impossible to do anything at all to help Her. Only one friend still remains by the side of the lotus-eyed Rādhā to preserve Her life and that is the hope of Your return.

96

Oh Kṛṣṇa! Expert enjoyer of the rāsa dance! If You have truly forsaken that Rādhā with whom You once created a love which deepened in intensity at every moment, then curses on this swab of cotton which we are holding before Her nose and which indicates that there is still some slight bit of life within Her.

97

Oh Mukunda! Who on this earth can narrate the hundreds of things that Rādhārāṇī speaks in Her delirious state? Oh Lord! Let me repeat some of those utterances. Please make these statements enter into Your beautiful ears which are decorated by dolphin-shaped earrings.

98

Rādhā says, "Oh Lalita! When Kṛṣṇa was in Vṛndāvana, His ever-increasing love

for Me made Me easily consider my religious duties to My husband as something exceedingly insignificant. How painful it is that He no longer loves Me. I am embarrassed that I am still maintaining my life in this body, which has now become an unbearable burden."

99

"I do not know the words which most effectively can be used in a message to Him. If I say, 'I love You more than my very self', then He will consider it pretentious. If I say, 'I cannot live without You', it speaks of My selfishness and fades the glory of love. And if I say, 'Why do You not come back to Vṛndāvana', then it will reveal that we are always thinking of Him."

100

"Oh sakhi! Before, when Kṛṣṇa loved Me, then these forest groves gave Me such pure joy that the trees were the cause of unlimited pleasure to Me. Now that He has become indifferent, all of them are simply the causes of suffering. When her lord ignores her, then what girl would not look upon the whole creation with distaste?"

101

"Oh dear Lalita! Will Kṛṣṇa ever call Me away again by force from the assembly of beautiful-eyed women all unsettled by feelings of love for Him due to the sounding of the sweet melodious notes of His flute? Will I ever gaze with a look of maddened love into the eyes of that lord of Mine, whose dancing eyebrows have ruined the religious vows of all the chaste girls of Vraja?"

102

"Oh well-wishing friend, long past is the day when naughty Kṛṣṇa, so greatly eager to enjoy with Me, found Me in a cave in Govardhana where I was playfully hiding from Him. He grabbed hold of Me suddenly, pulling Me to His chest as I feigned anger. In the end My breasts were left marked with hundreds of half-moon shaped scratches."

103

"In the beginning of the sweet autumn season filled with the sounds of buzzing bees in mountain forests whitened by waves of silver moonlight, will I ever wrap that Govinda tightly in these arms as We battle one another in Cupid's loving war games."

104

"My mind is burning up! How terrible! What should I do? I can see no shore on either side of this great ocean of suffering into which I have fallen. I am making this prayer to You with my head bowed — somebody please tell Me how I can cross over, or at least how I can have the patience to tolerate the situation."

105

"If Kṛṣṇa has really become the foremost of the hard-hearted by leaving Me then let it be so. He is free. As for Me, My only hope is to apply Myself to My marriage duties (or for death to come and take Me). But who could endure His coming here to Vṛndāvana on the pretext of My dreams and forcefully ravishing Me against My will."

106

"This improper behaviour of His is giving great distress to My mind so you should go immediately to Mathura and stop that irresponsible and cheeky boy from acting in that way. Oh friend, do it quickly before He comes again and at the beginning of

My dreams tears off my waistbells in a frenzy of lusty passion."

107

"Listen. It is not just in dreams that He comes either. Don't suddenly disbelieve Me thinking that I've gone mad, but listen to what I've experienced directly. How surprised I was when Your friend Kṛṣṇa unexpectedly came to the forests by the side of Govardhana and started to demonstrate His professionalism in the game of love."

108

"I ran away from His touch trying to escape into the deeper woods where it was dark and He would not be able to see Me, but He could tell where I had gone by the sound of My ankle bells which only tinkled louder as I quickened My step in fear of being caught. Then He came near Me and playfully moved to touch Me. So eager was He that His eyes positively gleamed in excitement and He became unaware that His flute had slipped from His hand and fallen to the ground."

109

"Oh sakhi I then became unable to get away from Him so I covered Myself with thick vines decorated with smilelike flowers, and began to whimper in trepidation, saying, "Don't touch Me, You fiend." Then that friend of yours started laughing and jokingly lifted My head so that He could kiss Me with His lips which then glowed as bright as the bimba fruit."

110

"I had hidden the flute in My braid, and so, being afraid of discovery, I feigned anger and began to slowly walk away again toward the mountain, but then He pulled My hair to stop me from going. Thus discovering the flute He said, "Ha! I've caught You now, You thief!" and began to carry Me off by force to imprison Me in a nearby forest cave."

111

"Another time when I was in the grove of Madhavi vines, that impertinent youth crept up from behind and forcefully covered My eyes with His hands. I became irritated and went to snatch His fingers and push them away, but as I did so He suddenly disappeared. Oh sakhi, I don't know where that king of cheaters has gone and hidden."

112

"Oh simple one! These are all incidents of the past. Enough of them. Look before you, your friend is here now, His face decorated with a honeylike smile. Like an ocean of erotic love sports, He is throwing a red banduka flower at Me and making suggestive motions with His pillar like arms that He will come to embrace Me right now."

113

"Oh friend, don't be shy! Get up quickly and tie that miscreant up with your thick necklace of pearls before He runs off to Mathura again!" Speaking in this way She suddenly falls to the ground in a stupor born of all these intense emotions coming from Her ever expanding love for You. You see, in this way She is making all Her girlfriends cry ceaselessly.

114

Oh, what pain it gives me to think what a wicked hearted woman I am! Since our childhood days I always advised Her to play hard to get and put on a pretense of indifference towards You. Oh lord, You are the teacher of the gopīs in the art of

love, because of me She was never able to fully enjoy the embraces of Your flawless arms even though She never wanted anything else from the very first time She saw You.

115

When will I be able to serve Her by fanning Her with a clump of fresh branches as She lies with Her eyes closed experiencing the happiness of undisturbed sleep resting in Your arms on the verandah of Your gardenhouse playground scented by the fragrant breezes carrying the odour of the Yamuna's lotus flowers, Her hair full of the fragrance of madhavi flowers.

116

Hiding secretly nearby, when I see Her in one edge of the Vṛndāvana woods in great joy after having spent the autumn night in love sporting with You, all the flower decorations in Her hair bruised and faded and Her arms wrapped around Your shoulders, seeing You both like this I shall laugh in great happiness.

117

When will the day come when I shall be able to say to Her, "Sakhi, I am going to pick flowers over there some distance away. You go ahead to the river bank where there are so many nice tulasi trees and pick their leaves and flowers." In this way I shall cunningly send Her to go to the place where You have hidden Yourself, oh lover of the gopīs, so that the two of You may fulfill all of Your desires.

118

So my dear swan, after you have thus submitted all these Gokula messages at His feet you must offer our respects to all the intimate ornaments of the Lord and incur their pleasure, for those ornaments that the Lord carries on His own body are the recipients of His special mercy and love.

119

Oh lover of the she-swans! First you should speak to the forest flower garland which so attractively adorns His chest. After inquiring after her health you should speak to her as follow: "Oh highly qualified one! Have you forgotten the doe-eyed Rādhā who for so long accompanied you, being adhered to the breast of the enemy of Kāmsa?"

120

Oh garland! You are experienced in amorous affairs. Don't you remember the time when my friend Rādhā, incensed at the Lord of Gokula for His infidelity, held on to you and pulled so strongly that His peacock feathered crown toppled from His head and His eyes rolled in fear.

121

Then you should turn to His dolphin shaped earrings and say, "What is the necessity of asking a fortunate entity such as yourself as to his well-being, for you are always kissing Kṛṣṇa's smiling cheeks and being touched by the darting glances from the corners of His eyes.

122

Oh goddess! Listen to me. I am taking shelter of you with a heart full of love because I know that you live at the base of His vinelike ears. When there are no Vṛṣṇis about to overhear you, please whisper into those ears of His all of these pleas of ours; convey the sufferings Rādhārāni experiences in separation from Him."

123

Oh best of the birds! Then you must kindly give the following notification to the Kaustubha jewel, speaking with all humility. After conveying to him my loving embrace, say: "Oh friend, it seems you have completely forgotten even Rādhā, one who was so dear to you. It must be due to your always remaining on Hari's chest. This has made you fickle and everyone knows how foolish it is to love the fickle.

124

Oh jewel of the gods! Because you abide on His chest you know His heart, therefore I am asking you whether we shall ever see His wild dancing on the banks of the Yamuna along with His musical expertise as He plays His flute to the accompaniment of the jingling waist and anklebells, bracelets and other ornaments of the dancing gopīs.

125

Oh conchshell! You are a newcomer and have never met us gopīs and thus you haven't got the slightest conception of the glories of Śrīmatī Rādhārāni. Even so, we appeal to you, telling you of the pain within our hearts, for those who are of a generous nature are always affectionate to those who are pained and weary.

126

You are the offspring of the ocean's heart! Oh friend! Please come one time for a visit to the precincts of Vṛndāvana, bringing Govinda with you, of course. You will enjoy residing there. But then again, how will you be able to make the land of cows dear when the glories of the flute's fortune are being sung everywhere constantly?

127

After you have thus spoken to each of these intimate associates of the Lord, then brother, speak to Him once again, telling Him the tales of His own ten incarnations in words which are sweet and loving but mixed with a good dose of anger also.

128

Oh Great Fish! My sakhi baited the hook of Her heart with the delicacy of love just to catch You, throwing it into the water of affection. But You swallowed the bait and the hook and pulled the string of Her ability to reason so that She has become completely submerged in those waters. Alas, what can the poor girl do now?

129

Oh Kṛṣṇa! My lamentable friend came closer to You when She saw Your attractive form and dalliances. She was both curious and enlivened greatly, but You immediately behaved like a tortoise, hiding Your beautiful limbs and showing only a hard shell. Is such behaviour proper?

130

Oh enemy of Kāmsa! Once again You have demonstrated the behaviours of a hog by taking Kubja, a servant girl of a low class to Your heart while she was taking sandalwood paste for King Kāmsa. Thus You made her Your wife just as in Your boar incarnation You picked up the earth from the mud at the bottom of the universe and made her Your wife.

131

Although Your pastimes as halfman and halflion are long since past, still You have not abandoned the mood of that incarnation. At that time You showed favor to Prahlad while to others You displayed extreme cruelty, tearing open their hearts. This time also You are showing attachment to Akrura while You tear open our hearts by leaving us in this heartless way.

132

Oh Vamana! Just like Bali ignored his guru, so Rādhā also ignored the wishes of Her elders, thinking Her love was sufficiently powerful and that thus You were Hers. In this way She surrendered Herself along with the kingdom of Her mind to You completely. Well, She got Her just deserts, for You have shackled Her in the bonds of unfulfilled love and thrown Her far away from You just as Vamana bound Bali in chains and exiled him to the lower planets.

133

Oh Lord! My girlfriend wants to jump from the mountain and commit suicide and thus it is logical for You to be hard on Her. Oh Bhrigupati! It is very difficult to understand Your activities when You have even forgotten Your father Nanda Mahārāja who is so dear to You. Oh Lord, Rādhā is trying to conquer Your capital city and so You are naturally cruel to Her. Still Your activities are hard to understand, for You abandoned even Your own guru Śiva when You became unable to maintain the bow he had given You, being defeated by Rāmacandra.

134

Oh Lord of the Rādhā dynasty! Now that You have left Vraja all the cows are greatly oppressed by different miseries (or the demon Dasana who was killed by Rāma); similarly the area surrounding Govardhana appears to be drying up (or taking on the nature of Ravana's brother Khara); the land of Vraja will soon be bereft of Śrīmatī Rādhārāni who is dying in separation for You (or the land is being subjugated by ViRādhā, another demon killed by Rāma); it can be seen that now a great plague is fearfully dancing in the once happy land (or the demon Marica is dancing fearfully). How can You remain indifferent when all these demons You once killed are thus dancing in delight at Your absence?

135

Oh Buddha! Omniscient one! You are always merciful to all, but why are You not sympathetic to Śrīmatī Rādhārāni who is never attached to anything but You? She is inimical to the god of lust and opposes everything which interferes with the attainment of Her desired goal, always remaining absorbed in meditation on You.

136

Oh Kalki! Come Here and with the sword of Your loving sidelong glances cut apart the infidel suffering born of Your separation. Come and show Your love for the cowherd men and make the land of Vṛndāvana a place with a happy Rādhārāni once again.

137

Oh lord of the birds! In this way you should repeat these messages of love to Kṛṣṇa while wetting your face and body with the tears pouring from your eyes. Then with your head lowered look at His lotus feet and wait attentively for His reply.

138

Oh lord of the swans! Please don't hesitate. Just think how rare a sight the form of Nanda Mahārāja's son is. Shouldn't you go and see Him at least once? The gopīs are the glory of the world. Don't you think you should do this little favour for them? It will only take a few hours, please brother, don't delay or doubt.

139

Oh enchanter of the female swans! Your mind is absorbed in the desire to appreciate the finer points of romantic dealings; you are the most discerning of persons, for you are able to separate just the milk from a solution of milk and

water. Therefore I ask you, do you think it is proper for you to delay in such an important and romantic affair as going to Mathura to speak to Kṛṣṇa on our behalf?

140

All glories to my spiritual master! Just like Śukadeva Muni was devoted to Lord Kṛṣṇa, being constantly absorbed in discussion of the Śrīmad Bhagavatam and thus very dear to the devotees, so too was he always indifferent to the pleasure of material life being fully aware of the sweetness of the devotional life. He is the foremost of those scholars who concern themselves with the esoteric aspects of the scriptures dealing with Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's conjugal affairs. All glories to him who is known in the world by the name "Sakar," Sanatana Gosvāmi.

141

This poem is concerned with the most confidential and profound of Kṛṣṇa's lilās and is therefore glorious. Those persons who are both knowledgeable in and sensitive to such transcendental subjects will never criticize either the external merits and defects of the work from a technical standpoint nor will they find fault in the activities of the Lord Himself who is the only true friend of the world. May this short opus therefore be dedicated to Him and may it be the cause of deep and ever-increasing joy to Him.