

Sri Krishna Kathamrita

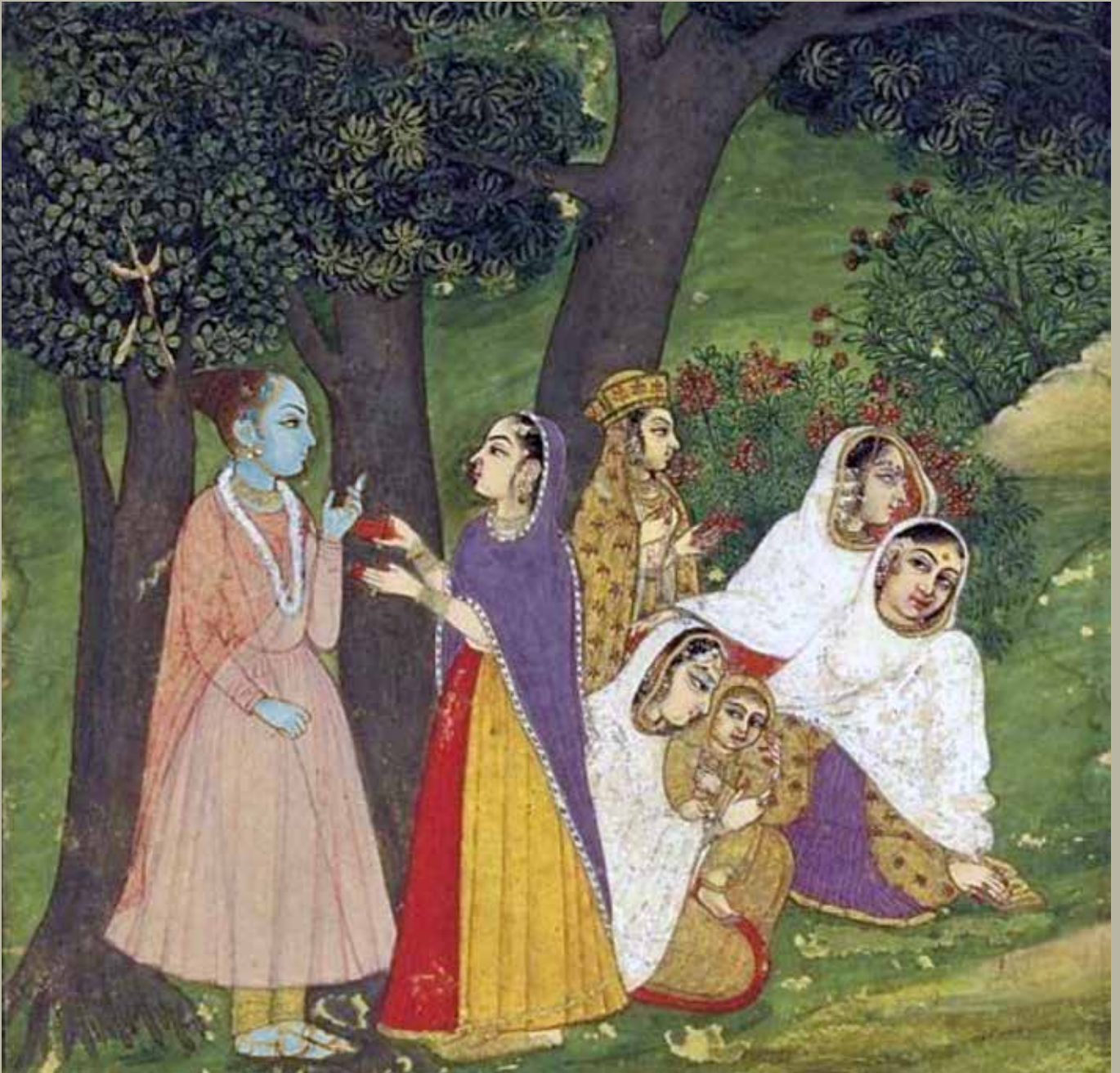


Bindu

Issue 611

yoginyāḥ vastrarūpam

The Dress of the Yogini





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OUR ONLY TIE IS LOVE OF GODHEAD



His Divine Grace

A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

Either Indian or foreign, whoever joins us they are not under any obligation, Our only tie is love of Godhead. It should be our definite policy that nobody is ill-treated so that he may go away. We recruit a person to join us after spending gallons of blood. Everyone comes for reformation. You cannot expect everyone to be perfect. Rather, it is our duty to make everyone perfect as far as possible. So we shall be very much cautious and careful in this connection. 🍌

— Letter to Tamal Krishna Goswami. 23 August. 1973.

RADHA'S FEELINGS OF SEPARATION



Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

The forty-seventh chapter of the tenth canto of Śrīmad Bhāgavatam describes how Krishna sent Uddhava to deliver the message of love to the gopīs. Uddhava came to the gopīs and at last to Radharani. Radharani was lying in her kuñja surrounded by her eight most intimate sakhīs, feeling acute pangs of separation from Krishna. Arriving there, Uddhava saw one mahā-devī lying on the ground.



Unknown photographer

sakhī anke hima vapu rasanā avāśa
pāñi-tala dharā-tale śeṣa-daśā-daśa (Hari-kathā Padāvalī)

Her golden body is lying on the lap of her sakhī. Her tongue cannot speak anything; she is speechless. Her hands are restlessly moving to and fro. Sometimes she is rolling on the ground. śeṣa daśā-daśa — The ten symptoms of a dying person are there. This is all mentioned in Ujjvala-nīlamanī. I am not going to that end, as it will take another day. There are so many things to say. If I explain this verse it will take one week's time. It contains so many things. Of this daśā-daśa, ten conditions, the last condition is mṛtyu, death.

With a very feeble voice, Radharani is telling her girl companions, “Sakhī, what shall I say? This viraha, separation from Gokula-pati, the lord of my heart, Krishna, is so acute! viśeṣa janmā jvara — This separation has caused a high temperature, more than a 110-degree fever.”

Radharani told Lalita:

uttāpī puṭa-pākato 'pi garala-grāmād api kṣobhaṇo
dambholer api duḥsahaḥ kaṭur alarṇ hṛm-magna-śūlyād api

Cover Painting: Radharani and the gopīs meet Krishna who has come in the saffron dress of a saintly renounced lady. By an unknown artist. Murshidabad painting. Late 1700's.

Painting by an unknown artist. Kangra style. 19th century.



Radharani lies dying in separation from Krishna

*tīvraḥ prauḍha-visūcikāni cayato 'py uccair mamāyaṁ bale
marmāny adya bhinatti gokula-pater viśeṣa-janmājvaraḥ*

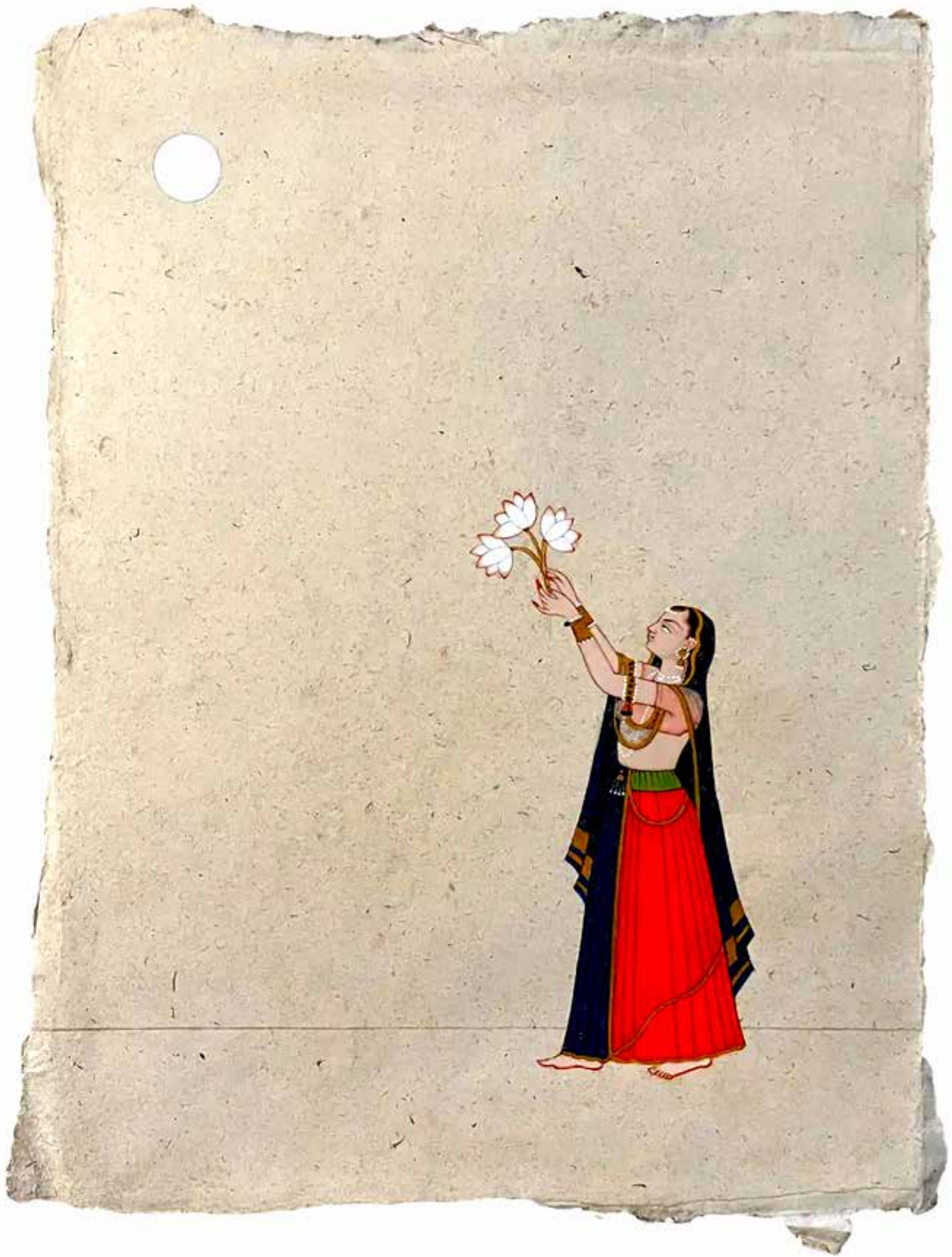
“I cannot bear suffering the fever of separation from Krishna, nor can I explain it to you. It is something like gold melting in an earthen pot. This fever produces more distress than poison, it is more piercing than Indra’s thunderbolt, more sharp than a spear plunged into the heart, and more horrifying than the last stage of cholera.” (*Lalita-mādhava* 3.2.4)

A goldsmith puts pieces of gold inside a small earthen pot, places them in the blazing fire, covers them with another pot, then blows with a bellows until the heat becomes more and more intense and finally the gold melts. Similarly, Radharani says, “Such heat I am feeling, *uttāpī puṣa-pākato* — more and more severe heat. I am feeling heat that is greater than the heat produced from very dreadful poison — *garala-grāmād api kṣobhaṇo*. It is *duḥsahaḥ*, more intolerable than the striking of a thunderbolt. I cannot tolerate it. It is breaking my heart at every moment — *marmāny adya bhinatti*, I cannot tolerate it. O my *sakhī*, dear girl companion, I cannot tolerate it.

There is no need of this body. I don’t see any purpose of keeping this body. This body is useless. I want to give it up immediately.”

Radharani kept silent for one or two moments and then said, “Oh! Death is not coming to me! I want to die, but death is not coming. There is a great obstruction to death. What is that obstruction? It is Krishna’s words. He said, ‘I’ll come back, I’ll come back, I’ll come back.’ When Akrura took Krishna in his chariot and was leaving Vrajabhumi, we were rolling on the ground and crying, ‘Let the wheels of the chariot roll over our bodies! Let us die!’ At that time, Krishna said, ‘Hey! Hey! No, no, no! Don’t do that! I will come back!’ These words he spoke are a great obstruction. So death is not coming. What shall I do?”

At that time, Radharani looked up at the sky and saw a crow flying in the direction of Mathura. She called out, “Hey crow! Come here, come here! Listen to me! Are you going to Mathura? Don’t go in any other direction; just go straight go to Mathura! Lord Mathura-pati, Mathuranath is there.



Vintage painting by an unknown artist.

Radha offers flowers to Suryadev and prays to him to be reunited with Krishna



Contemporary painting by an unknown artist.



Srimati Radharani sees Krishna in her reflection

Vandana-caraṇa, offer obeisances to that Lord of Mathura and deliver my message to him.

“Tell him that if a house has caught on fire the first duty of the house master is to let the domestic animals loose. They should not be burned. Open the door and let them out first. My body is the house and it is on fire — *viraha-agni*, separation is the fire. This house is burning, burning, burning. Who has set this fire? Your Mathuranath has set fire to this house. Now go and tell him that my *prāṇa*, my life, is the animal in the house. The house is on fire and it cannot get out — *dagdhum prāna-pasum śikhī viraha-bhūr indhe mad-aṅgālaye*. (*Lalita-mādhava* 3.2.9) What is the reason it cannot get out? Because the door is bolted, *argala*, with a very strong bolt. That strong bolt is *āśārgala-bandhanam* — Krishna’s words. He said, ‘I will come back.’ (*Lalita-mādhava* 3.2.9)

“The door cannot be opened and the house is on fire. Tell him he should come immediately and unbolt it. Then my life, *prāṇa-pasū*, will get out.” This is Radharani’s love. 🍌

— *Mathura Meets Vrindavan*, p. 212-214. Lecture, Atlanta, Georgia, 20 June 1994.

DRESS OF THE YOGINI PART EIGHT



From Śrī Rādhā-mādhavodaya
By Raghunandan Goswami

For more about Raghunandan Goswami, see Bindu issue 604. The story here continues from Bindu issue 610.

sei kāle lalitā viśākha dui jana
vana haite puṣpa laye kailā āgamana
tāhāḍige dekhi abhimanyu mātā kaya
bhāla haila torā ye āile e samaya
esa esa rādhikāra nikaṭe yāiyā
kahiba sakala kathā prakāśa kariya

In the meantime, Lalita and Vishakha returned together from picking flowers in the forest. “It is good that you have arrived now!” said the mother of Abhimanyu (Jatila) when she noticed them, “Come! Come! Let us proceed to Radhika’s presence.” Jatila then began to tell them all that had just happened. (215-217)

eta kahi calilena rādhāra bhavane
tīṅha tāñhāḍike dekhi bhāvichena mane



Unknown artist. From the Punjab Hills, circa 1800-1820.

Radha as the proṣṭa-bhartṛkā nāyikā, the heroine in separation, longing for Krishna

*eki kena jaratī kareṇa āgamana
sange laye apurva yoginī ekajana
ihādera pāche āse dui saharī
jānite nā pāri hetu mane tarka kari*

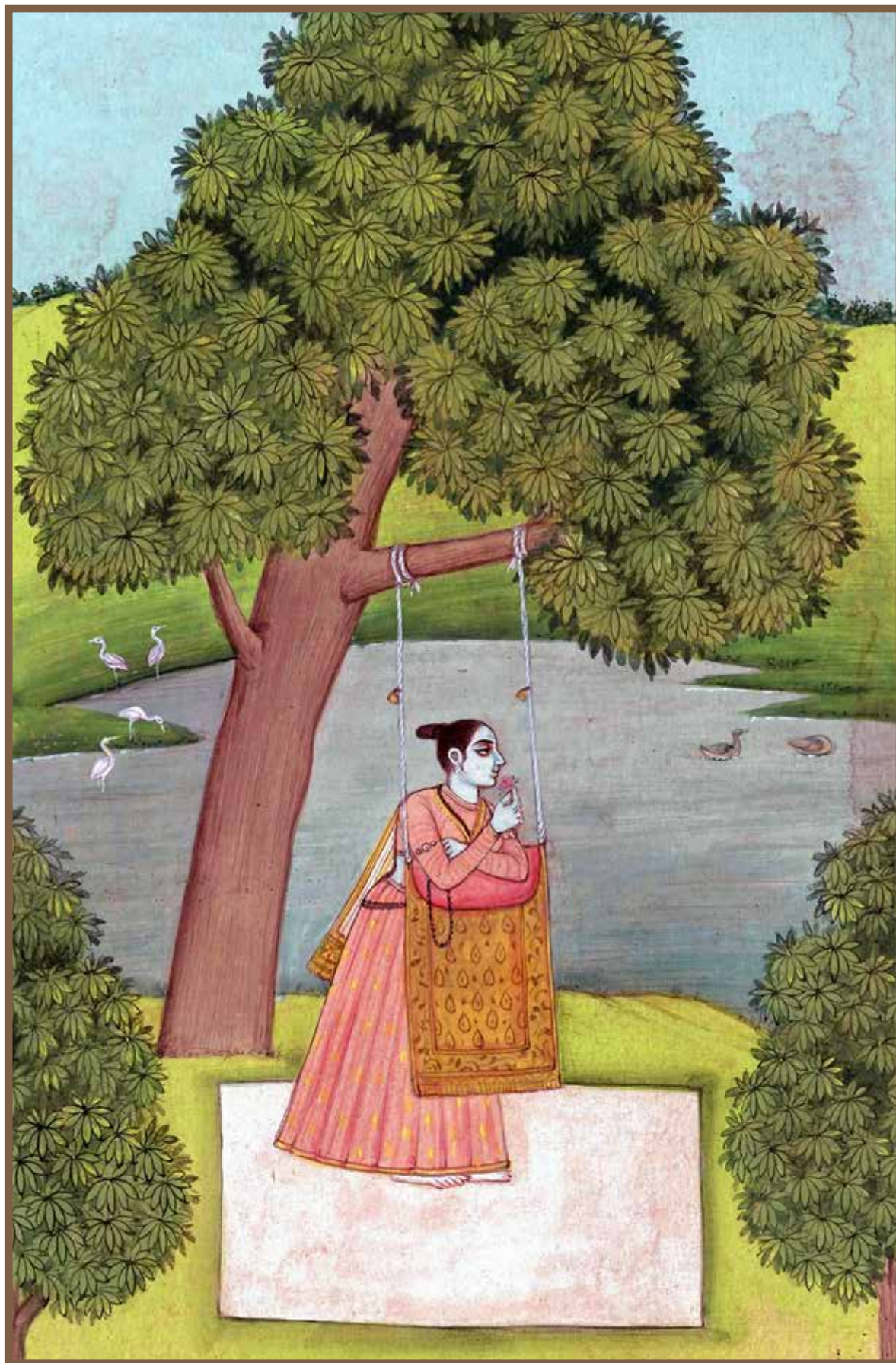
While informing them of what had happened, they drew near Radha's chamber. Looking in their direction, Radha began to wonder, "What is this? The old woman? But why? Approaching with a most remarkable yogini? And my two handmaidens following along behind?" Unaware of what their approach may portend, she began to reason as follows: (218-20)

*giyāchilā ihārā bandure ānibāre
bujhi nāhi pāiyāche dekhite tānhāre
kimvā kora aparādha bhāviyā antare
āse nāi bandhu sakhī vākye mora ghare
tāhā jīñāsīte mana ati utkaṅṭhita
ha-ila tāhāte vighna vṛddhā upastita*

(Radha wonders) "They went to bring my friend. Am I now to understand that they could not find him? Or perhaps, within his heart, he ponders some misdemeanour of mine, and my *sakhīs* now return to my chamber only to tell me that my friend has not come? Although my heart longs to question them, an obstacle presents itself in the shape of the old woman." (221-223)

*eirūpa śrī rādhikā bhāvichena mane
jaṭilā nikaṭa hailā janārdana sane
tare dekhi śrī rādhikā uṭhe dāḍadāilā
tāira prati jaṭilā kahite ārambhilā*

As the beautiful Radhika thought to herself in this manner, just then, Jatila, accompanied by Janardan, arrived by her side. Upon noting Jatila's approach, Radha rose to her feet, and Jatila began to speak to her as follows: (224-225)



Vintage painting by an unknown artist.

Krishna dressed as a yogini meditating on Radha



Unknown artist. Pahari style from the Mewar area in Rajasthan. 1714.

Radha-Krishna's pastime of separation

badhumātā dekha ei apūrva yoginī
 bhuta bhāvi varttamāna trikāla darśinī
 ihāra prabhāta dekhi heno haya jñāna
 yamunā dhārīnī nahe ihāra samāna
 bhramaṇa karena eha gurura ādeśe
 jīvahita karibāre divya upadeśe
 eha kahibena tohe kichu hita kathā
 śravaṇa karaha tāhā nā kara anyathā

“O *badhu-mātā* (daughter-in-law)! Behold this extraordinarily wonderful yogini. Being aware of all the three times (*trikāla darśinī*), she is able to tell past, present and future. When I saw her this morning at dawn, I thought that even Yamuna-dharini could not compare with her. On her guru’s behest, she wanders here and there, imparting spiritual counsel entirely for the benefit of others. She has come here especially to speak some words for your good. Pay exclusive attention to her words of advice.” (226-229)

[**Note:** The term “*yamunā-dhārīnī*” (literally, “she who bears, holds, or sustains the Yamuna”) in text 227 is somewhat ambiguous. It’s not clear who it is referring to.

One suggested meaning of *yamunā-dhārīnī* could be the consort of Lord Shiva. The earth supports or holds the Yamuna, and the earth is generally considered to be the *śakti* of Lord Shiva’s consort. Since Krishna

was dressed in dreadlocks and ashes like a follower of Lord Shiva, and (as seen in the previous issue in text 183) he was chanting the names of Shiva, it’s possible that the term *yamunā-dhārīnī* refers to Shiva’s wife. In her form as Durga or Mayadevi it could be said that she is maintaining the earth and thereby the Yamuna. Following this idea, the meaning could be that when Jatila introduces Mahamati to Radha she is saying, “Look! Here is someone who is even more splendid than the goddess who supports the Yamuna.” Or in other words, here is a yogini who is even more beautiful than the wife of Lord Shiva.

We took this question to the learned Sanskrit scholar Krishna Kamal Goswami from Nandagaon in Vraja. He offered a second opinion, explaining to us:

“*Yamunā-dhārīnī*” is a description of any lady who has the qualities of the Yamuna. The Yamuna is *sarit*, meaning, “a river filled with *rasa*”. Yamuna is also *saumya* — “very gentle and peaceful”. What is the difference between the Ganga and the Yamuna? The Ganga is very *cañcalā* — rough, unsteady, and loud, whereas Yamuna is peaceful. By this meaning, Jatila is describing the yogini (Krishna) as *yamunā-dhārīnī*, because the yogini has the peaceful qualities of the Yamuna.

From another perspective, if we consider the phrase according to technical Sanskrit grammar, the compound word, *yamunā-dhārīnī* is a *bahuvrīhi*



Unknown artist.

Radha looks at a painting of Krishna

tatpuruṣa-type of feminine compound, meaning, “She who bears, holds, or sustains the Yamuna.” Who is it that bears, holds, or sustains the Yamuna? In classical Sanskrit usage, the phrase refers to the Yamuna herself; as the river-goddess is conceived as the very embodiment and container of her river’s waters – she “holds” them by being the river.]

*eta śuni śrī rādhikā bhāvena hiyāya
e kona śankata āsī ghāṭala āmāya*

*ki kare yoginī tāhā kemane jāniba
nā jāni vā ki kariyā svikāra kariba*

*ei mata bhāvichena vrindāvanēśvarī
tānre sambodhana kari kahichena hari*

Hearing these words, noble-minded Radhika began to deliberate in her heart, “What is this obstacle I must face now! How can this yogini know everything, past, present and future, and yet, without knowing anything about her I must consent to this interview?” As Vrindavaneshwari thought to herself in this manner, Hari (Mahamati) addressed her as follows: (230-232)

*pativratā-śiromaṇi nā hao cintita
śunaha vacana mora kahi atihita*

*duṣṭha loka-kathā śuni eita jaṭilā
tomā prati ye ye kaṭu kathā kahichilā*

*ihāra se doṣa tumi kara kṣamāpaṇa
anyathā ihāra habe aśubha ghaṭana*

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*pativratā nārī jāra prati ruṣṭha haya
tāra putra dhana dhānya saba pāya kṣaya*

*eta śuni bhāvichena vrindāvanēśvarī
yoginī e saba kathā jānila ki kari*

“Don’t worry, O *pativratā-śiromaṇi* (best of the chaste wives), as what I shall now speak is most beneficial. It is only because she listens to the words of wicked people that Jatila showers you with harsh words. Forgive her for this shortcoming, otherwise some misfortune may befall her if you do not forgive her: for if a *pativratā* entertains wrath towards someone, then that person’s son, wealth and good fortune are all subject to destruction.” Hearing these words Vrindavaneshwari Radha began to think, “How is this yogini aware of all these matters?” (233-37) [To be continued in the next issue.] 🍌

— English translation by Jagannath Mishra Das from Raghunandana Goswami’s Śrī Śrī Rādhā-mādhavodaya. Pages 187 to 188. Published by Niradachandra Chakravarti. Kolkata. 1312 Sal. (1905 CE) Bengali.



Krishna tries to break Radha's loving sulky anger