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### THE CREST JEWEL AMONG KRISHNA'S LOVERS

*Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Thakur*

Sixteen thousand gopis were present and serving Sri Krishna in the *rāsa* dance arena. By His inconceivable potency, the Lord of all mystic power, Sri Krishna, expanded Himself in many forms and, by placing Himself between two gopis, enjoyed the *rāsa* dance with His maidservants. Seeing this, Srimati became a little angry. She thought, “Am I not the topmost maidservant of Sri Krishna? Can Sri Krishna’s life go on without Me? Sixteen thousand gopis can serve Him in every way. These sixteen thousand maidservants have given up everything for Sri Govinda – their adherence to worldly etiquette and Vedic injunctions, their family relationships, their modesty, their patience, their attempts to please their relatives, and fear of their relatives’ chastisement. They are gratifying Krishna’s senses with everything they possess. If Sri Krishna can leave all of them for My sake, then I will think I am a real maidservant of Sri Krishna.”

Thinking like this, Srimati Radhika left the *rāsa-līlā* arena. But then Sri Krishna’s *rāsa-līlā* suddenly stopped. She for whom everything is carried out and for whom the very *rāsa* dance pastime is enacted – and without whom the *rāsa* festival would not have

even begun – why wouldn’t Krishna stop His *rāsa* dance in Her absence?

Soon Govinda too left the *rāsa* arena to search for His dearest heroine. Then all the gopis said to one another “O friend! Krishna left us and took Radha to a secluded place. Therefore, She must have worshipped the Supreme Lord more than any of us.”

Without Sri Radhika, all other gopis combined cannot give Krishna pleasure. Rather, all the other gopis are there simply to enhance the mellows of Krishna’s sporting activities with Sri Radha. In his *Gīta-govinda* (3.1), Sri Jayadeva Gosvāmipada writes:

*kaṁsārīr api saṁsāra-  
vāsānā-baddha-śṛṅkhalām  
rādhām ādhāya hr̥daye  
tatyāja vraja-sundarīḥ*

“Lord Krishna, the enemy of Kamsa, took Srimati Radharani within His heart, for He desired to dance with Her. Thus He left the arena of the *rāsa* dance and the company of all the other beautiful damsels of Vraja.”

—Excerpt from the lecture given by Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Thakur on 6th September 1924(Radhastami) ❀

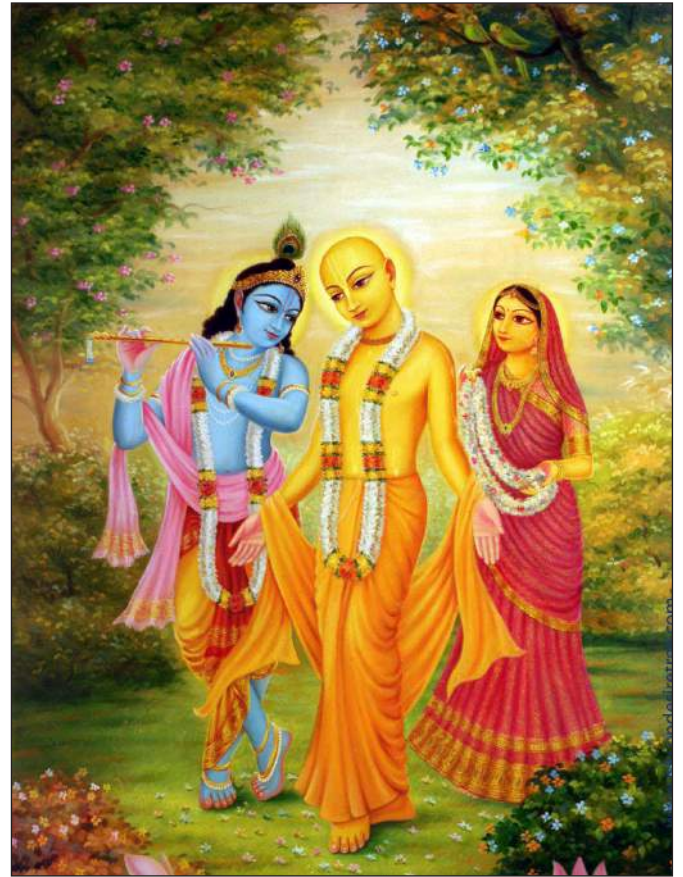


**WHO IS SRIMATI RADHARANI?***Srila Krishna Das Kaviraj Goswami*

Four kinds of devotees are the receptacles of the four kinds of mellows in love of God, namely servitude, friendship, parental affection and conjugal love. Each kind of devotee feels that his sentiment is the most excellent, and thus in that mood he tastes great happiness with Lord Krishna. But if we compare the sentiments in an impartial mood, we find that the conjugal sentiment is superior to all others in sweetness. Increasing love is experienced in various tastes, one above another. But that love which has the highest taste in the gradual succession of desire manifests itself in the form of conjugal love. Therefore I call it *madhurā-rāsa*. It has two further divisions, namely wedded and unwedded love. There is a great increase of mellow in the unwedded conjugal mood. Such love is found nowhere but in Vraja. This mood is unbounded in the damsels of Vraja, but among them it finds its perfection in Sri Radha. Her pure, mature love surpasses that of all others. Her love is the cause of Lord Krishna's tasting the sweetness of the conjugal relationship. Therefore Lord Gauranga, who is Sri Hari Himself, accepted the sentiments of Radha and thus fulfilled His own desires. Lord Chaitanya is the shelter of the demigods, the goal of the Upanishads, the be all and end all of the great sages, the beautiful shelter of His devotees, and the essence of the love of the lotus eyed gopis. Will He again be the object of my vision? Lord Krishna desired to taste the limitless nectarean mellows of the love of one of His multitude of loving damsels [Sri Radha], and so He has assumed the form of Lord Chaitanya. He has tasted that love while hiding His own dark complexion with Her effulgent yellow color.

The loving affairs of Sri Radha and Krishna are transcendental manifestations of the Lord's internal pleasure giving potency. Although Radha and Krishna are one in Their identity, They separated Themselves eternally. Now these two transcendental identities have again united, in the form of Sri Krishna Chaitanya. Radha and Krishna are one and the same, but They have assumed two bodies. Thus They enjoy each other, tasting the mellows of love. Now, to enjoy *rāsa*, They have appeared in one body as Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. Srimati Radhika is the transformation of Krishna's love. She is His internal energy called *hlādinī*. That *hlādinī* energy gives Krishna pleasure and nourishes His devotees.

Lord Krishna's body is eternal [*sat*], full of knowledge [*cit*] and full of bliss [*ānanda*]. His one spiritual energy manifests three forms. *Hlādinī* is



His aspect of bliss; *sandhinī*, of eternal existence; and *sainvit*, of cognizance, which is also accepted as knowledge. O Lord, You are the support of everything. The three attributes modes, which cause happiness, misery and mixtures of the two, do not exist in You, *hlādinī*, *sandhinī* and *sainvit* exist in You as one spiritual energy. But the material - for You have no material qualities. The essential portion of the *sandhinī* potency is *śuddha-sattva*. Lord Krishna's existence rests upon it. Krishna's mother, father, abode, house, bedding, seats and so on are all transformations of *śuddha-sattva*. The condition of pure goodness [*śuddha-sattva*], in which the Supreme Personality of Godhead is revealed without any covering, is called Vasudeva. In that pure state the Supreme Godhead, who is beyond the material senses and who is known as Vasudeva, is perceived by my mind. The essence of the *sainvit* potency is knowledge that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is Lord Krishna. All other kinds of knowledge, such as the knowledge of Brahman, are its components.

The essence of the *hlādinī* potency is love of God, the essence of love of God is emotion [*bhāva*], and the ultimate development of emotion is *mahābhāva*. Sri Radha Thakurani is the embodiment of *mahābhāva*. She is the repository of all good qualities and the crest jewel among all the lovely consorts of Lord Krishna.





Of these two gopis [Radharani and Chandravali], Srimati Radharani is superior in all respects. She is the embodiment of *mahābhāva*, and She surpasses all in good qualities. Her mind, senses and body are steeped in love for Krishna. She is Krishna's own energy, and She helps Him in His pastimes. I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord, who resides in His own realm, Goloka, with Radha, who resembles His own spiritual figure and who embodies the extensions of Her bodily form and who are imbued and permeated with ever-ecstatic potency [*hlādinī*]. Their companions are Her confidantes, who embody - blissful spiritual *rāsa*.

The beloved consorts of Lord Krishna are of three kinds: the goddesses of fortune, the queens, and the milkmaids of Vraja, who are the foremost of all. These consorts all proceed from Radhika. Just as the fountainhead, Lord Krishna, is the cause of all incarnations, so Sri Radha is the cause of all these consorts. The goddesses of fortune are partial manifestations of Srimati Radhika, and the queens are reflections of Her image. The goddesses of fortune are Her plenary portions, and they display the forms of *vaibhava-vilāsa*. The queens are of the nature of Her *vaibhava-prakāśa*. The Vraja-devis have diverse bodily features. They are Her expansions and are the instruments for expanding *rāsa*. Without many consorts, there is not such exultation in *rāsa*. Therefore

there are many manifestations of Srimati Radharani to assist in the Lord's pastimes. Among them are various groups of consorts in Vraja who have varieties of sentiments and mellows. They help Lord Krishna taste all the sweetness of the *rāsa* dance and other pastimes. Radha is the one who gives pleasure to Govinda, and She is also the enchantress of Govinda. She is the be all and end all of Govinda, and the crest jewel of all His consorts.

The transcendental goddess Srimati Radharani is the direct counterpart of Lord Sri Krishna. She is the central figure for all the goddesses of fortune. She possesses all the attractiveness to attract the all attractive Personality of Godhead. She is the primeval internal potency of the Lord. Her worship [*ārādhana*] consists of fulfilling the desires of Lord Krishna. Therefore the *Purāṇas* call Her Radhika. Truly the Personality of Godhead has been worshiped by Her. Therefore Lord Govinda, being pleased, has brought Her to a lonely spot, leaving us all behind. Therefore Radha is *parama-devatā*, the supreme goddess, and She is worshipable for everyone. She is the protectress of all, and She is the mother of the entire universe. Radha is the original source of all the goddesses of fortune. She fully represents the six opulences of Krishna. Therefore She is the supreme energy of Lord Krishna. All beauty and luster rest in Her body. All the lakshmi's derive their



beauty from Her. All the desires of Lord Krishna rest in Srimati Radharani. Srimati Radhika fulfills all the desires of Lord Krishna. Lord Krishna enchants the world, but Sri Radha enchants even Him. Therefore She is the supreme goddess of all. Sri Radha is the full power, and Lord Krishna is the possessor of full power. The two are not different, as evidenced by the revealed scriptures. They are indeed the same, just as musk and its scent are inseparable, or as fire and its heat are nondifferent. Thus Radha and Lord Krishna are one, yet They have taken two forms to enjoy the mellows of pastimes.

— *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* » *Ādi-līlā* » 4: *The Confidential Reasons for Lord Caitanya's Appearance* » Verses: 42 to 98 ❧

### DEVOTIONAL SERVICE IN CONJUGAL LOVE

*His Divine Grace*

*A .C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada*

A pure devotee's attraction to Krishna in conjugal love is called devotional service in conjugal love. Although such conjugal feelings are not at all material, there is some similarity between this spiritual love and material activities. Therefore, persons who are interested only in material activities are unable to understand this spiritual conjugal love, and these devotional reciprocations appear very mysterious to them. Rupa Goswami therefore describes conjugal love very briefly.

The impetuses of conjugal love are Krishna and His very dear consorts, such as Radharani and Her immediate associates. Lord Krishna has no rival; no one is equal to Him, and no one is greater than Him. His beauty is also without any rival, and because He excels all others in the pastimes of conjugal love, He is the original object of all conjugal love.

In the *Gīta-govinda*, by Jayadeva Goswami, one gopi tells her friend, "Krishna is the reservoir of all pleasure within this universe. His body is as soft as the lotus flower. And His free behavior with the gopis, which appears exactly like a young boy's attraction to a young girl, is a subject matter of transcendental conjugal love." A pure devotee follows in the footsteps of the gopis and worships the gopis as follows: "Let me offer my respectful obeisances to all the young cowherd girls, whose bodily features are so attractive. Simply by their beautiful attractive features they are worshipping the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Krishna." Out of all the young gopis, Srimati Radharani is the most prominent.

The beauty of Srimati Radharani is described as follows: "Her eyes defeat the attractive features of the eyes of the chakori bird. When one sees the face



of Radharani, he immediately hates the beauty of the moon. Her bodily complexion defeats the beauty of gold. Thus, let us all look upon the transcendental beauty of Srimati Radharani." Krishna's attraction for Radharani is described by Krishna Himself thus: "When I create some joking phrases in order to enjoy the beauty of Radharani, Radharani hears these joking words with great attention; but by Her bodily features and counterwords She neglects Me. And I even possess unlimited pleasure by Her neglect of Me, for She becomes so beautiful that She increases My pleasure one hundred times." A similar statement can be found in *Gīta-govinda*, wherein it is said that when the enemy of Kamsa, Sri Krishna, embraces Srimati Radharani, He immediately becomes entangled in a loving condition and gives up the company of all other gopis.

In the *Padyāvālī* of Rupa Goswami it is stated that when the gopis hear the sound of Krishna's flute, they immediately forget all rebukes offered by the elderly members of their families. They forget their defamation and the harsh behavior of their husbands. Their only thought is to go out in search of Krishna. When the gopis meet Krishna, the display of their





exchanging glances as well as their joking and laughing behavior is called *anubhāva*, or subecstasy in conjugal love.

In the *Lalita-mādhava*, Rupa Goswami explains that the movements of Krishna's eyebrows are just like the Yamuna and that the smiling of Radharani is just like the moonshine. When the Yamuna and the moonshine come in contact on the bank of the river, the water tastes just like nectar, and drinking it gives great satisfaction. It is as cooling as piles of snow. Similarly, in the *Padyāvalī*, one constant companion of Radharani says, "My dear moon faced Radharani, Your whole body appears very content, yet there are signs of tears in Your eyes. Your speech is faltering, and Your chest is also heaving. By all these signs I can understand that You must have heard the blowing of Krishna's flute, and as a result of this, Your heart is now melting."

In the same *Padyāvalī* there is the following description, which is taken as a sign of frustration in conjugal love. Srimati Radharani said, "Dear Mr. Cupid, please do not excite Me by throwing your arrows at My body. Dear Mr. Air, please do not arouse Me with the fragrance of flowers. I am now bereft of Krishna's loving attitude, and so, under the circumstances, what is the use of My sustaining this useless body? There is no need for such a body by any living entity." This is a sign of frustration in ecstatic love for Krishna.

Similarly, in *Dāna-keli-kaumudī*, Srimati Radharani, pointing to Krishna, says, "This clever boy of the forest has the beauty of a bluish lotus flower, and He can attract all the young girls of the universe. Now, after giving Me a taste of His transcendental body, He has enthused Me, and it is more than I can tolerate. I

am now feeling like a female elephant who has been enthused by a male elephant!" This is an instance of jubilation in ecstatic love with Krishna.

The steady ecstasy of conjugal love is the original cause of bodily enjoyment. In the *Padyāvalī* this original cause of union is described when Radharani tells one of Her constant companions, "My dear friend, who is this boy whose eyelids, dancing constantly, have increased the beauty of His face and attracted My desire for conjugal love? His ears are decorated with buds of *aśoka* flowers, and He has dressed Himself in yellow robes. By the sound of His flute, this boy has already made Me impatient."

The conjugal love of Radha-Krishna is never disturbed by any personal consideration. The undisturbed nature of the conjugal love between Radha and Krishna is described thus: "Just a little distance away from Krishna was mother Yashoda, and Krishna was surrounded by all of His friends. In front of His eyes was Chandravali, and, at the same time, on a chunk of stone in front of the entrance to Vraja stood the demon known as Vrsasura. But even in such circumstances, when Krishna saw Radharani standing just behind a bush of many creepers, immediately His beautiful eyebrows moved just like lightning toward Her."

Another instance is described as follows: "On one side of the courtyard the dead body of Shankhasura was lying, surrounded by many jackals. On another side were many learned *brāhmaṇas* who were all self-controlled. They were offering nice prayers, which were as soothing as the cool breeze in summer. In front of Krishna, Lord Baladeva was standing, causing a cooling effect. But even amid all these different circumstances

of soothing and disturbing effects, the lotus flower of ecstatic conjugal love that Krishna felt for Radharani could not wither." This love of Krishna for Radharani is often compared to a blooming lotus; the only difference is that Krishna's love remains ever increasingly beautiful. Conjugal love is divided into two portions: *vipralambha*, or conjugal love in separation, and *sambhoga*, or conjugal love in direct contact. *Vipralambha*, separation, has three subdivisions, known as (1) *pūrvārāga*, or preliminary attraction, (2) *māna*, or seeming anger, and (3) *pravāsa*, or separation by distance.

When the lover and the beloved have a distinct feeling of not meeting each other, that stage is called *pūrvā-rāga*, or preliminary attraction. In *Padyāvālī* Radharani told Her companion, "My dear friend, I was just going to the bank of the Yamuna, and all of a sudden a very nice boy whose complexion is like a dark blue cloud became visible in front of My eyes. He glanced over Me in a way that I cannot describe. But since this has occurred, I am sorry that I can no longer engage My mind in the duties of My household affairs." This is an instance of preliminary attraction for Krishna. In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, Tenth Canto, Fifty-third Chapter, verse 2, Krishna told the messenger *brāhmaṇa* who came from Rukmini, "My dear *brāhmaṇa*, just like Rukmini I cannot sleep at night, and My mind is always fixed on her. I know that her brother Rukmi is against Me and that due to his persuasion My marriage with her has been cancelled." This is another instance of preliminary attraction.

As far as *māna*, or anger, is concerned, there is the following incident described in *Gīta-govinda*: "When Srimati Radharani saw Krishna enjoying Himself in the company of several other gopis, She became a little jealous because Her special prestige was being dimmed. Therefore, She immediately left the scene and took shelter in a nice flower bush where the black drones were humming. Then, hiding Herself behind the creepers, She began to express Her sorrow to one of Her consorts." This is an instance of a seeming disagreement.

An example of *pravāsa*, or being out of contact because of living in a distant place, is given in the *Padyāvālī* as follows: "Since the auspicious day when Krishna left for Mathura, Srimati Radharani has been pressing Her head on one of Her hands and constantly shedding tears. Her face is always wet now, and therefore there is no chance of Her sleeping even for a moment." When the face becomes wet, the sleeping tendency is immediately removed. So when Radharani was always weeping for Krishna because of His separation, there was no chance of Her getting any sleep for Herself. In the *prahlāda-saṁhitā* Uddhava says, "The Supreme

Personality of Godhead, Govinda, panic-stricken due to being pierced by the arrows of Cupid, is always thinking of you [the gopis], and He is not even accepting His regular lunch. Nor is He getting any proper rest."

When the lover and beloved come together and enjoy one another by direct contact, this stage is called *sambhoga*. There is a statement in *Padyāvālī* as follows: "Krishna embraced Srimati Radharani in such an expert manner that He appeared to be celebrating the dancing ceremony of the peacocks."

— From *fifth wave, Nectar of Devotion, A Summary Study of Śrīla Rupa Goswami's Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* ❀

### ŚRĪ RADHIKAṢṬAKA

*Eight Prayers Glorifying Sri Radhika*  
*Srila Raghunatha Das Goswami*

*rāsa-valita-mṛgākṣī-mauli-māṅkya-lakṣmīḥ*  
*pramudita-muravairi-prema-vāpi-marālī*  
*vraja-vara-vṛṣabhānoḥ puṇya-girvāṇa-vallī*  
*snāpayatu nija-dāsye rādhikā māṁ kadā nu*

When will Sri Radhika, who is a splendid ruby in the crown of all nectarean doe eyed girls, a swan swimming in the lake of love for jubilant Lord Krishna, and a celestial vine sprouted from Vraja's exalted King Vrishabhanu, bathe me in Her service?

*sphurad-arūṇa-dukūla-dyotitodyan-nitamba-*  
*sthalam abhi vara-kāñcī-lāsyam ullāsayantī*  
*kuca-kalasa-vilāsa-sphīta-muktā-sara-śrīḥ*  
*snāpayatu nija-dāsye rādhikā māṁ kadā nu*

When will Sri Radhika, who makes the sash of bells dance on Her hips splendid with red silk, and whose necklace of large pearls plays on the waterpots of Her breasts, bathe me in Her service?

*sarasija-vara-garbhākharva-kāntiḥ samudyat-*  
*taruṇima-ghanasārāśliṣṭa-kaiśora-sīdhuḥ*  
*dara-vikasita-hāsyā-ṣyandi-bimbādhārāgrā*  
*snāpayatu nija-dāsye rādhikā māṁ kadā nu*

When will Sri Radhika, who is as splendid as a great lotus whorl, who is new nectar mixed with the camphor of youth, and whose bimba fruit lips blossom with a gentle smile, bathe me in Her service?





*ati-caṭulataranī taṁ kānanāntar milantanī  
vraja-nṛpati-kumārānī vikṣya śaṅkā-kulākṣī  
madhura-mṛdu-vacobhiḥ samstutā netra-bhaṅgyā  
snapayatu nija-dāsye rādhikā mānī kadā nu*

When will Sri Radhika, who, accidentally meeting restless Krishna in the outskirts of the forest, stared at Him with suspicious eyes as he cast amorous glances at Her and flattered Her with many sweet and gentle words, bathe me in Her service?

*vraja-kula-mahilānānī prāna-bhūtākhilānānī  
paśūpa-pati-grhīṇyāḥ Krishna-vat-prema-pātram  
su-lalita-lalitāntaḥ-sneha-phullāntarātmā  
snapayatu nija-dāsye rādhikā mānī kadā nu*

When will Sri Radhika, who the girls of Vraja love as much as their own lives, who the gopa queen Yashoda loves as much as Lord Krishna, and who makes the heart of charming lalita blossom with love, bathe me in Her service?

*niravadhi sa-viśākhā śākhī-yūtha-prasūmanīḥ  
srajam iha racayanī vaijayantīnī vanānte  
agha-vijaya-varoraḥ-preyasī śreyasī sā  
snapayatu nija-dāsye rādhikā mānī kadā nu*

## nityaṁ bhāgavata-sevayā

When will Sri Radhika, who in the company of Vishakha at the forest's edge strings a Vaijayanti garland from the flowers of many trees, and who is the beautiful beloved resting on Lord Krishna's handsome chest, bathe me in Her service?

*prakṛita-nija-vāsaṁ snigdha-veṇu-praṇāddair  
druta-gati-harim āratī prāpya kuṅḇe smitākṣī  
śravaṇa-kuhara-kaṇḍūnī tanvatī namra-vaktrā  
snapayatu nija-dāsye rādhikā mānī kadā nu*

When will Sri Radhika, who smelling the fragrance of Lord Krishna and hearing the sweet sounds of His flute, ran to Him in the forest grove and, scratching Her ears, approached Him with smiling eyes and lowered face, bathe me in Her service?

*amala-kamala-rāji-sparśa-vāta-praśīte  
nija-sarasi nidāghe sāyam ullāsinīyam  
parijana-gaṇa-yuktā krīḍayantī bakārīnī  
snapayatu nija-dāsye rādhikā mānī kadā nu*

When will Sri Radhika, who on a summer evening happily plays with Lord Krishna by Her own lake cooled by breezes touching the many splendid lotuses, bathe me in Her service?

*paṭhati vimala-cetā miṣṭa-Radhaṣṭakanī yaḥ  
parihṛta-nikhilāśā-santatiḥ kātaraḥ san  
paśūpa-pati-kumāraḥ kāmam āmoditas taṁ  
nija-jana-gaṇa-madhye rādhikāyās tanoti*

Pleased with any person who, abandoning all hope (of material happiness) and overwhelmed (with love), reads this sweet Sri *Radhaṣṭaka* with a pure heart, the prince of Vraja of His own accord places him among Sri Radha's personal associates.

— From *Sri Stavāvalī* by Sri Raghunatha Das Goswami, Translation by Sriman Kusakrta Das ॐ

!! Sri Sri Nitai Gaurchandra Jayati !!

### Nityam Bhagavata-sevaya

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