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THE SONG OF THE BEE

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Srila Shukadeva Gosvami

"THESE ARE OUR WIVES"
Disciples of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

UDDHAVA AND NANDA MAHARAJA
Sri Srimad Gaur Govinda Swami

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Shukadeva Gosvami said: The young women of Vraja became astonished upon seeing Lord Krishna’s servant, who had long arms, whose eyes resembled a newly grown lotus, who wore a yellow garment and a lotus garland, and whose lotus like face glowed with brightly polished earrings. “Who is this handsome man?” the gopis asked. “Where has he come from, and whom does he serve? He’s wearing Krishna’s clothes and ornaments!” Saying this, the gopis eagerly crowded around Uddhava, whose shelter was the lotus feet of Lord Uttamashloka, Sri Krishna. Bowing their heads in humility, the gopis duly honored Uddhava with their shy, smiling glances and pleasing words. They took him to a quiet place, seated him comfortably and began to question him, for they recognized him to be a messenger from Krishna, the master of the goddess of fortune

[**The gopis said:**] We know that you are the personal servant of Krishna, the chief of the Yadus, and that you have come here on the order of your good master, who desires to give pleasure to His parents. We see nothing else He might consider worth remembering in these cow pastures of Vraja. Indeed, the bonds of affection for one’s family members are difficult to break, even for a sage. The friendship shown toward other those who are not family members is motivated by personal interest, and thus it is a pretense that lasts only until one’s purpose is fulfilled. Such friendship is just like the interest men take in women, or bees in flowers. Prostitutes abandon a penniless man, subjects an incompetent king, students their teacher once they have finished their education, and priests a man who has remunerated them for a sacrifice. Birds abandon a tree when its fruits are gone, guests a house after they have eaten, animals a forest that has burnt down, and a lover the woman he has enjoyed, even though she remains attached to him.

Thus speaking, the gopis, whose words, bodies and minds were fully dedicated to Lord Govinda, put aside all their regular work now that Krishna’s messenger, Sri Uddhava, had arrived among them. Constantly remembering the activities their

beloved Krishna had performed in His childhood and youth, they sang about them and cried without shame. One of the gopis, while meditating on Her previous association with Krishna, saw a honeybee before Her and imagined it to be a messenger sent by Her beloved. Thus She spoke as follows.

[**The gopī said:**] O honeybee, O friend of a cheater, don’t touch My feet with your whiskers, which are smeared with the *kuṅkuma* that rubbed onto Krishna’s garland when it was crushed by the breasts of a rival lover! Let Krishna satisfy the women of Mathura. One who sends a messenger like you will certainly be ridiculed in the Yadus’ assembly. After making us drink the enchanting nectar of His lips only once, Krishna suddenly abandoned us, just as you might quickly abandon some flowers. How is it, then, that Goddess Padma willingly serves His lotus feet? Alas! The answer must certainly be that her mind has been stolen away by His deceitful words. O bee, why do you sing here so much about the Lord of the Yadus, in front of us homeless people? These topics are old news to us. Better you sing about that friend of Arjuna in front of His new girlfriends, the burning desire in whose breasts He has now relieved. Those ladies will surely give you the charity you are begging. In heaven, on earth or in the subterranean sphere, what women are unavailable to Him? He simply arches His eyebrows and smiles with deceptive charm, and they all become His. The supreme goddess herself worships the dust of His feet, so what is our position in comparison? But at least those who are wretched can chant His name, Uttamashloka. Keep your head off My feet! I know what you’re doing. You expertly learned diplomacy from Mukunda, and now you come as His messenger with flattering words. But He abandoned those who for His sake alone gave up their children, husbands and all other relations. He’s simply ungrateful. Why should I make up with Him now? Like a hunter, He cruelly shot the king of the monkeys with arrows. Because He was conquered by a woman, He disfigured another woman who came to Him with lusty desires. And even after consuming the gifts of Bali Maharaja, He bound him up with ropes as if he were a crow. So let us give up all friendship with this dark-complexioned boy, even if we can’t give

up talking about Him. To hear about the pastimes that Krishna regularly performs is nectar for the ears. For those who relish just a single drop of that nectar, even once, their dedication to material duality is ruined. Many such persons have suddenly given up their wretched homes and families and, themselves becoming wretched, traveled here to Vrindavana to wander about like birds, begging for their living. Faithfully taking His deceitful words as true, we became just like the black deer's foolish wives, who trust the cruel hunter's song. Thus we repeatedly felt the sharp pain of lust caused by the touch of His nails. O messenger, please talk about something besides Krishna. O friend of My dear one, has My beloved sent you here again? I should honor you, friend, so please choose whatever boon you wish. But why have you come back here to take us to Him, whose conjugal love is so difficult to give up? After all, gentle bee, His consort is the goddess Sri, and she is always with Him, staying upon His chest. O Uddhava! It is indeed regrettable that Krishna resides in Mathura. Does He remember His father's household affairs and His friends, the cowherd boys? O great soul! Does He ever talk about us, His maidservants? When will He lay on our heads His *aguru*-scented hand?

Shukadeva Gosvami said: Having heard this, Uddhava then tried to pacify the gopis, who were most eager to see Lord Krishna. He thus began relating to them the message of their beloved.

[**Sri Uddhava said:**] Certainly you gopis are all-successful and are universally worshiped because you have dedicated your minds in this way to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vasudeva. Devotional service unto Lord Krishna is attained by charity, strict vows, austerities and fire sacrifices, by japa, study of Vedic texts, observance of regulative principles and, indeed, by the performance of many other auspicious practices. By your great fortune you have established an unexcelled standard of pure devotion for the Lord Uttamashloka even the sages can hardly attain. By your great fortune you have left your sons, husbands, bodily comforts, relatives and homes in favor of the supreme male, who is known as Krishna. You have rightfully claimed the privilege of unalloyed love for the transcendental Lord, O most glorious gopis. Indeed, by exhibiting your love for Krishna in separation from Him, you have shown me great

mercy. My good ladies, now please hear your beloved's message, which I, the confidential servant of my master, have come here to bring you.

[**The Supreme Lord said:**] You are never actually separated from Me, for I am the Soul of all creation. Just as the elements of nature ether, air, fire, water and earth are present in every created thing, so I am present within everyone's mind, life air and senses, and also within the physical elements and the modes of material nature. By Myself I create, sustain and withdraw Myself within Myself by the power of My personal energy, which comprises the material elements, the senses and the modes of nature. Being composed of pure consciousness, or knowledge, the soul is distinct from everything material and is uninvolved in the entanglements of the modes of nature. We can perceive the soul through the three functions of material nature known as wakefulness, sleep and deep sleep. As a person just arisen from sleep may continue to meditate on a dream even though it is illusory, so by the agency of the mind one meditates on the sense objects, which the senses can then obtain. Therefore, one should become fully alert and bring the mind under control. According to intelligent authorities, this is the ultimate conclusion of all the Vedas, as well as all practice of yoga, *Sāṅkhya*, renunciation, austerity, sense control and truthfulness, just as the sea is the ultimate destination of all rivers. But the actual reason why I, the beloved object of your sight, have stayed far away from you is that I wanted to intensify your meditation upon Me and thus draw your minds closer to Me. When her lover is far away, a woman thinks of him more than when he is present before her. Because your minds are totally absorbed in Me and free from all other engagement, you remember Me always, and so you will very soon have Me again in your presence. Although some gopis had to remain in the cowherd village and so could not join the *rāsa* dance to sport with Me at night in the forest, they were nonetheless fortunate. Indeed, they attained Me by thinking of My potent pastimes.

Shukadeva Gosvami said: The women of Vraja were pleased to hear this message from their dearest Krishna. His words having revived their memory, they addressed Uddhava as follows.

[The gopis said:] It is very good that Kamsa, the enemy and persecutor of the Yadus, has now been killed, along with his followers. And it is also very good that Lord Acyuta is living happily in the company of His well-wishing friends and relatives, whose every desire is now fulfilled. Gentle Uddhava, is the elder brother of Gada now bestowing on the city women the pleasure that actually belongs to us? We suppose those ladies worship Him with generous glances full of affectionate, shy smiles. Sri Krishna is expert in all kinds of conjugal affairs and is the darling of the city women. How can He not become entangled, now that He's constantly adored by their enchanting words and gestures? O saintly one, does Govinda ever remember us during His conversations with the city women? Does He ever mention us village girls as He freely talks with them? Does He recall those nights in the Vrindavana forest, lovely with lotus, jasmine and the bright moon? As we glorified His charming pastimes, He enjoyed with us, His beloved girlfriends, in the circle of the *rāsa* dance, which resounded with the music of ankle bells.

Will that descendant of Dasharha return here and by the touch of His limbs bring back to life those who are now burning with the grief He Himself has caused? Will He save us in that way, just as Lord Indra brings a forest back to life with his water-bearing clouds? But why should Krishna come here after winning a kingdom, killing His enemies and marrying the daughters of kings? He's satisfied there, surrounded by all His friends and well-wishers. The great soul Krishna is the Lord of the goddess of fortune, and He automatically achieves whatever He desires. How can we forest-dwellers or any other women fulfill His purposes when He is already fulfilled within Himself? Indeed, the greatest happiness is to renounce all desires, as even the prostitute Pingala has declared. Yet even though we know this, we cannot give up our hopes of attaining Krishna. Who can bear to give up intimate talks with Lord Uttamashloka? Although He shows no interest in her, Goddess Sri never moves from her place on His chest.

Dear Uddhava Prabhu, when Krishna was here in the company of Sankarshana, He enjoyed all these rivers, hills, forests, cows and flute sounds.

All these remind us constantly of Nanda's son. Indeed, because we see Krishna's footprints, which are marked with divine symbols, we can never forget Him. O Uddhava, how can we forget Him when our hearts have been stolen away by the charming way He walks, His generous smile and playful glances, and His honeylike words? O master, O master of the goddess of fortune, O master of Vraja! O destroyer of all suffering, Govinda, please lift Your Gokula out of the ocean of distress in which it is drowning!

Shukadeva Gosvami continued: Lord Krishna's messages having relieved their fever of separation, the gopis then worshiped Uddhava, recognizing him as nondifferent from their Lord, Krishna. Uddhava remained there for several months, dispelling the gopis' sorrow by chanting the topics of Lord Krishna's pastimes. Thus he brought joy to all the people of Gokula. All the days that Uddhava dwelled in Nanda's cowherd village seemed like a single moment to the residents of Vraja, for Uddhava was always discussing Krishna. That servant of Lord Hari, seeing the rivers, forests, mountains, valleys and flowering trees of Vraja, enjoyed inspiring the inhabitants of Vrindavana by reminding them of Lord Krishna. Thus seeing how the gopis were always disturbed because of their total absorption in Krishna, Uddhava was supremely pleased. Desiring to offer them all respect, he sang as follows.

[Uddhava sang:] Among all persons on earth, these cowherd women alone have actually perfected their embodied lives, for they have achieved the perfection of unalloyed love for Lord Govinda. Their pure love is hankered after by those who fear material existence, by great sages, and by ourselves as well. For one who has tasted the narrations of the infinite Lord, what is the use of taking birth as a highclass *brāhmaṇa*, or even as Lord Brahma himself? How amazing it is that these simple women who wander about the forest, seemingly spoiled by improper behavior, have achieved the perfection of unalloyed love for Krishna, the Supreme Soul! Still, it is true that the Supreme Lord Himself awards His blessings even to an ignorant worshiper, just as the best medicine works even when taken by a person ignorant of its ingredients. When

Lord Sri Krishna was dancing with the gopis in the *rāsātilā*, the gopis were embraced by the arms of the Lord. This transcendental favor was never bestowed upon the goddess of fortune or other consorts in the spiritual world. Indeed, never was such a thing even imagined by the most beautiful girls in the heavenly planets, whose bodily luster and aroma resemble the lotus flower. And what to speak of worldly women who are very beautiful according to material estimation? The gopis of Vrindavana have given up the association of their husbands, sons and other family members, who are very difficult to give up, and they have forsaken the path of chastity to take shelter of the lotus feet of Mukunda, Krishna, which one should search for by Vedic knowledge. Oh, let me be fortunate enough to be one of the bushes, creepers or herbs in Vrindavana, because the gopis trample them and bless them with the dust of their lotus feet.

The goddess of fortune herself, along with Lord Brahma and all the other demigods, who are masters of yogic perfection, can worship the lotus feet of Krishna only within her mind. But during the *rāsa* dance Lord Krishna placed His feet upon these gopis' breasts, and by embracing those feet the gopis gave up all distress. I repeatedly offer my respects to the dust from the feet of the women of Nanda Maharaja's cowherd village. When these gopis loudly chant the glories of Sri Krishna, the vibration purifies the three worlds.

Shukadeva Gosvami said: Uddhava, the descendant of Dasharha, then took permission to leave from the gopis and from mother Yashoda and Nanda Maharaja. He bade farewell to all the cowherd men and, about to depart, mounted his chariot. As Uddhava was about to leave, Nanda and the others approached him bearing various items of worship. With tears in their eyes they addressed him as follows.

[**Nanda and the other cowherds said:**] May our mental functions always take shelter of Krishna's lotus feet, may our words always chant His names, and may our bodies always bow down to Him and serve Him. Wherever we are made to wander about this world by the Supreme Lord's will, in accordance with the reactions to our fruitive work, may our good works and charity always grant Us love for Lord Krishna.

[**Shukadeva Gosvami continued:**] O ruler of men, thus honored by the cowherd men with expressions of devotion for Lord Krishna, Uddhava went back to the city of Mathura, which was under Krishna's protection. After falling down to pay his homage, Uddhava described to Lord Krishna the immense devotion of the residents of Vraja. Uddhava also described it to Vasudeva, Lord Balarama and King Ugrasena and presented to them the gifts of tribute he had brought with him.

— *Srimad-Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) » Canto 10: The Summit Bonum » Chapter 45 » Verses 1–69 » Translations by Disciples of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.*

"THESE ARE OUR WIVES"

Disciples of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

*kācin madhukaram dṛṣṭvā
dhyāyanti kṛṣṇa-saṅgamam
priya-prasthāpitam dūtām
kalpayitvedam abravīt*

Srimati Radharani is referred to in this verse as *kācit*, "a certain *gopī*." To establish that this particular *gopī* is in fact Srimati Radharani, Srila Jiva Gosvami quotes the following verses from the *Agni Purāna*:

*gopyaḥ papracchur ūṣasi
kṛṣṇānucaram uddhavam
harī-līlā-vihārāṁś ca
tatraikām rādrikām vinā
rādḥā tad-bhāva-saṁlinā
vāsanāyā virāmitā
sakhībhiḥ sābhyadhāc chuddha-
vijñāna-guṇa-jṛmbhitam
ijyānte-vāsinām veda-
caramāṁśa-vibhāvanaiḥ*

"At dawn the gopis inquired from Krishna's servant, Uddhava, about the Lord's pastimes and recreation. Only Srimati Radharani, immersed in thought of Krishna, withdrew Her interest in the talks. Then Radha, who is worshiped by the residents of Her Vrindavana village, spoke up in the midst of Her girlfriends. Her words were full of pure transcendental knowledge and



expressed the ultimate portion of the Vedas."

In the *Bhagavad-gītā* (15.15) Lord Krishna states, *vedaiś ca sarvair aham eva vedyah*: "By all the Vedas, I am to be known." To know Krishna is to love Krishna, and thus Radharani, by Her own example and words, revealed Her supreme love for the Lord. Having quoted the above verses from the *Agni Purāṇa*, Srīla Jīva Gosvāmī also quotes the following from the *Nṛsimha-tāpanī Upaniṣad* (*Pūrva-khaṇḍa* 2.10): *yaṁ sarve devā namanti mumukṣavo brahma-vādinaś ca*. "All the demigods and all the transcendental philosophers who desire liberation bow down to the Supreme Lord." We should follow suit.

— *Srīmad-Bhāgavatam* (*Bhāgavata Purāṇa*) » Canto 10: *The Summum Bonum* » Chapter 47 » Verse 11 » Purport by Disciples of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swamī Prabhupada.

UDDHAVA AND NANDA MAHARAJA Sri Srīmad Gaur Govinda Swami

Srīman Uddhava then went to the *tīrtha* (holy bathing place) that Lord Krishna had given to the gopis so they could pass the time worshiping their worshipable Deity there. Very carefully hidden from the gopis, Uddhava bathed there and performed his daily duties there. Then he reverently approached the gopis. Respectful Uddhava then saw the gopis. Their

bodies were emaciated, their hair disheveled, their garments spotted with dirt, their glistening beauty gone, their forms dark as if covered by smoke or by ashes or by some other like substance, their eyes anxious, their lips filled with sighs, their mouths dry, and their eyes like the eyes of does that fear the flames of a forest fire. Seeing Uddhava, who had a dark complexion, long, round, and broad arms, a face splendid like the moon, lotus-like eyes, new youthfulness, handsomeness, shark-shaped earrings, and garments that defeated gold, and who made all that saw Him think they were seeing Krishna Himself, the gopis were for a long time filled with wonder.

As they gazed at Uddhava, who was remarkably like Krishna Himself, the gopis were not bewildered into thinking that Uddhava was Krishna. Their ecstasy of Love-for-Krishna became the eyes with which the gopis saw the truth of Uddhava. Sometimes the gopis thought certain inanimate objects were actually Krishna. Still, they never thought that about any living being. The gopis always followed the path of religion. As bumblebees, who depend on the lotus flowers for their very lives, surround a life-giving lotus-lake, in the same way, in that place filled with the fragrance of lotus flowers, the filled-with-wonder gopis politely surrounded Uddhava, who within and without was fragrant with the sweet fragrance of Sri Krishna.

After they had surrounded Uddhava, decided in their hearts that Uddhava must be an honored servant of Lord Krishna, politely worshiped Uddhava

and placed before him a comfortable seat and other offerings, the gopis became silent for some moments. Then, with artificial smiles concealing the burning sorrows that they felt, the gopis said: “From your fragrance and in other ways also we know that you must be a personal associate of Krishna. Still, who are we poor girls that we know enough that we can say something about who you are? Commanded by Krishna, you must have abandoned the opulence of Mathura City and come here to the cow-pasture-land of Vraja. That is why we girls can now easily approach you.

“If you have been sent here by our husband Krishna, then please be kind and reveal everything to us. Please do not say that to see Krishna’s parents Nanda and Yashoda is the root cause of your coming here. When considering causes the primary cause is first and the secondary causes come after. Even great sages do not stop loving their friends and kinsmen. O gentle Uddhava, why, then, did Krishna abandon His parents? Does even a clay pot abandon its parents, which are the earth and the potter’s wheel? You know what is right. That is why we ask this question of you. Alas! How sad it is that Krishna does not wish to be with His parents and does not think it right to place His glance on the people that live in this cowherd village of Vraja. In the city of Mathura are many demigods, humans, chariots, horses, and elephants, and great wealth as well. Here in Vraja the best of wealth is, alas, merely a rope for tying the cows.

“The relationship of the enjoyer and the enjoyed, which is seen in the relationship of the bumblebee and the flower, and in other relationships also, is fickle and impermanent. The relationships of men and women, relationships that exist only to attain a brief moment of pleasure, are generally fickle and impermanent also. Sometimes the relationship of a man and a woman is long-lasting. The relationship of husband and wife is not fickle or unsteady. It lasts. It follows the principles of religion. It brings happiness and auspiciousness. A paramour and his lady may stay together for some time, but they eventually abandon each other. A prostitute shuns a pauper. A rich man shuns an old prostitute.”

From the very first the gopis’ thoughts, words, and bodily actions were all as if tied with a rope to Sri Krishna. The gopis remained unaware of the auspicious and inauspicious conditions of the external world. Alas! Alas! Again and again burning in the flames of separation from Krishna, the agitated *gopī* spoke many harsh words, words unfit for the assembly of the kind and the gentle. Even when Uddhava, who was expert in dealing with many different kinds of situations, and who Lord Krishna Himself had sent there as a messenger, stood before them, the gopis, overcome with anguish, abandoned any attempt to be polite or gentle. So be it. What more shall I say? If I were to say the words, “The gopis then sang sweet songs describing their secret meetings with Krishna”, then my heart would be thrust into flames of anguish. What benefit would I attain by trying to describe the unbearable and wildly passionate love the gopis feel for Sri Krishna?

Then, silently bowing his head, Snigdhanakanta again said: Alas! Afraid of a scorpion, I fled, only to run into the mouth of a poison-fanged serpent. Although I fled from trying to describe the gopis’ love for Krishna, I have now fallen into the mouth of trying to describe the wild passions of Sri Radha’s glorious love for Sri Krishna. For a moment Snigdhanakanta felt flames of sorrow lick his heart. Then he suddenly became cheerful and said: Alas! Even though I am wide-awake, I think that I am seeing a nightmare. Accompanied by Her beloved Krishna, my Goddess Radha is present now before my eyes. Therefore I may say a little something about Her love for Krishna. It may be possible for me to somehow say something about the yawning awake of Her deep and intense love for Krishna.

Sri Radha thought: “Sri Krishna approached Me. Then He hid from Me and went away to Mathura City. In Mathura He must be enjoying many pastimes with the beautiful goddess-like girls there.”

Gazing at Krishna’s messenger Uddhava, and thinking in this way, Sri Radha was overcome with intense jealous anger. As Radha was staring at Krishna’s messenger Uddhava, a bumblebee flew nearby. Bewildered, Radha mistook the bumblebee for another messenger sent by Krishna. “At once I should chase him away with insults!” After thinking in this way, Sri Radha openly said to the bumblebee: “O wretch! Wretch! Why do



you approach Me? You are very bold and arrogant indeed. Go Away! Go to some faraway forest.” Casting a vicious glance at him, Radha mocked the bumblebee with these words: “Wretch! Rascal! You do not know what is right. You drink (pa) wine (madhu). That is why people call you by the name ‘madhu-pa.’” Laughing, Radha again said: “Aha! Perhaps it is right that you drink wine. After all, your master Krishna is the master of all kinds of wine.” Drawing a logical inference, Sri Radha harshly said: “Since you are both wine-drinkers, you and your master have the same nature.

“Krishna is the master of wine (madhu-pati) and you are a drinker of wine (madhu-pa). This is very well known. Therefore it is right that He is the master that maintains you and you are the servant maintained by Him.” Again finding fault with the bumblebee, Radha knitted her eyebrows and said: “O *gopī*-friends, please hear My words. This drunken bumblebee seems like a sincere-hearted though bewildered being. Still, because again and again he shakes his head and again and again he mumbles sounds that have no meaning, we can easily see that he is some kind of thief or some kind of rogue. He is a very surprising creature.” Thinking, “Perhaps he is not a surprising creature,” Radha addressed

the bumblebee, “Wretch! O bumblebee! O friend Krishna! Why, pretending to be so saintly and innocent, have you come here? Go! Go far away! I am no friend of that rogue Krishna. I will not allow you to cheat Me. You have taken shelter of a rogue and a cheater. A person who is a friend of cheaters is a cheater two times over. Pretending to befriend others, he only cheats them.”

Gently smiling Radha then became rapt in thought. Aware that the bumblebee was now buzzing around Her feet, Radha said: “Wretch! Don’t touch even one of My feet!” Then, as She was trying to shoo the bumblebee away, Sri Radha said: “What do you say, wretch? What do you say? “Do you say, ‘O queen, having come from Your master, Krishna, I touch Your feet. I touch them very respectfully’? So be it. Then it is very right if you touch My feet. O wretched bee, the fault of yours that I mentioned before does not make My heart wither up in distress. At any rate these are things I have no power to know directly. But now I see another fault in you. Your mustaches are now red with the flower-pollen from the flowers in Krishna’s broken flower-garland and also red from the *kunkuma* powder anointing the breasts of the girls that are My rivals, girls very eager to meet with Sri Krishna.

“One male (Krishna) carries on His chest *kunkuma* powder from many passionate girls. Another

male (you, O bumblebee) carries that same *kunkuma* powder on his little mustaches. That kunkuma powder came upon the first male's chest because of His amorous affairs with many girls. Yes, it must have been amorous affairs." Smiling, Sri Radha said in a joking mood: "O proud little bumblebee, don't touch Me at all. If you must touch Me, then at least don't touch Me with your mustaches." Shaking Her now-reddish-with-anger beautiful chin, Radha again said: "Ah! What do you say? "You say: 'O Goddess, O greatest lover of Krishna, Your master, Krishna, sent me to You to calm Your jealous anger. As I was flying along on the path, I became exhausted with hunger, so I stopped to drink the nectar of a certain rare flower. As I drank the nectar, my mustaches became red with pollen.' "

That is perhaps true. Perhaps true. A rogue may sprinkle lies, one by one, in a hundred of his statements. Who has the power to know, in the words of rogues, what are the truths and what are the lies? I do not need to talk with, debate with, hear words of consolation from, or accept gifts from you, a servant whose master is a rogue. Your master is the king of Mathura City. Let Him calm the jealous anger in the hearts of Mathuras girls. It is well known that you and your master Krishna take shelter of Mathura. You should stay in Mathura and carry Krishna's messages to the girls of Mathura. As you stay in Mathura you can always stay at the great treasure that is your master Krishna's feet. People of like nature find great happiness in each other's association. It is seen that wine-drinkers, wine-sellers, and various kinds of rogues all enjoy each other's company." With a mocking laugh Sri Radha then rebuked the bumblebee: "Krishna's words to Me of so-called consolation would only bring uproarious laughter if they were repeated in the Yādavas' assembly-house. Without any shyness, and completely unable to conceal the mark that Krishna has placed upon you, you quickly and without any mistake fly to any place as Krishna's messenger.

"A sweetly fragrant person may yearn to conceal himself. Still, his sweet fragrance precedes him and always announces his presence to all." Angrily finding faults with the bumblebee, Sri Radha said: "O bumblebee, why do you speak in this way? Why, on a whim, do you mistakenly find fault

with faultless Krishna and with Me also? I do not see any faults in Sri Krishna.

"Please hear My words: Krishna is the king of rogues. He acted as if He loved Us. We thought: "Krishna will never leave Us. Alas! Alas! Then suddenly He left Us. What sin is greater than that? I think that because His body is black Krishna has no fear of sin. You very arrogantly taught us a philosophy that shows no respect to the sincere and saintly-hearted. Even a neophyte student has more true knowledge than you. Thinking only of your own benefit, you come, sip the nectar of the flowers, and then fly away. Krishna is like that. But it is not only that He is interested in His own selfish benefit. It is seen that He also finds pleasure in making others suffer. Once He allowed Us to sip the nectar of His lips and then, snake that He is, He fled from Us.

"Some, who are like bumblebees, break others apart for their own selfish benefit. And then there are others, like Krishna the king of Mathura, who, even when they do not benefit from it, relish giving pain to others. Aha! That is the greatest wonder. Still, I have seen a wonder even greater than that. Aware of His glorious virtues, Goddess Lakshmi, who is the queen of all beautiful lotus-like women, serves Sri Krishna's lotus feet. This I have heard, and I have directly seen it also. Wherever Krishna places His feet, Lakshmi places her feet also." After speaking these words, Radha thought for a moment and then said: "Goddess Lakshmi is very sincere and honest and righteous. She does not know anything about the cunning ways of rogues. Only because He bears the name 'Uttama-shloka

!! Sri Sri Nitai Gaurchandra Jayati !!

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(He who is praised in glorious stanzas) has she fallen in love with this Krishna.

“Why does lotuslike Goddess Lakshmi worship Krishna, worship Him just as, alas, alas, the foolish lotus flowers worship the harsh sun that does not care at all for their well-being?” Again and again describing Krishna’s misdeeds in this way, Radha bitterly wept. What will be gained if I elaborately recount all of Radha’s wild lamentations at this time? Then, as the bumblebee was pleasantly humming, Sri Radha spontaneously revealed another truth. She said: “O *gopī*-friends, this bumblebee still boldly approaches Us. Look! Look! Even though We have no faith in his good character, he approaches Us again and again. The bee thinks: ‘My singing will melt these girls.’ That is why I will not chase this bee away.” Bewildered and agitated, Sri Radha then said: “Creatures that have four legs are seen to be fools. But you have six legs. How can it be, then, that you are not more foolish than even the four-legged creatures? Why do you again and again sing this song in the pain-filled land of Vraja?”

“Have you not heard these words: ‘A person who, aware of what is in the hearts of his companions, acts to please them, is like a demigod, but a person who acts without considering what is in the hearts of others is like an animal, even though he may be standing on two legs.’ You have already sung your song. Why must you sing it again and again? A person that does not know what the hearer likes to hear, will sing too much. A person whose singing is like the howling of a dog is not liked by anyone. If you must sing, why do you sing about the Yadava-king Krishna? Who is He to Us? What relationship does He have with Us that We would enjoy hearing songs about Him? As a *pināka*, or any other musical instrument, will play only the melodies the performer wishes, so even a foolish singer will sing only songs his audience likes to hear.

Then Radha angrily said: “Wretch! If you say that in the past Krishna had a relationship with the people of Vraja, then we say that

you are a fool, for that relationship is now withered away. Poets write poems praising glorious persons alive in the present. Poets do not write poems praising the sons of kings that lived in ancient times. If you are haunted by the fiend of the desire for money, then go and sing before the householders, who are also haunted by that fiend. They will give you something, even if only to chase away the calamity (of your singing). Why, alas, do you now sing before us, who, from the sorrowful moment (that Krishna abandoned Us), have become like homeless *sannyasis* shorn of the last trace of any material desire. Ahh! What do you say? You say: ‘I am also shorn of material desire.’ Then why do you sing about that wretch Krishna? If you want to sing some stories from the past, the sing some stories from the Puranas. Because you have six legs you are wild beast one and a half times over. How can you then be free of any material desire? You are a beggar and you have no virtues. Therefore you are doubly wretched.

“If a person does not know where he will get donations and where he will not get them, then how will he know from whom he should beg? Therefore, please listen, O foolish bumblebee, listen to this god advice. Your friend Krishna is always the victor in His amorous pastimes. Go to someone else and sing about His amorous conquests. The Yadavas will not be shy to hear those songs. But if you sing those songs to the girls He conquered, you will only bring pain to their hearts. Please listen. Shunning all shyness, I will tell you something from Vatsyayana Muni’s *Kāma-sūtra*. If a male is very bold and aggressive, then he brings intense pleasure to his buxom beloveds. Vatsyayana also affirms that hearing about amorous pastimes brings pleasure like the pleasure that comes from enjoying amorous pastimes directly.” Smiling, Radha then said: “Why do you shake your head? If you do not speak your request, then how can We *gopis* give anything to you? Please listen and I will explain something to you. A person who wishes something should clearly state his wish. If

there is no clear request, the giver will hesitate to give. If there is a clear request, the giver will perhaps give very enthusiastically again and again.”

After a moment's thought, Sri Radha, in the mood of a sarcastic rebuke to the bumblebee, said to Her *gopī*-friends: “O girls dear as life to Me, how is it that this insect flying amongst the flowers has learned the secret truth that you glorious girls keep in your hearts? That bumblebee now says to Me: ‘O Goddess, please do not speak harsh words. How is it possible that the chaste ladies devoted to their husbands could worship some other man? Therefore please be silent and do not criticize them.

“I will tell You something. These *gopī*-girls are all very chaste. They worship their husbands as of they were demigods. Still, there is no woman in the upper, middle, or lower planets, no woman, even if she is the mother of seven sons, that has the power to stay away from this Krishna. Therefore please do not accuse the *gopis* in this way. Krishna possesses the most sublime and glorious virtues. Why do you criticize Him again and again? Krishna is the all-powerful supreme controller. His wishes are always fulfilled. He has no faults. Because He is the original cause of everything, He stands always beyond the influence of the illusory potency *māyā*.

“A hypocrite pretending to be a saint seduces the people and brings them under his control. A true saint does not act in that way. A hypocrite is very interested in bringing others under his control. A true saint is not interested to do that. People who say that Krishna's spiritual and eternal face, eyebrows, smile, and other features are all products of the material potency *māyā* are persons whose hearts and minds are themselves bewildered by the power of that *māyā*-potency. We say that Krishna's presence before us is His mercy upon us. We do not feel envy or hatred of Him. You should advise all women to think as we do about Sri Krishna. A person stung by thorns warns people away from thorny places. A person who was never stung by thorns may not be

interested to warn others away from thorny places. (When others are stung because of his failure to warn them) this person may be said to be not different from the thorns themselves.”

Imagining the bumblebee had spoken these words, Sri Radha spoke to Her *gopī*-friends. Then Sri Radha boldly said to the bumblebee: “O wretched bumblebee, why do you try to find fault with Us *gopis* as you speak with your buzzing words? You are very intelligent. Why, then, are you so attached to this Krishna?

“Now the bumblebee says: ‘It is said that, unrestrained by any feelings of shyness, even Goddess Lakshmi runs to any place where the dust from Lord Krishna's feet rests. Who are you *gopis* that you should act in a way different from Goddess Lakshmi's actions?’” After some thought Sri Radha said: “O wretched bumblebee whose intelligence is very pure, you don't understand. From the very beginning Krishna hypnotized Lakshmi and brought her under His control. “Krishna wishes to bring everyone under His control. He is clever. First He brings the leaders under His control. Following the leaders' example, all the people then worship Him. Why should we *gopis* hide anything from you? Although He has nothing to gain from doing so, Krishna has stolen Our hearts. The power of His *māyā* potency has made Us greedy to attain Him. Bewildered by His *māyā*, We think Krishna is the most intelligent of all. We do not think Krishna is a product of the material potency *māyā*. (O bumblebee,) if you doubt that all this is the truth, then please consider this: Why, even after knowing all this, do you still place your faith in this Krishna?

“Please hear My words. Even though He is just as I said, Krishna still fulfills the desires of all the poor people. He ferries them to the farther shore of the ocean of their desires. Krishna, who bears the name ‘Uttama-shloka (He who is glorified by the most beautiful prayers)’ will deliver Us from Our sufferings. Even Goddess Maya has faith in Krishna. Just as even the disciples of Jaimini Muni

attained the results of their yajnas, so even a person that has no faith in the Supreme Personality of Godhead will attain perfection by the contact of Lord Krishna's holy name.”

Her intelligence like a great, beautiful, and sweetly-fragrant lotus-flower, Sri Radha thought the bumblebee buzzing around Her feet was begging forgiveness. Shooing him away, she rebuked him, saying: “O wicked bumblebee, why do you speak these flattering words and then touch your head to my feet? Go at once! We all know about your master Krishna's skill in cunning flattery. What are you in comparison to Him? You are only a wretched being. As long as the true nature of His actions is not recognized, a cheater can succeed in his cheating. But after his cheating is exposed, even only once, all his actions thereafter are thought by others to be lies, are thought to be the posturing of an actor on a stage.

“We renounced everything for Krishna's sake and He accepted Us. Then suddenly he left Us. Why should We be eager to make friendship with such a person?” After pausing for a moment, Sri Radha spoke the following words, words persons who do not understand the ecstasy of diving into intense love for Krishna consider only dry and tasteless: “It is not wise for a girl to offer her heart to a lover that is neither thoughtful nor intelligent. Look! Look! See the wickedness of dark Krishna! You bumblebees, as well as the cuckoos and others like you are all ungrateful to the flower-vines, crows, and others that nourish you. Then there was Ramacandra, who, it was thought, had crossed to the farther shore of the great ocean of the nectar of all religious activities. We have heard of what this Ramacandra did to the monkey-king Bali, who had not offended Him in any way, and to Vishravah Muni's daughter Shurpanakha, who had not offended Him either. What! What! What do you say, O bumblebee? You say: ‘Because of his relationship with a woman, Bali hated his brother Sugriva. And as for Shurpanakha, she was a prostitute. Therefore Ramacandra do not do any wrong in His actions against

them.’ Bumblebee, you are a wretch. That Ramacandra was completely under the control of His wife. (On her request) He went out to kill a golden stag. How can we believe the words of this black Krishna? Bumblebee, don't be so proud. In Our words We have just now given many examples of the wickedness of this Krishna.

“A person who speaks many words in an attempt to conceal one of his faults will find that his abundant words only reveal all his other faults. Because of My sufferings I have criticized this deerslayer Ramacandra. I am not at all reluctant to criticize Him. Even though you have no relationship with Ramacandra, you still speak many words to defend Him. You also defend black Krishna, who is your master and who is always under the control of women. Therefore We doubt (that you tell Us the actual truth about Him. You will only tell Us lies that praise Him.) Please do not try to cheat Us in this way. Because Krishna is now under the control of the women of Mathura City, the death of Us girls has now come near. Still, your firm devotion to Krishna certainly bears witness to His greatness. What will we gain by trying to dispute that fact? Let Us return to the subject at hand.

Ramacandra took birth in a *kṣatriya* family. That is why harshness and a host of other *kṣatriya* qualities were never far away from Him. Look! Look! Vamana was born from Prajapati Kashyapa. Vamana was a *brahmacārī* from the moment of His birth. He was a solitary hermit. No one was greater than Him. His complexion was also black. What did He do to King Bali? To defend calamities he brings to others, the crow speaks the story of Vamana, who brought such a great calamity to King Bali. When Bali offered a gift to Him, Vamana responded by bringing newer and newer calamities. All of you people are the same. Even your words bring calamities. Wretch! What are you mumbling? You say: ‘Why, then, do the sages describe the pastimes of Krishna and Ramacandra and Vamana?’ The sages are certainly greatly at fault for doing that. Krishna's poten-

cy-of-bewilderment (*mohana-śakti*) makes the sages attached to Krishna. That potency thus creates a fearful condition for everyone. People are not so afraid of ferocious wild beasts as they are of even only the sight of a hypocrite that wraps himself in the flag of religion. Thinking, ‘What will this wild beast do to me?’ the people flee from wild beasts. A human being who in his heart is a ferocious wild beast even though externally he presents himself as pure and saintly, is very dangerous indeed, more dangerous than the wild beasts.”

After a moment’s thought, Sri Radha said: “Persons who talk of Krishna’s pastimes are in the grip of the illusory potency *māyā*. With the great effulgence of its illusion-power, the description of Krishna’s pastimes pulls up by the roots the hearts of persons wealthy with the great good-fortune of householder life. After uprooting the householders’ hearts, the description of Krishna’s pastimes, remaining unfriendly, forces the householders to renounce their families and their wealth. It makes them poor and wretched, and at the end it makes them beg, as birds do. Don’t try, O bumblebee, to drag Me into a verbal battle. You say, ‘Why, then, do the most worthy saints hear the narrations of Krishna’s pastimes?’ Don’t be angry. Just listen. In the beginning hearing about Krishna is pleasing to the consciousness. At that time it is sweet like nectar placed upon the tongue. Later that same hearing about Krishna becomes like a drink laced with sugar and dhustūra-powder, a drink that makes the consciousness stagger, tremble, and roll on the ground.

“I think these birds were not always birds. In their previous births they were human householders always enchanted by hearing songs glorifying Krishna. When those souls left their human bodies they took birth as birds.” Sri Radha acted as if She was listening to the bumblebee speak. Then She said: “Wretch! You say: ‘O Radha who thirsts to associate with Krishna, what You have said is not the truth. The truth is that with Your body and mind You worship Krishna.’ Please

hear this: The knowledge that We gopis have about Krishna is not Our imagination. We know Him directly. We have seen Him with Our own eyes. At first He spoke wonderful words to Us, words like the words you have spoken to Us. Then later Krishna became like a hunter. He hunted Us like a hunter that plays music to lure a deer into a trap. With so much terrible suffering staring Us in the face, what will We gopis gain by being shy and embarrassed? Please listen. We were attracted to Krishna and delighted by His ornaments of forest-flowers. We thirsted to meet with Him. Still, from His hands, which were different from thorns in name only, and from His sharp fingernails, which were like arrows to the touch, we suffered great pain.

“I swear, O bumblebee, that the touch I felt from Krishna’s body was not merely a thing imagined in My mind. Again and again I sipped the poison of the touch of His fingernails, a poison that made glittering flames rise up again and again in My heart. O bumblebee, seeing that Krishna’s prime-minister (Uddhava) is now cunningly silent, you have become his representative, his assistant-minister. O bumblebee, O wise paṇḍita learned in buffoonery, please be merciful to Me. Please talk of something other than this Krishna. The philosophical truths Krishna taught you and you are now trying to teach Me are not new. Many other philosophical truths are also known by Krishna. By knowing these truths, a person will never again know any kind of fear.”

After speaking this part of the narration, Snigdhanakanta said: Push by the spiritual wildness of Her love for Krishna, and feeling the touch of Krishna’s body even though She was afflicted by feelings of intense separation from Him, Radha became flooded by waves of anger. Then, wandering about, as was his nature, the bumblebee flew to another tree. Then Radha manifested the nature *ka-lahāntaritā* (a girl separated from her lover by a quarrel).

Then Sri Radha said: “Alas! I spoke very crooked and ferocious words to Krishna’s messenger. Unable to understand the true

meaning of My crooked words, the messenger went away. Because there was no other way, My beloved Krishna sent this bumblebee to protect Me. I chased that bumblebee away. Now great flames burn in the lotus-flower of My heart.”

After speaking these words, Radha wept. Seeing Radha weep, the other gopis wept also. Weeping, Radha gazed at the path. Seeing that bumblebee, or perhaps another bumblebee, coming, Radha trembled and stuttered: “O d-d-d-d-dear friend, p-p-p-p-please come back.” These words of Sri Radha mean: “Because even though you left Us, you have now returned, you are our dear friend.” The words “dear friend” may be explained in the following way: A person with whom one enjoys pastimes is a friend, and a person who shares one’s sufferings is dear. Therefore a person who stays with someone when that person is distressed is a dear friend. Sri Radha’s heart was filled with love for Krishna. Considering Herself most fortunate, Sri Radha thought in Her heart: “Was that bumblebee sent by My beloved Krishna?”

Then She began to speak that thought aloud. She said the first word, “Was”, and then She suddenly fell unconscious. When Radha fell unconscious, Uddhava’s consciousness trembled, and the gopis almost fell unconscious also. Still unconscious, Radha said, as if in a dream: “Please ask for some boon. What does he wish?” Because She was momentarily bewildered, Radha said here “he” when She intended to say “you”. The implication of these words of Sri Radha is as follows: The dearest beloved (Krishna) already possesses the great treasure of (Radha’s) intimate friendship. This treasure is His alone, and no one else can possess it. The dearest beloved’s messenger (the bumblebee), because he cannot possess that treasure, should therefore request a boon, whatever he desires.

Rapt in thinking, Radha thought: “The bumblebee must be thinking: ‘This girl Radha is bewildered. She is not intelligent. I am Her sincere friend. Still, She thinks I am

trying to trick Her.’ Therefore I should say something to this bumblebee.” Then Radha said: “O dear bumblebee, I offer all honor to you.”

The meaning of this statement is given in these words: A person who remains always a sincere friend should be always served and satisfied. One should think of him as not different from one’s own self. Sri Radha thought: “The bumblebee has said: ‘If You think in that way, then please give some gift to me.’ This bumblebee has come to place Me on a chariot and take Me back to Krishna.” Her voice breaking with emotion, Sri Radha then said (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.47.20): “O bumblebee, you have come to take Me to Krishna because He is not able to come here. How can you take Me there?”

The meaning of these words of Sri Radha is: “O bumblebee, you bring pleasure to everyone. You are My friend. How can you carry Me into the company of those other girls that are My rivals? You do not know My sufferings. Neither does Krishna know them. Even though I have not offered to pay you anything to do it, you are still eager to carry Me and My disease of separation into the company of many girls who are My rivals.” Then Sri Radha said: “What do you say? You say: ‘Krishna has just now returned from His vow of chanting the *gāyatrī-mantra*. How is it possible, then, that He will be willing to associate with a woman?’ If you talk like that, then I say in reply to you (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.47.20): Krishna is taking rest there along with the goddess of fortune and embracing her to His chest.”

The meaning of these words is: “The line of Krishna’s chest is Goddess Lakshmi herself. Teenage Goddess Lakshmi secretly meets teenage Krishna in this way.” Radha said: “Then again, don’t take Me to Mathura City, for then I will become another one of the city girls, girls unfaithful to their lovers.” Returning to external consciousness, Sri Radha opened Her eyes and saw that the bumblebee had returned to Her after a long absence. Looking at the bee, She became reminded of Her separation from Krishna. Radha

thought: “Should I ask him, or should I not ask him?” In a repentant mood, Sri Radha then asked the bumblebee (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.47.21): “Please let Me know how Krishna is faring in Mathura.”

The meaning of these words is as follows: “O king of bumblebees, I will tell you the truth. I will not keep anything secret from you. In considering the truths of religion and truths of auspicious family ties, I can say that Sri Krishna is most certainly My husband. The love that He and I bear for each other is the proof of that fact. Alas! Dearest Krishna went to Mathura City. There He stayed. After a long time He has not yet returned to Vraja. I wonder if He has remained there in Mathura. Worrying and worrying about this, My heart has burst into flames and burned away. Now My heart is only ashes.”

Imagining that She has heard from the bumblebee’s mouth that Krishna is indeed still in Mathura, Radha asked this question of the bumblebee (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.47.21): “Tell Me of Krishna still remembers His foster father Nanda Mahārāja, His affectionate mother Yashoda, and His cowherd friends and His poor friends like us, the gopis.” The meaning of these words is as follows: “Every day Krishna goes, within His heart, to Vraja. Every day He remembers His father, mother, friends, and kinsmen. Every day We meet Krishna in this way. He stands before Our eyes. We are like walking dead-men suddenly sprinkled with the pure nectar of seeing Krishna.” Imagining that the bumblebee had affirmed, “Krishna does indeed remember the people of Vraja”, Radha shook off all shyness and asked (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.47.21): “I am sure Krishna must sometimes sing about us, who served Him just like maidservants, without any payment.”

The meaning of these words is as follows: “When He sees how We gopis have, in a secluded place, served and decorated His Deity form, does Krishna say, ‘Do these gopis not serve Me very gloriously?’ No. He does not. Krishna does not remember Us, nor does He

secretly come, in His heart, to Vraja.” Then Radha said (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.47.21): “Is there any possibility that Krishna will come back and place His *aguru*-scented hand on Our heads?” As She spoke these words, Radha began to meditate on the hand and arm of Sri Krishna. She thought of them as the trunk of a great elephant drunk on liquor. As She thought of Krishna’s hands and arms, and as She burned in the flames of separation from Him, Radha began to fall unconscious. It was in that bewildered state that Radha mistakenly said: “If he had placed His *aguru*-scented hand” (*adhāsyat*) instead of “will place His *aguru*-scented hand” (*dhāsyati*).

The unconscious condition of Sri Radha is described in these words: Because Radha was now silent, and because Her body was now emaciated, and because Her limbs were in a very unusual state, and because She had turned pale, and because She was very much changed, and because and because saliva flowed from Her mouth, and because She was now motionless, and because there was no sign of Her breathing at all, everyone thought: “Radha is no longer alive within Her body.” The meaning of the statement of Sri Radha recorded in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.47.21 and quoted in Text 114 of this chapter of *Sri Gopāla-campū* is given in these words: “Our hearts yearn to serve Krishna’s hand more fragrant than *aguru*. Aha! Will Krishna touch Our heads with His hand? Every day Our hearts ask this question.”

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