



तव कथामृतं तप्तजीवनम्
tava kathāmṛtaṁ tapta-jīvanam

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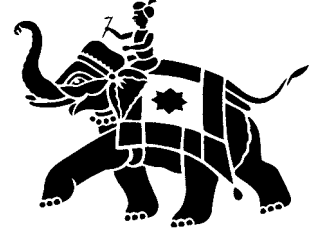
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“DON’T FREELY CIRCULATE MY LETTERS”

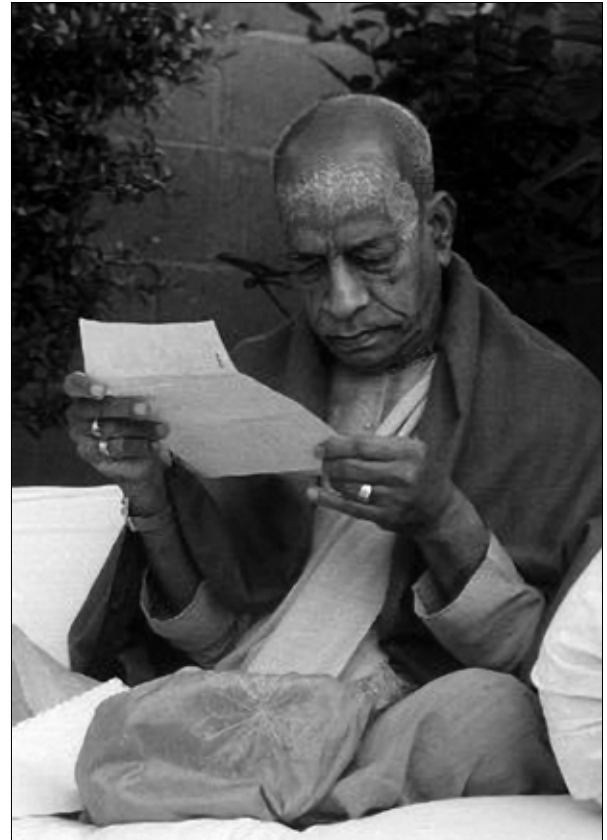
*His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta
Swami Prabhupada*

Gradually I am trying to hand over the management to the reliable hands of my disciples, and you should all work by joint consultation, without any friction. Now, by the grace of Krishna, we are expanding and we must work in such a way that our society may become a solid institution. In this connection, I request you not to circulate all my letters that I address to you. Letters are sometimes personal and confidential, and if all letters are circulated, it may react reversely. I have already got some hints like that with letters I sent to you regarding Kirtanananda and Hayagriva. So in the future please do not circulate my letters to you. All my letters to you should be considered as confidential, and if you want to circulate them, ask me before doing so. ॐ

— Letter to Brahmananda. 28 September 1969.

OF LUST AND LOVE *Srila Jagadananda Pandit’s Prema Vivarta Chapter 16*

*pīriti pīriti pīriti bale
pīriti bujhā ke?
ye jana pīriti bujhite pāre
vraja goṇī haya se*



*His Divine Grace
A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada*

So much talk about love, love, love, but who really understands love? It is the *gopīs* of Vraja who understand love. (Text 24)

pīriti baliyā tina ṭi āgkhara
vidīta bhuvana mājhe
yāhāte paśila sei se majila
ki tāra kalanika-lāje

The word *pīriti*, love, consisting of three syllables, is famous throughout the universe. Whoever is touched by love becomes totally obsessed by it, oblivious to shame or disrepute. (25)

samsāre yateka puruṣa ramaṇī
ālambana doṣe sadā
rakta māmsa dehe āroṣa karite
nārakā haya sarvadā

Those persons who mistakenly interpret passionate lusty relationships between men and women in this material world to be genuine love dwell always in hell. (28)

ataeva tāra sahaja sādhanā
kṛṣṇa kṛpā yabe pāya
jaḍa deha gandha chāḍiyā se saba
cid-ānanda rasa dhāya

When such persons perform proper *sādhana* and get Krishna’s mercy, they give up all trace of bodily attachments and aspire for real transcendental pleasure. ❀

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GOPI VASTRAHARANA LILA

Sri Srimad Purnachandra Das Goswami

PART FOUR

More Divine Joking

The *gopīs* started whispering among themselves. “What are we going to do?” “Why don’t you talk to him and defeat him with your clever words? One bold *gopī* addressed Krishna, “Are you not the respected son of the king of Vraja, Nanda Maharaja, the king who always instructs everyone in good behavior? Are you not the ocean of good qualities, full of waves of compassion? Are you not the remover of ignorance and learned in *śāstra*? Therefore, how could you have performed such an unjust and abominable act? You should not do such things because you are the most worshipable and famous person. This will not do you any good

but will only bring you infamy. So please don’t joke with us like this.”

Other *gopīs* said, “Why are you deviating from *dharma*? You are famous as being naturally very merciful. So why are you not showing us any mercy?

“You foolish girls do not understand me. You should not even think of branding me as being unethical.”

“We may not know other persons who live in Vraja, but we know you as the famous son of King Nanda. Furthermore, we know you as honored by each and every resident of Vraja and dear to them.”

“My dear unintelligent girls, if I am indeed the son of the king, then how can you ascribe unethical behavior to me? If you reply that even the sons of kings are sometimes unethical, then how is it that I am honored throughout Vraja and dear to everyone? Surely it is not possible for those who are unethical to be given honor and affection.”

“True, but we are just women and do not know how to speak properly. Therefore, please mercifully forgive our offense and give us back our garments. We are trembling.”

The *gopīs* suggested, “Why don’t you just leave our clothes on the bank and go away?”

“But there are so many of you that you may take each others’ clothes.”

“But we’re honest, not like you. We never take others’ property.”

“If that is true, then simply come and take your clothes. What is the difficulty?”

When the *gopīs* saw that Krishna was very determined, they felt ecstasy. And although they were very embarrassed, they were also very happy that they were getting so much attention from Krishna. He was joking with them as if they were his girlfriends or his wives, and that is what they had prayed for. Thus they could not resist joking with Krishna in return. They also began joking with one another in the water.

One of them said, “Go on, *sakhī*! You go ahead first, and we’ll see if he plays any tricks on you.

Orissan style *pata-citra* painting by Gokul Bihari Pattnaik

Krishna joked with the gopis

Then we'll follow later." The other girl replied, "Oh no, no, no! You go first."

Hearing such joking words was nectar for Krishna's ears. The *vraja-gopis* were very loving and respectful to Krishna, but they entered into Krishna's mood. He started joking, so they also joked. The young girls giggled and squinted their beautiful lotus eyes at each other. These lotuses were blossoming with full beauty under the warm rays of the Krishna sun. Krishna had captivated the *gopis'* minds with his sweet, teasing words as they were shivering in the water, but out of shyness they submerged themselves in even deeper water, up to their necks. They were shaking from the cold, but also from joy, apprehension and eagerness.

Krishna began to yawn, "I'm getting tired now. I've stayed up all night. So if you don't come now and get your clothes, I'm going to make a hammock with them and take rest here in the tree."

The *gopis* replied, "Our dear *gopa*, your cows have all entered into a cave. So you should go now and rescue them."

"No, no, no. You come out now because you should go home and perform your household duties. Don't become a disturbance to your parents."

"But, our dear Krishna, our parents were the ones who told us to come here and perform this *vrata*, so we're going to stay here for one month. There's no need for us to return to our homes."

"My dear austere ladies, I have also developed a desire for detachment from family life. And I also want to stay for one month and perform this austerity of staying here in the clouds. But if you show your mercy to me, then I can come down and perform austerities with you and fast in your company."

"Dear Krishna, don't be unfair! We know that you are the respectable son of Nanda, and thus it is only fitting for us to have an attitude of servitude towards you. Besides, you are very dear to us. Please return our clothes to us. We're shivering! It is because you are so beautiful that we have become your maidservants, and thus we will do whatever you want, even what You do not explicitly order. But please give back our clothing. By your stealing the property of women and seeing women naked, you will incur *adharma*. You know *dharma*. And if you don't give us our clothes, we'll go to the king and tell him!"

By saying "the king", they specified neither Kaṁsa nor Nanda, intentionally leaving it ambiguous, thinking, "Let Krishna think of the king for whom

he has the most fear.” They only meant to frighten Krishna, although he is without fear. They did not intend to tell on him. Moreover, one might consider that it was a mistake for the *gopīs* to admit that they considered themselves as Krishna’s maidservants, and therefore Krishna will now defeat them with their own words. But actually the *gopīs* said that directly for the purpose of offering their very selves to Krishna.

Krishna thought, “Even though they are just young girls, they have performed such a difficult feat. But there is still something more difficult for them to do. I want to see the power of their love for me. I want to see if they are capable of doing it.” Thinking thus, the Lord was smiling. “O you who have acknowledged your servitude toward me with your own mouths, now I am going to test your statement, ‘We will do whatever you ask.’ If you can come out of the water then I will return your garments together with my very life and soul.”

Krishna said, “If you are actually my maidservants and you will really do whatever I say, then simply come here and take your clothes. If you don’t come here then I won’t give them back. And even if the king becomes angry, what can he do anyway? Furthermore, since I am the stronger, you will not be able to achieve what you desire by quarrelling with me.”

(To be continued) ❁



Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu in Jagannath Puri

ETERNALLY GOING ON *Srila Vrindavan Das Thakur's* Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavata madhya 23.513-14

*adyāpiha caitanya e saba līlā kare
yakhane yāhāre kare dṛṣṭi-adhikāre*

Lord Chaitanya performs these pastimes even today. Only when the Lord gives one the ability to see these pastimes can one see them. ❁

*bhakta lāgi' prabhura sakala avatāra
bhakta bai kṛṣṇa-karma nā jānaye āra*

The Supreme Lord incarnates for the sake of His devotees. No one other than the devotees can understand the activities of Kṛṣṇa.

— Adapted from the English translation of *Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavata* by Bhumipati Das. Edited and published by Pundarik Vidyanidhi Das. Vrajaraaj Press. Vrindavan. 2001.



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