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## Sri Krishna Bhavanamrita Mahakavya

Written in 1685 A.D. by Srila Srila Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura

"Srila Visvanatha Chakravarti Thakura has given us a transcendental literature entitled Krishna Bhavanamrita, which is full with Krsna's pastimes. Devotees can remain absorbed in Krsna-thought by reading such books."

(Srila Prabhupada KB "Uddhava Visits Vrndavana")

### Cast of Characters

#### In Order of Appearance

##### Sri Radha

A part of Krishna known as His shakti or 'Pleasure Energy' which manifests as a separate being (Radha) with whom Krishna can have a relationship. God, or Krishna, has the abilities to both be enjoyed and to enjoy Himself. In order to enjoy Himself, He manifests Radha.

Radha is also referred to by the following names in Sri Krishna Bhavanamrita Mahakavya: Priyaji, Vrishabhnuja, Padmini, Gandharva, Radhika, Priya and Kundadanti.

##### Sri Krishna

The Supreme Personality of Godhead, assuming the role of a human being simply to please His devotees. In Sri Krishna Bhavanamrita Mahakavya, He is also called Hari, Madhusudana, Priyatama, Kesava, Acyuta, Madhava, Giridhari, Pinchabhushana, Aghabid, Shyama, Madana Mohana, Vihariji, Giribhrita, Punyasloka, Aghari, Bakari, Madhubhidi, Aghantaka, Aghasatru, Varada Pasupati, Murali, Aghahara, Aghamanthana, Prabhavishnu and Kalanidhi.

##### The Sakhis

Sri Radhika's maid servants. They are teenagers. Her eight closest servants are Lalita, Vishaka, Chitra, Indulekha, Champakalata, Tungavidya, Rangadevi and Sudevi.

##### Nidradevi---The Goddess of Sleep

Daksha and Vichaksana--Two male parrots

Subha and Sukshmadi---Two female parrots.

Hridevi--The Goddess of Bashfulness.

Bhanumati--A sakhi.

The Manjaris---The young servants of the sakhis. They are mere girls. They include Lavagna, Ruci, Rupa, Lila, and Rata.

Vrinda-- The goddess who furnishes, caters and arranges for the meetings between

Radha and Krishna.  
 Kakkhati--An old female monkey. One of Vrinda's assistants.  
 Jatila--Radha's mother in law, Abhimanyu's mother.  
 King Vrishabhanu--Radha's father. Her mother is Kirtida.  
 King Nanda--Krishna's foster father.  
 Mukhara--grandmother of Radha.  
 Shyamala--A sakhi friend of Radhika.  
 Madhurika--A sakhi.  
 Queen Yashoda--Krishna's foster mother. One of Nanda's two wives. Also called  
 Vrajeshwari and Savitri.  
 Rohini-- Nanda's other wife, Balaram's mother, and head cook in Nanda's kitchen.  
 Purnamasi-- Appearing as an old woman, the personification of yoga-maya. She  
 both facilitates Radha and Krishna's meetings, and creates obstacles at the same  
 time.  
 Balarama--Krishna's older brother, son of Nanda and Rohini. Also called  
 Balabhadra, Haladhara.  
 Madhumangala--Krishna's closest friend.  
 Rasa--A manjari.  
 Tulasi--A manjari. Second name for Rati-manjari  
 Kundalata--Krishna's female cousin.  
 Dhanista-- An older girl who lives at Nanda's house, acting as a messenger and  
 bringing food and other gifts.  
 Kamala--One of Krishna's servant boys.  
 Sridama--Krishna's close friend.  
 Subala--A friend of Krishna's.  
 Raktaka and Patraka--Two of Krishna's servant boys.  
 Parjanya--Krishna's grandfather.  
 Nandi Mukhi--Literally, 'Bull Face.' An older girl who participates in the pastimes,  
 but in a strictly platonic way.

## **Krishna Bhavanamrta**

### **Chapter 1**

#### **Nisanta Lila Pastimes at Dawn**

(3:36 a.m. - 6:00 a.m.)

Sri Radha and Sri Krishna competed with each other in erotic cleverness, but Their fight ended when fatigue invited Nidra devi, the goddess of sleep, bringing her to Them. Their maidservants, who were also sleeping, were accustomed to get up in time to do their service. Have they now automatically awoken, knowing that the night is over? Getting up from bed, these maidservants looked around anxiously. Seeing that the best of lovers (Radha and Krishna) were still sleeping in solitude, they quietly sat up in their beds on the courtyard of the nikhunja. They yawned and jokingly inquired from each other about what had happened. With their bee-like eyes rolling because of staying up late at night, they relished the vision of Hari's love signs on their breasts.

Some of these maidservants then began to perform their scheduled service at daybreak, stringing flowers and preparing betel leaves. They smelled the fragrance of Radha and Krishna's bodies, which were bound together by Cupid. With their lotus-like faces they looked through slits in the wall of the grove-cottage and saw how Radha and Krishna were embraced by the goddess of sleep, due to being tired from Their clever, erotic dance. They saw that the jeweled lamps that were standing here and there in the kunjā made Krishna shine like a blue lotus flower and made Sri Radhika look like a golden campaka flower, even though Their effulgent forms were no longer covered by garlands or ornaments.

One sakhi (maidservant) told another, "Sakhi, Radha and Krishna's sakhis don't know how to dress and decorate Them! Therefore, Their sakhi Srngaradhu (over ornamentation personified) became angry, threw away Their clothes and ornaments and decorated Them with thousands of nail marks, making Them look even more beautiful. Their complexions complement each other through Their embrace. Golden Radhika is dressed by Krishna's blue complexion, and blue Krishna is dressed by Radhika's golden complexion. To avoid repetition of this pattern, the incorporeal god Cupid removed Their blue and golden garments. When Cupid conquered the kingdom of Sri Radhika's body, shyness became the protectress of the land, taking her position in Radhika's head, eyes and breasts. Alas! Has she now been exiled? If bashfulness cannot stay in any secret place in Sri Radhika's body, she must have made some offense. Or maybe she has appeared as Radhika's auspicious glances to give joy to our eyes? Or maybe bashfulness disappeared, handing the kingdom over to Cupid? By doing this she may get incomparable opulence (i.e. after awakening, Radhika may become even more shy.) Is the steady Krishna-cloud showering the restless Radha-lightning with sweet rasa? How amazing! The Lord rewards the maidservants even before they've served Him!"

Elsewhere, some maidservants prepared betel leaves, strung flower garlands and made different kinds of ointments. They placed aguru frankincense in their trays and spent some time with other scheduled services. Then, a soft, cool breeze blew at the end of the night for the pleasure of the Lord and Lady of the nikunja. One maidservant said, "Sakhi, I understand that the sleep of this soft breeze is also broken, and because of its drowsiness it blows only softly. This soft Malayan breeze pleases all the ten directions, filling them with the fragrances of the blooming flowers of the vines and trees, which it kisses and carries around at the end of night, waking up the sleeping honeybees as it enters their nostrils."

Hearing the nice humming of the bees, Vrindadevi woke up, looked around everywhere and then engaged her pet birds in awakening her Lord and Lady. On Vrinda's order the roosters woke up, craned their necks and flapped their wings. They crowed about five or six times, awakening Sri Radhika, who became very disturbed. Seeing that the roosters stopped Her from embracing Krishna, Sri Radhika angrily cursed them saying, "Hey roosters, go crow in hell! Why are you crowing here?" Sri Radhika slightly slackened Her embrace of Sri Krishna's chest. Hearing that the roosters had become silent, She thought that they had gone to hell because of Her curse. Then, She tightened Her embrace, and fell asleep again. When the tittibhas and other birds began to sing, Sri Radhika, whose sleep was disturbed again, said, "Hey! Excuse Me! Let me sleep a little longer!" And She stretched out, slightly. Then, all the waterbirds like the kadambas, karandavas,

swans and cranes and all the land birds like the pigeons, saris, sukas, peacocks and cuckoos awoke and began to sing nectarean songs about Krishna.

Radha and Krishna awoke simultaneously and stretched out Their bodies, feeling afflicted by separation from each other's embrace. While stretching, Sri Radhika's body looked like a bow of campaka flowers and Krishna's body resembled a bow of blue lotus flowers. Then, They blissfully embraced each other again, tightly. Their maidservants understood that Radha and Krishna had woken up, and they fearlessly yet silently opened the door of the kunjja cottage, their anklebells jingling with each charming footstep, as they entered the cottage. Hearing Her maidservants' softly jingling anklebells, Sri Radhika wanted to get up from bed, but She was unable to do so, being tightly held by Krishna's vine-like arms. So, She remained lying in His chest, unable to move.

Just as Sukadeva Goswami expertly awakens the world from maya by glorifying the Lord in an attractive way (i.e. explaining the Bhagavata Purana), similarly the (male) suka-parrots, Daksa and Vicaksana, woke the Lord up at Vrinda's request.

First Daksa sang, "You who are expert in unlimited erotic games! You who are showering nectar on the gopis' eyes! O mad elephant, who swims in the love-river of His beloved One! O You who inundates all the worlds in His own sweetness! O, ocean of rasa! Are you sleeping, immersed in the bliss of tasting your lover's lips? That's not improper; but the night, who is called Ksanada (giver of only a moment of pleasure), and who facilitates Your love festival, has now ended."

Then, Vicaksana sang, "O, Lord! give up Your sleep; morning has broken. Be clever now and conceal Your desires. If not, then it will be seen by others. Slacken Your embrace of Your beloved and return to Vraja. Glory to You, joy of Vraja! O, moon of the milk ocean of King Nanda's heart! O, flower on the vine of mother Yasoda's piety! Go home, and make Your friends happy."

Then, the (female) sarika-parrots, Subha and Suksmadi called Sri Radhika. "Glory to You, my queen! Laxmi, the goddess of fortune, and the most beautiful women in the world desire the beauty of Your face and Your pastimes. You became intoxicated by drinking the honey of Your lover's lotus face, and now You are sleeping? That is not proper at this time of the morning. Therefore, I'm awakening You. Don't delay any more. Wake up! Follow the etiquette. Don't embarrass Yourself! Go Home! Who will teach You some good manners? You are the siksa guru in good manners (in surrender to Krishna) for all the gopis!"

Hearing this, the loving Couple sat up in bed, looking as beautiful as all that is beautiful in the three worlds. Their anklebells and waistbells jingled sweetly, and the splendor of their bodies shone brightly. Their faces were surrounded by disheveled locks of hair, illuminated by the splendor of Their earrings and necklaces. Their lotus-like hands moved here and there, groping for Their clothes, which had fallen off. For some time the two lovers hung against each other, Their eyes rolling from fatigue and Their hair disheveled. They sat facing each other, supporting Their bodily weight on each other's shoulders. They raised Their mouths as They yawned and stretched out Their bodies. It looked as if Their lotus-like faces were circumambulating each other. With the rays of the lamps of Their pearl-like teeth They performed the arati (ceremony) of each other's faces, and with the tongue-like corners of Their beautiful, slightly opened eyes They relished each other's sweetness. Then again They experienced the joy of sleep for a while. With Their beautiful, dizzy faces gazing at each other, They were lying in a tight

embrace, and Their bodies rolled off the uneven bed of flowers. Neither the bed nor Nidradevi could leave Radha and Krishna, because both were overcome by feelings of separation. Alas, still the very hard hearted birds began to sing in the morning, separating Radha and Krishna from each other.

## Chapter 2 Nisanta Lila (cont) Pastimes at Dawn, Cont'd. (3:36 a.m. - 6:00 a.m.)

The sakhis, who purchase with millions of hearts only a mere drop of the luster of Radha and Krishna's blissful erotic beauty, allowed their fish-like eyes to enter the latticed windows of the nikunja to play in the flood of Their natural beauty.

Visakha told Lalita, "Sakhi! Look how beautiful the erotic signs on Radha and Krishna's bodies are! Although They are niramsuka (without clothes) They are beautified with much amsuka (spiritual luster). And although They are vihari (enjoyers or without necklaces) They are also atihari (very beautiful). Although They are anangada (without armllets) They are anangada (giving erotic joy to each other). Although They are niranjana (without eyeliner) They are niranjana (very pleasing to each other). Their lipstick was washed away during Their playful absorption and Their playbed was all messed up. Such are the signs of Their enjoyment."

Lalita replied, "Sakhi, last night these Two began their love fight by pulling each other's hair, biting each other's lips and scratching each other with Their nails. The red kunkuma powder on Sri Radhika's breasts colored Acyuta's feet with Her hearts passion, and Krishna carried the passion of Her lotus feet on His head in the form of Her glistening footlac."

In this way, with soft voices, the sakhi's secretly described Radha and Krishna's love affairs to each other. They were immersed in an ocean of bliss, praising their own good fortune. Radha and Krishna's luster (rupa manjari) increased because of the blissful enjoyment of Lalita and the other attracted sakhis. Then, the expert maidservant, Rupa Manjari, appeared and beheld the exquisite beauty of Their love-game. She saw that They looked most charming on Their playbed with Their ornaments scattered here and there, and Their footlac, spots from chewing pan, eyeliner and vermilion washed away by the drops of Their perspiration. One maidservant placed a pillow on Radha and Krishna's bed. One covered Their bodies with fine clothes. Another removed Their drowsiness and the rolling of Their eyes by serving Them a glass of awakening nectar drink.

When the lotus-like eyes in Radha and Krishna's moon-like faces, which were surrounded by honeybee-like locks of hair, began to worship each other, Cupid woke up and quickly fetched his bow. Cupid became angry at being overruled. He pierced Their moon-like faces, which were covered with dark ropes of Their curly locks, with his arrows, making nectar ooze out. Hridevi, the goddess of bashfulness, was sleeping outside of the cottage, but she was startled by the jingling bangles and anklebells of the approaching sakhis. So, she entered Sri Radhika's heart, which caused Her to loosen Her embrace of Sri Krishna.

When Sri Radhika became eager to untangle Her hair from Her nosering and earrings, one maidservant saw this, and giggling said, "O, Loving Couple! The incorporeal Cupid bound You up with the strings of Your mutual passion through

Your hair, earrings, and the like. Now he wants to obstruct all these attachments, although You are one soul." Hearing this, fair-faced Radhika became annoyed and said, "O, you maidservants! I know you! Keep quiet!" Despite hearing this, the maidservants kept on giggling, expertly serving Her by untangling the knots themselves.

Another maidservant dampened a very soft and valuable cloth in rosewater and wiped the eyeliner, lipstick, footlac and so on from Radha and Krishna's faces, making them shine like mirrors. One maidservant placed betel leaves in Their mouths. Another one quickly and expertly performed Their mangala arati with a jeweled lamp, as if she were waving around thousands of her hearts. Other maidservants held mirrors before Them, some brought in body ornaments, while another removed Their drops of perspiration by softly fanning Them.

Seeing Krishna's bite marks on Her face as She looked in the mirror, Sri Radhika thought, "Today Madhusudana (the Krishna-honeybee) has drunk all the nectar from My lotus face by biting Me." This made Her very happy, and She could not put the mirror away. Sri Radhika thought, "Today, My nectarean form, which is unrivaled in all the three worlds, and My boundless youthful sweetness have become successful by being most blissfully enjoyed by My dear One!"

While Radhika thought like that, Her lover drank all the nectar of Her sweetness with His eyes. This made Her feel unlimited bliss within, and Sri Krishna's lotus face became the playground of Her beautiful sidelong glances. In an independent mood (svadhina bhartrika) Sri Radhika said, "Womanizer! Have You messed up my dress and ornaments? Why are You so complacent? Straighten everything out before My girlfriends return here and ridicule Me! Pacify Cupid, the god of love, by applying Your cleverness in decorating Me. Put him back into the temples of Our minds by removing the spots of musk and vermilion from my body, now that You've taken him out by covering Me with nail and bite marks."

Krishna replied, "You speak the truth! The worshipable incorporeal Cupid became manifest on the surface of Your body. Let Me worship him with ornaments, fragrances, garments, flowers, garlands and sandalwood pulp." Krishna then softly combed Radhika's hair with a comb handed to Him by the maidservant, Bhanumati. After tidying Her hair, He expertly braided it with a garland of malati flowers. With a new pencil He painted pictures on Radhika's body using musk, sandal and vermilion. It was as if these charming pictures were made by the lines of His passion. He placed beautiful earrings on Radhika's ears, which were handed to Him by Lavanga manjari, and He smeared fresh eyeliner on Her lotus-like eyes. When He hung a beautiful, long necklace around Her, handed to Him by Ruci manjari, Radhika proudly said, "Why do You put My necklace on before smearing My breasts with sandalwood pulp? You don't know how to dress Me!" Krishna proudly replied, "Radhe! I made wonderful pictures on Your breasts, which astonished Visakha and Your other friends, who are very proud of their own skill in drawing pictures."

Then Hari gave a wink to Sri Rupa manjari, Lila manjari and Rati manjari, indicating that they should bring their brushes. When He began to paint Sri Radhika's breasts, the flower-archer, Cupid, aimed his arrows at Him. Hari's hand began to shiver and the lines of the pictures He painted became crooked and were practically washed out. The maidservants thought that clever Krishna was lighting the firewood of Radhika's patience with the fire of lust. Cupid did not think much

of Krishna's efforts in ornamenting His beloved and made the pictures fall from their positions, joyfully ornamenting both the Lovers with the scattered fragments of decoration.

The maidservants had the desires of their bloom-like eyes fulfilled with the audience of the Divine Couple in the nikunja, and they prayed that their fulfillment would last for a long time. But, when they saw that Radha and Krishna wanted to enjoy again, they somehow found excuses to leave the kunja. From outside, fixing their eyes on the latticed windows they experienced bliss at every second, but they became morose when they looked to the east where the sun was rising. The restless glances of these sakhi's are always manifested in the hearts of the practicing devotees (sadhaka bhaktas).

Those sakhis, whose affection knew no bounds, entered the kunja cottage, knowing that Radha and Krishna had finished Their loveplay. Seeing this, Sri Radhika at once loosened Herself from Krishna's embrace and got up from bed. She obtained Her maidservants' loyalty by frowning in an exaggerated way, while they all sat around Her. Sri Hari pretended to still be asleep, being thirsty after the nectar of their conversation. Sri Radhika said, "Bho friends. You are most fortunate today to act as My friends. It's very fortunate that you have blessed Me with your audience. Have you come here to purchase Me? O arrogant ones, I am a housewife! You have brought Me here from My house into the forest, forcibly handed Me over to this boy, an expert at destroying the housewives' chastity, and then disappeared. Today you protected the old merit of My piety, on the strength of which I could lie down next to Him all night without having My chastity ravaged. O, friends, now Nidradevi (the goddess of sleep) lives in the eyes of Him with whom I spent the night. He is tired from staying up for many nights, making love with thousands of gopis. In this way, Nidradevi helped Me tremendously!"

Lalita said, "Sakhi, who does not know Your famous chastity, and who does not know about Krishna's celibacy? Even the sruti (the Gopala Tapani Upanishad) praises Krishna as a brahmachari. The eyes of the sakhis are very pleased to see Your spotless association with Him. Krishna is not even touched by the goddess of sleep because He keeps His vow of celibacy! We can truly understand that He associates with You through Cupid."

After Lalita said this, Visakha said, "Sakhi Lalita, I know it all! For the sake of getting happiness, Radha and Krishna gave up Their bodies at the Kanya Kupa at Prayaga (or 'They merged in the sacrifice of Cupid')."

Citra said, "Sakhi, What is this benefit?"

Visakha said, "After bathing in Prayaga, Their virtue was strengthened again, so now They are united again (or 'They engaged Their purified minds in Yoga again'.) Sri Radhika had attained the acyuta yoga siddhi ('infallible mystic perfection' or 'union with Acyuta, Krishna') through vairagya dhuradhara ('carrying the weight of renunciation' or 'having the color from chewing pan removed from her lips by Krishna's kisses'), nairgunya mukta harini ('liberation by transcending the three modes of material nature' or 'having Her pearl necklace broken by Krishna') and niranjanodara drik ('objective transcendental vision' or 'having Her eyeliner wiped away by Krishna'). Krishna took shelter of His subservient Yoganidra ('mystic slumber' or 'feigned sleep') to experience His full atmabhutva ('self-born nature' or 'ecstatic experience'). He is worshipped by transcendentalists for liberation as He sits on His yoga asana (or 'on His bed of



flower petals in the kunjā') having attained siddhi ('mystic perfection' or 'ecstatic satisfaction'). But, O Sakhis, Radhika's siddhi is greater! There are wonderful moonbeams shining on Her sky-like chest (or 'Her chest is full of nail marks') and mental affliction ('mental distress' or 'erotic agitation')."

As Hari heard this, His body became studded with goose bumps of ecstasy. Vainly trying to control His laughter, He was moistened by perspiration; and smilingly gave up His feigned sleep. Suddenly He got up and showed the sakhis His chest, saying, "Ham Ho! Look at the wonderful (Citra means wonderful or one sakhi) moonbeams (Indulekha means moonbeam or one other sakhi) on My chest, which are the only source of My life and happiness!"

Sri Radhika lowered Her head and giggled, covering Her mouth with Her veil and looking at Krishna with knitted eyebrows. Then She slightly touched Hari's chest with Her lotus-like hand and pointed at the marks there, saying, "O Lover, if these wonderful (Citra) moonbeams (Indulekha) are on your chest, then why did not Lalita and Visakha (unlike Citra and Indulekha) also get a place there, although they are so qualified? They would accept Your nail marks and repay You threefold!"

The sakhis then said to Krishna, "We heard that You spent the whole night fast asleep. Which lady then has made these nail marks on your chest? Sri Radhika is the Queen of all chaste girls, so She could not have given up Her virtue by doing this."

Krishna said, "Yes, friends, the vine of Sri Radhika's piety is very strong. Therefore, She defeated Me in last night's erotic battle, although She's just a weak girl. Look, She dug into My chest with Her nail-weapons!"

The sakhis asked Krishna, "O Gallant One, How did Sri Radhika carve Your chest with Her nails?" Krishna then showed them by biting their lips with His teeth and scratching their breasts with His nails.

Looking in this way at Madhusudana (the Krishna-honeybee), who was intoxicated from drinking the honey of the blooming lotus-faces of the gopis in the forest in the morning, Vrindadevi was immersed in an ocean of bliss; but she trembled out of fear, also. The rays of the fullmoon-like faces of Sri Radhika and the gopis had arisen and the moonlit night was over. So, Vrinda looked to see if Radha and Krishna's love games were over or not, being doubtful at heart. It is said in the Vedas that as much as darkness is dispelled, that much knowledge is revealed, and accordingly the disease of the heart, lust, is destroyed. But, Vrinda thinks the opposite. She thinks that Radha and Krishna's passion increases as the daylight comes. The customs of Vraja are not perceived by the Vedas.

Vrinda saw no other way to break Radha and Krishna's loving fatigue but to engage the old she-monkey Kakkhati in speaking some harsh words to force Them to separate. She thought, "Alas! There's no other way than this!"

Kakkhati said, "O Krishna! You contaminated these chaste girls with the mud of adultery, and You will not even leave them alone in the morning time! As a reaction to all this, Jatila is now quickly coming here from Vraja.

Simply upon hearing the three syllables Ja-ti-la all the gopis turned pale, and their anxiety made the ocean of their love play diminish to a spoonful. The gopis fearfully said, "O alas, friends! What to do now? How can we secretly return home?" as they stumbled out of the kunjā-cottage into the courtyard. "The night, that gave us just a little pleasure, is now over, and the miserable Jatila has come to

devour the fruitful vines of our desires and to shower us with the flowers of misery!"

Some sakhis and maidservants then entered the kunjja-cottage again to fetch Radha and Krishna's broken flower garlands, Their nectarean food remnants and Their different ornaments, which they ecstaticly divided among themselves.

Radha and Krishna's desires to separate and unite got into a fight and if the first one (the desire to separate) was just slightly defeated, Krishna's arm would beautify Radhika's shoulder. Seeing this, the peacocks perceived Radha and Krishna to be a lightning vine embraced by a raincloud on earth. They happily spread out their feathers, danced and sang 'ke ka.' The maidservants had the same illusory vision. While Radha and Krishna thus proceeded to Vraja in Their embrace, They eagerly looked into each other's faces. They also fearfully looked in all directions, thinking, "Somebody's watching us!" At that time, Cupid failed to shoot his darts, because although the lotus flowers in his kingdom bloom up when the sun rises, he became worried and forgot to fix his darts during this sunrise, which afflicted the lotus-like gopis.

The soldier of eagerness was defeated by the soldier of fear when Radha and Krishna reached the outskirts of Vraja, forcibly taking away the jewel-like embrace of Krishna's arm around fair-eyed Radhika's shoulder. Fear personified then admonished Radha and Krishna, forbidding Them to even walk on the same path together. Their maidservants had to cry when they saw how pitifully They looked at each other then. Radha and Krishna's moonlike-faces instantly lost their luster from sorrow because of being forced to walk on separate paths, like stars that lose their luster when they come before the moon. Radha and Krishna became sad because of having to separate after having first attained the jewels of each other's hearts. Their pure love guaranteed Their next meeting.

Losing Sri Radhika's company, Krishna went alone to Vraja. At that time, a young girl personifying unlimited pain obstructed Him by embracing Him (Krishna, feeling great pain of separation, could not walk on anymore), and He shed warm tears of sorrow. Sri Radhika's entire body, except Her hair and nails, was studded with blisters of severe separation, and since She was delaying Her return home with a stumbling gate, Her friends took Her along.

Sri Radhika said, "Friends, alas! I'm dying from the pain of separation! How will you take me to Vraja? Why engage in this calamity? Fate became my enemy, taking away My blissful union with Krishna! How can you lock Me up in My mother-in-law's house? Lalita, you took Me out of My home today and made Me reenter it again on the same day. Why did you vainly make me greedy after stepping into the nectar-ocean of Krishna's company? Sakhi, the sun that I saw setting just now is yet again rising in the east! Now the night has become as illusory as a flower in the sky. Was there no night today? Curses on My ears! Curses on My tongue! Curses on My eyes! They are always burning with the fever of erotic eagerness, unable to drink even a drop of the nectar of Krishna's nice voice, nice taste and nice form!"

Lalita said, "O naive girl! Today the yoga of nocturnal union with Krishna recited the nirveda almanac (nirveda refers to impious acts, like adultery, that are forbidden by the Vedas) to You. Now, Your separation is also reciting the nirveda almanac (here, nirveda means lamentation) to You. The union made You taste the nectar of Acyuta, and the separation made You taste bitter poison. Alas!" Sri

Radhika, the Supreme Goddess of love of Krishna, could not understand the words of Her girlfriends. Being surrounded by them, She entered Her house without being seen by the people of Vraja and lay down on Her bed.

### Chapter 3 Pratah Lila Morning Pastimes (6:00 a.m. - 8:24 a.m.)

When Sri Radhika fell asleep, Her maidservants, that were all as qualified as their leader Srimati Rupa manjari, and who had given up all their personal desires, nourished their own luster by bathing, anointing and decorating themselves with pure garlands and clothes. Each line on these manjaris' toes defeats the bright splendor of lightning. They are cleverness personified and although they are qualified to be group leaders of gopis (yuthesvaris) they have no taste for this, but are always immersed in the nectar ocean of Sri Radhika's service.

King Vrisabhanu built a separate residence for his daughter, Sri Radhika, north of Jatila's inner chamber, and had this residence decorated with different kinds of artful handicraft and an incomparably beautiful, elegant moontower. In this watchtower are pillars, verandas, roofs, a courtyard, other kinds of rooms, sitting platforms and gates. The eyes of those who behold this building, that is illuminated by jewelled lamps and has many nice pictures, are astonished. Above the cloud-like sapphire balconies on this moontower are rows of most charming silver swans. The peacocks, looking at this bluish balcony, take it to be their friend the cloud, but when they see the lines of silver swans, that are their enemies, they contract their tail feathers.

In the middle of this moontower is a room where Sri Radhika's maidservants clean Her sitting place, dining table and bed, smearing them with sandalwood pulp. When the water is dried up they spread out a soft rug made from the hair of a Ranku deer and in topmost bliss they hang a canopy inset with pearls there. One maidservant cleaned the golden and jeweled vessels. Another one fetched water that was appropriate for the season (cold in the summer and warm in the winter), and another one placed a pillow on the jeweled bench which was covered with sheets of different colors. Another maidservant kept Rhadika's clothes and jeweled ornaments of the previous day all in a box, after cleaning them. Her bangles jingled loudly as she opened the box. Another maidservant began to crush camphor, vermilion and sandalwood. Another purehearted maidservant began to make bangles, crowns, flower garlands and flower sashes, and another one lovingly made a tasty pan of catechu, jatiphala, cloves and other ingredients.

Meanwhile, the sounds of the churning of curd and of brahmanas reciting the Vedas became audible everywhere in the village. The cows wanted to call their calves with their mooing, but they were drowned out by the brahmanas. The praisers sang waves of nectarean poetry describing Sri Krishna's glories, and the saris, sukas, sparrows, peacocks and other birds increased the volume of their songs. Gradually, all the people woke up, sat up in their beds and considered their duties for the day. Then they eagerly went to the house of Nanda, the King of

Vraja, to see Krishna.

Mukhara, whose very life is the audience of her granddaughter Radhika's lotus-like face, and who is like a box full of jewels of parental affection, came in and called out, "Radha! My daughter! Where are You?"

Sri Radhika said, "O holy mother, here I am!" as yawned and got up, looking at Mukhara with eyes rolling from sleep. When Mukhara saw Sri Krishna's yellow cloth on Sri Radhika's chest, she pretended not to see it, in order not to embarrass Her.

She said, "Radha, morning has broken! Why are You still sleeping? Don't You see that the sun is up already? Take Your bath and eat something before You go out to do Your puja. Alas! Your body is getting skinnier every day!" While saying this, Mukhara sprinkled Sri Radhika with her loving teardrops. With her hand she caressed Her body and then she took Radhika on her lap to fondle Her before hurrying to the palace of the King of Vraja, being eager to see Krishna.

Then, one by one, Sri Radhika's friends came into the room and surrounded Her while She sat on Her jeweled sofa. They were laughing and joking with each other. "The meeting with Sri Radhika is certainly a shower of nectar for the wheat of my joy!" they thought. Shyamala sakhi came along with them. Sri Radhika, who is beauty personified, embraced her and offered her a seat.

Sri Radhika said, "Shyama! Just as I was thinking of you, you came before my eyes by the arrangement of fate. Sakhi, if the tree of My desires will now bear fruit, I will consider this a good morning. Alas, O beautiful one, that tree of my desires is constantly sprinkled by My girlfriends, but still it does not bear fruit! How is it possible? O, when will I ever see those fruits?"

Shyamala said, "Radha, if the tree of Your desires did not bear fruit yet, don't worry. It will surely bear fruit! But, O Idle One, I understand that these fruits are most amazing! Although their fragrance is relishable by the honeybees (or gopis), they are always relished as if never tasted before. How amazing! Can't You see those fruits that have reddened Your own eyelids (red from sleep or Krishna's lipstick)? O Lotus Faced One, haven't You tasted those fruits that have cut Your lips (Krishna's bite marks) by repeatedly savoring them?"

Sri Radhika replied, "O Shyama, you joke about Me because you don't know My heartache. Just as the lightning illuminates the cloudless night just once, first destroying the darkness and then disappearing again, making the darkness twice as dense as before, similarly, after having seen Krishna just once, His disappearance doubles the misery of His absence."

Shyamala said, "Radha, that moon (kalanidhi means moon or clever Krishna) whom you compare with the lightning, pleased You with its nectarean rays (karagra means rays or nails). Its phases now become visible on Your breasts."

Sri Radhika said, "Shyama, He simply pollutes Me with His phases! You are right in calling Him Kalanidhi. He sometimes gives a drop of moonlight to My cakora bird-like eyes, but not much. He cannot fulfill My desires in this way!"

Shyamala said, "Radha, tell us everything frankly. I am eager to have my affliction mitigated by bathing in the nectarean Ganga stream of stories about Your nocturnal pastimes with Krishna, that flows from Your lotus-like mouth! How can I perform any activities without first tasting that nectar?"

Sri Radhika said, "Shyamala, when a stream of fresh bluish luster began to

shower Me in the kunjja cottage tonight, then who took Me on the dancing stage of innumerable Cupids that were dancing there? When I was pleased by seeing this dancing, I gave all My sense activities as a reward to them, as the audience. I cannot remember anymore what wonderful performance began on the stage then."

Shyamala said, "Radha! How amazing! You became the stage manager of this erotic fight of that One Ocean of Happiness who astonished millions of Cupids with His own dancing."

Sri Radhika said, "Shyama, I experienced so many other things than what you just described. Alas! Is this all some magic trick, a dream or an illusion in the mind?"

Shyamala replied, "Radha, You have drunk so much honey from the lotus-like face of He who blinds all the housewives from afar with the fragrance of His face, so this error of Your mind is not so surprising."

Then, Madhurika appeared. The sakhis asked her, "Sakhi, where do you come from?"

Madhurika answered, "I went to the house of the king of Vraja this morning for some duty. Listen to all the fun I saw going on there!. When Queen Yashoda called out, 'Bho, Krishna! Krishna! Get up, O lotus eyed One!', she showered Him with her breastmilk and her tears of loving ecstasy, as she saw Him lying on the bed. While Krishna got up, His eyes slightly rolled out of drowsiness. The fragrance from His mouth spread here and there as He yawned, causing the honeybees to become intoxicated. While He stretched Himself out, His lotus like face looked very beautiful, tilted upwards to one side, making His curly locks fall loosely downwards. Queen Yashoda caressed her son from head to toe with her palms, pronouncing the mantra 'avyadajo'nghri maniman' to protect His whole body. She looked upwards, pitifully praying to the Lord, "O God of Gods! You mercifully gave me this son, who is the very life of all of Vraja. Please protect Him in all circumstances."

Madhurika continued, "Listen, O Gandharvika, to another wonderful thing that happened! When the queen of Vraja saw Your blue cloth on her son's chest, Pauramasi told her, 'Just see, Krishna exchanged clothes with His brother, Balarama.' Then, seeing the spots from Your pan on Krishna's cheek, Paurnamasi said, 'Madhava, has a ruby from Your earrings been reflected in Your emerald like cheek?' and wiped away the red spots of Your lipstick with her hand. Seeing Krishna dizzily getting up from bed, Yashoda told Rohini, 'Sakhi Rohini, last evening Krishna did not eat enough, that is why He is so thin and dizzy! Give Him something to eat, now!' Hearing this, Rohini went to get something to eat. Then, Krishna sat down on a jewelled chair brought in by His servants who began their scheduled services like washing His lotus like face. Then, Balarama and Madhumangala arrived and stood on each side of Krishna's chair, making Him look like a raincloud flanked by the moon and the lightning.

"When Rohini brought Krishna fragrant butter mixed with rock candy and seasoned with camphor on a silver tray, it looked like the manifestation of motherly affection from her lotus like heart. Everyone became very happy to see this. Mother Yashoda repeatedly served this to Krishna and His friends. However, Madhumangala told her, 'Mother, I'm still hungry, although I have already eaten unlimited amounts of food!' So, Mother Yashoda gave him more.

"Meanwhile, one of the cowherd men came in and said, 'Krishna! The expert cowherds fail to milk the cows and the calves cannot drink even a drop of their mother's milk, being very morose. The cows are looking down the road for You to come with tear filled eyes, liking their calves, filling all directions with their mooing, unable to tolerate another moment without You.' Krishna then gladdened His mother by sprinkling her with the nectar of His slightly smiling lotus like face, indicating His own bliss. Chewing pan, He got up to milk His cows. Mother Yashoda then told Balarama, "O Balabhadra, if You go to wrestle after milking the cows, then don't delay! I urge You, come back quickly for breakfast after playing with Your friends.'

"Hearing His mother's words, Hari said, 'O Mother! You're saying this because you don't trust Me! I am the only leader of all the cowherd boys, so why should I accept the control of My older brother?'

"Mother Yashoda replied, "All the older people of Vraja know how You are the leader of the boys from Your very childhood! How many times did they not complain to me about Your stealing butter and yoghurt from thier homes in the past?' Mother Yashoda personally handed Krishna a golden bucket for the milk, placing it into His right hand. Into His left hand she placed a wonderful rope for tying cows, that defeats the splendor of lightning. Like that, O sakhi, Krishna looks even more beautiful.

"Then, Krishna went out, walking more slowly than a mad elephant. His anklebells jingled, His moving, curly locks were black, like the Yamuna river, and His jewelled earrings were white, like the Ganga river. These streams of nectar sprinkled the globe of His moonlike face like the Triveni (the confluence of the three holy rivers, the Yamuna, Ganga and Sarasvati.) Krishna's yellow scarf danced on His chest like a restless lightning strike dancing on a cloud. His pearl necklace started dancing of joy when it saw the Kaustubha gem dancing on His chest, rising like the sun, and His long flower garland kissed His foot ornaments.

"When Krishna thus went out of His house, He gave great joy to His mother's eyes. Sometimes He chewed pan which was given to Him by His servants, and His body was studded with goose bumps as He stood by the town gate. Krishna sat down on a platform outside the gate, waiting for His friends, trying to find out which girl was doing what there. Then, one by one, His dear friends came there to meet Him.

"O mistress, How can I describe the mild smile on the lotus like face of Krishna, who has such good taste, as He relished the soft words that His friends whispered in His ears at every step? How can I describe the meaning of these words? May your bee-like mind always search for this! Whose mind will not be enchanted by the profuse sweetness of the turban Krishna wore at that time? The net of golden strings on top of that turban, on which beautiful jewels are strung, is indescribable. Then, Krishna got up and went down the road to the barn. The anklebells on His feet jingled sweetly, and His bodily fragrance, that pervaded all the directions, forcibly attractde the young housewives, who climbed the nearest watchtower from where they repeatedly worshipped Him with their lotus-like eyes."

Sri Radhika's fever of separation was extinguished for the time being by Madhurika, who served Her the soothing nectar drink of descriptions of Krishna's beautiful play with His friends. However, shortly after that, the fever of Her desire

increased a hundred times again. The joy of Radhika's ears had increased, but the high fever of desire entered Her eyes. These eyes became envious of their neighbors' incomparable wealth of Krishna nectar and became afflicted with sorrow. Then, Sri Radhika, the Supreme Goddess of anuraga (constant passion) for Krishna told Madhurika, "O Fairfaced One, Most blessed are the girls of Vraja, whose fishlike eyes always play in the ocean of Krishna's natural beauty and playfulness."

Then She told Shyamala, "Sakhi, Although I took birth in Gokula I could never relish Krishna's sweetness! And even if I heard about it, My restless mind could not keep even a drop of it!"

Shyamala said to Lalita, "Lalita, listen! I'm going home now. Let my words stop now. Please offer this lotus-like girl to the thirsty Krishna honeybee in the abode of the king of Vraja." When Shyamala went home, Sri Radhika's mind got upset with feelings of separation from Krishna, making Her experience each second to be like a millenium. When Her maidservants began their usual duties for Her bathing and ornamentation, She went through them as a mere custom. Then all the sakhis were also bathed, ornamented and dressed by their friends, so that even the beauty of their lotus feet defeated that of the goddess of fortune, who was churned out of the milk ocean along with a spotless autumn moon.

#### Chapter 4

#### Sri Radhika's Bath, Dressing and Ornamentation

Pratah Lila cont. (6:00 a.m. - 8:24 a.m.)

After this, the maidservants came before Sri Radhika's jeweled sofa with golden pitchers in their hands, filled with water which was cool in the summer and warm in the winter, to quickly wash Her beautiful mouth. One maidervant poured water from her jug into her palm. As Sri Radhika flushed Her closed mouth, moving the water back and forth from Her palate to Her teeth, Her cheeks were slightly puffed up. With a bit of noise, She privately spat the water out. After this, one maidservant removed Sri Radhika's locks from Her shoulders with the fingers of her left hand, placing them on Her head, and began to wash Her naturally smooth forehead, cheeks and eyes, making them shine unlimitedly. With soft closed hands, one faireyed maiden brushed Sri Radhika's teeth with the very beautiful twig of a desire tree. At that time her handstring swung and her bangles remained silent, but her earrings swung faster. While Sri Radhika was washed like this, Her teeth looked beautiful and charming like raindrops.

Another fair maiden cleaned Sri Radhika's tongue with a tongue scraper which was shaped like a bow. She held the scraper with her tender thumbs and indexfingers and scraped Radhika's youthful, sproutlike tongue. Sri Radhika was very pleased with that. Her lowered head that was covered with Her curly locks and beautified by Her smile, shivered. After Sri Radhika's moonlike face was thus repeatedly washed inside and out, one sakhi washed Her hands and dried the water drops from Her face with a soft towel. One maidservant held a jeweled mirror in front of Radhika's face to show Her that all the pan spots had been washed from Her teeth. Once again, Radhika's face was beautified with a nectarean smile as She beheld Her own face, that showed all the signs of Her Priyatama's love

festival, in the mirror.

The sakhis came there in great bliss and removed all the unnecessary ornaments from Radhika's limbs, making Her look even more beautiful with the signs of the removed ornaments on Her body, like an ornament free from spots. Then, Sri Radhika put on a white bathing dress, looking around anxiously to see if anybody was watching. She looked like a steady streak of lightning surrounded by the beautiful orb of the moon. Then again, She sat on a soft seat, surrounded by Her girlfriends that are dedicated to Her with causeless love and that are expert in serving Her, like a beautiful moon surrounded by its orb.

Rati Manjari took Radhika's veil off and opened Her braid, displaying Her wonderful bunch of hair. She unravelled this hair with her fingers and sprinkled it with fragrant oil, gently pulling it from top to bottom and making it smoother by hitting it softly with the side of her hand. She softly massaged Radhika's head with her bud-like hands that carried jingling bangles. Radhika's eyes opened slightly and Her body shivered from erotic bliss. When she combed Radhika's hair and bound it up, it looked as if the dense darkness of this hair blocked the shining of Her moon-like face, so she angrily punished the hair for this with the weapon of her jeweled comb.

The maidservants secretly smiled when they saw the marks of Krishna's nails and teeth on Radhika's breasts while they opened the pots with oils for sprinkling Her breasts, arms, etc. Seeing this, Radhika's eyes became startled and She shyly lowered Her head. Then one very clever maidservant prepared an ointment of kunkuma, camphor, lotus pollen and sandal mixed with rosewater. Another maidservant anointed Radhika's body, that looked like the lightning showered by a raincloud of nectarean luster, with this unguent, expertly checking with her eyes if her service was done well. Another maidservant massaged Radhika's hair with the palms of her hands, using myrobalan shampoo mixed with other fragrant substances. With her calm movements, she made this hair very smooth and beautiful.

Sri Radhika then sat down on a crystal bathing dais in front of her, being surrounded by Her attendants and maidservants. When She climbed onto this dais with the elegant steps of an elephant, Her own luster colored the dais golden. Sri Radhika's buttocks, that were covered by a white cloth, looked like a waterfall through the transparent crystal jug, attaining oneness in color with it, but changing in form as the jug came close to Her body. When these blissful maidens rubbed the drops of water from Radhika's body after the shower, it looked as if pearls were wiped from a steady streak of lightning by a blue, autumnal cloud.

When one maidservant tied Radhika's hair in a cloth to squeeze out the water, it looked as if the Yamuna was covered by the Ganga, but still defeating the Ganga by coming out from inside of it, extending her luster. This maidservant softly beat Radhika's hair with this towel to make the water drip out. It was as if dense darkness was crying, being swallowed by the moonbeams that are white like lotus stems.

Sri Radhika then dressed in a fine gown from her waist down, dropping Her bathing dress. Mother Earth accepted that dress and attained its fragrance, thinking, "Fragrance is my quality and fair eyed Radhika's bathing dress has given me that quality with all the fragrant oils that touched it during Her bath!" Sri Radhika, the jewel of all ladies, whose body was slightly bent and whose eyes were



startled, removed the hairs from Her beautiful face with Her fingers, that looked like the buds of golden campaka flowers. Sri Radhika held the towel with both Her hands, striking Her freshly washed locks with it, filling the sky with drops of water that flew here and there. This looked very beautiful. It looked as if the branches of a steady lightning vine had made friends with the spotless moonlight to strike the dense darkness, making it splendid and bent.

Then, Sri Radhika was dressed in a beautiful blouse tied with crimson strings hanging down Her breasts, and with a petticoat with pictures on it, that hung down to Her heels. On top of that She was dressed in a new cloud blue sari with golden spots on it, seeing which, Mukunda's eyes would be attracted and obstructed. The remaining water dripped from Svamini's hair, making the aguru smoke from it ascend to heaven. Who does not take part in the constant service of great souls? (Those who have no guru can still relish the service of the Lord, who is the aggregate of all gurus, and relishing the nectar of such service, ascend to heaven, Vaikuntha)

The moonfaced Radhika, being surrounded by the soldiers of Her bright luster sat down on Her golden chair and the expert Sudevi came up to Her, placed her left hand on the top of Her head and combed Her hair softly with a comb she held in her right hand. When she combed, she opened her left hand, otherwise she contracted it. It was as if the stream of the Yamuna was dragged by a golden net, falling on the sometimes blossoming, sometimes closed lotus flower of Her face, swallowing it. With a beautiful comb Sudevi made the part in Radhika's hair above Her forehead. In this way Her two braids were divided by a narrow path that was praised by Cupid. The remembrance of this part destroys all sinful reactions. Is it sweetness personified, or is it the Ganga where the elephant of Hari's heart can play? Or is it the triple pathway where the boats of Her friends' eyes can cross the river?

Lalita stood in front of Radhika, placing a beautiful crestjewel on Her shining head, that rose like the sun on the dense darkness of Her hair, that is very dear to Him. All around this crestjewel were strings of new pearls that touched the part. It looked as if the stars got cold and displeased from serving the moon and therefore began to serve the sun, to get some warmth. The place where the part comes out on the forehead is named latatika. The pearls that were placed on this part looked like Cupid's bow and kissed Radhika's curly locks. It looked as if the moss on a lake of nectar was kissed by foam. Then, Sudevi joined Radhika's hair with the pearl string of Her crestjewel and latatika and made Her braid, that fell down to Her thighs, decorating it with different sweet flowers that came out here and there. It looked as if the moon threw out all its spots after performing penances and had attained the position of Sri Radhika's spotless moon-like face. The discarded spots hung down as Her braid, that touched Her feet out of gratitude. At the end of this braid, Sudevi hung a lotus flower made of various wonderful diamonds, pearls and gold on a thin silken string. This looked like the desire vine of Hari's desires in the form of the fibrous root of a Banyan tree with a very beautiful jeweled ribbon at the end, brought there by Cupid after he conquered the abode of Indra.

Lalita jokingly told Sudevi, "O Sudevi, are you Bandhada devi ('Maya devi, who binds the illusioned souls to the material world' or 'the goddess who binds the braid') who firmly binds all the balas ('living beings' or 'Radhika's hairs')? Only

Hari can give moksha ('liberation to the living beings' or 'only He can open Radhika's braid') whenever He feels like it!" After saying this, Lalita placed her left hand on the top of fawn-like Radhika's head, slightly lifting Her head, and holding a cup of musk in her right hand. With a pencil, she mixed that musk with aguru and made a circle on Radhika's forehead with this mixture. In the middle of this circle she drew an eight petalled lotus with sindura and in that circle she painted Radhika's sweet tilaka with sandalwood paste mixed with camphor. Cupid defeated Lord Siva and took the moon from his forehead, using it to make the half moon-crest on Sri Radhika's forehead.

Sri Radhika's forehead looked like a golden slab covered by Her curly locks that were like magic syllables written on that slab, and was beautified by the multicolored smara yantra (Cupid's instrument) tilaka that controls and gladdens Her Priyatama. Then Lalita applied eyeliner mixed with camphor on Radhika's eyes from a cup. How can any poet's tongue relish (lick) the sweetness of Radhika's curved eyelids then? Seeing Radhika's lotus-like eyes with eyeliner on, it seems that even the sun does not shine so brightly! The enemy of the sun, dense darkness, has surrounded the friends of the sun, the lotus flowers, as the eyeliner. But how amazing! Instead of diminishing the beauty of these lotus-like eyes, their beauty simply increases!

Lalita smilingly said, "Radha, I don't know how much You like black substances (referring to Krishna)." Hearing this, Sri Radhika angrily knitted Her eyebrows. Then, Lalita said, "O nicely anointed fishlike eyes, now that the sweet Krishna cloud will arise you should dance skillfully, sweetly and blissfully!"

Hearing this, moon faced Radhika said, "Lalita, how can My eyes become dancers unless your glances, that are the best of dancers, teach them?" Then Lalita swiftly placed Radhika's nosepearl, that was inset with different jewels, on Her nose. It looked as if the moon took his wife the star on his chest as an ornament. These pearl ornaments were like an effulgent king sitting on a golden lotus throne, giving great joy to Hari's city-like eyes, controlling them, although they are otherwise hard to control. Are Aghadvisa's (Krishna's) two playful eyes thirsty after Radhika's nosepearl, thinking it to be the seed of a vine of beauty? Or are they Cupid's round bud-like arrows that were coming out of a quiver of sesame flowers showing their great opulence in order to destroy Mukunda's patience?

Lalita jokingly said, "O nosepearl, You are a globule with sweet nectar that adorns Hari's fish-like eyes. Quickly attract Him so that the world can announce your good fortune!"

Then, Visakha said, "Lalita, those fish-like eyes of Hari, that live in the ocean of constant passion even swallow the basket of the housewives' patience and fear, and they will also swallow this globule. Who on earth can subdue these eyes?"

Hearing these nectarean words of Her friends, Sri Radhika frowned and said, "Why don't you engage in mutual krisa (attraction)? You can attract Krishna and Krishna can attract you!" After that, Lalita hung hoop earrings, that shone like clean garments, on Sri Radhika's ears that were adorned with kunda flowers and jewelled earrings hanging under them. Are these the best sprouts of Cupid's tree, that give joy to the Krishna honeybee, bearing beautiful clusters of jewels and honey, or are they Sri Radhika's hoop earrings?

Lalita then painted makara fish (sharks) on Radhika's soft cheeks that will

surely call Makara Ketu (Cupid), saying, "Please come, and Hari will worship you during the most romantic time, offering His red, sprout-like lips to you! O makaras, when Krishna's shark earrings fall on you, you must accept them as your husbands! They are aghara sruti sevi (Aghara is Krishna or 'destroying all sins' and sruti sevi means 'they hang under Krishna's ears' or 'they are served by the Vedas'.)

The diamonds that hung on Radhika's ears on the fresh nectarlake of Her cheeks looked like barleycorns and the sharks on Her cheeks opened their mouths to eat them. Have they now become stunned from bliss when these diamonds arose? Keep Krishna's snake-like earrings lying on the hard chest of Your snake-like armlets, thus they will attain the jewel of women (Radhika's armlets), becoming most wealthy and giving up their restlessness! When Lalita put a drop of musk on Radhika's chin, it looked as if the moon, removing the darkness with its rays, mercifully kept this child of darkness on his own chest.

Lalita joked, saying, "This blue drop is like the full moon rising from an ocean of sweetness. Seeing this, Krishna will think it belongs to Him and He will personally come to relish its juice again and again. It seems as if Cupid has made a leafcup with perfectly formed golden ketaki leaves, placing red bimba fruits on them and laying a beautiful baby black bee under it."

Then Chitradevi made pictures of beautiful tender leafed vines on fair limbed Radhika's breasts with camphor, aguru, kunkuma and sandalwood pulp. Then these breasts looked like Cupid's chakravaka birds, that were covered by moss, coming out of a pond of rasa after having first been immersed in it. When the mad Krishna elephant sees this, He wants to play with them with his trunk. Champakalanta and Indulekha then placed two jeweled armlets on Radhika's arms, dividing these arms like the full moon cutting two lotus stems in two.

The sakhis jokingly said, "O armlets, if you don't bring someone's matchless body here to offer to She who wears you, all the people will find fault with you and your name, angada ('armlet' or 'giving the body') will not be fulfilled! Sakhi, if this armlet comes before Hari's eyes it will be immediately anangada (giving erotic bliss) fullfilling our highest desires in a very wonderful way! Who can be more generous than that?"

Hearing these jokes from Her friends, Sri Radhika smiled slightly, shyly lowered Her eyes and said, "Alright. No need to elaborate on these armlets any more. Your limbs have the three qualities of angadatva (ability to give one's body), anangadatva (ability to give erotic bliss) and agadatva (giving medecine against lusty affliction), that are also seen in Hari!."

Then the sakhis hung charming sapphire bangles inset with lines of gold, that please the ears with their jingling, on Sri Radhika's wrists. These bangles looked like black bees being chased away by the swanlike nails on Her lotus-like hands. Now, they are embracing the necks of those lotus-like wrists that give shelter to them, thinking them to be blue lotus flowers. Radhika's bracelets and bangles represent a japa mala of Krishna's bluish complexion and His golden dress. She naturally praises Krishna in this way, doing japa of blue and gold.

Just as a hunter spreads out his net to catch birds, Sri Radhika's handstring looked like a net spread out by the hunter, Cupid, from the roots of the leaves on the nectar vine of Radhika's hands to catch the cakora bird named Hari. Sri Radhika wears jeweled rings on each finger except for on the thumb, index and middle finger of Her right hand. Usually the moon and the lotus flower cannot be

seen together, but on Radhika's lotus-like hands, the nails perk like moons and Her rings shine like stars surrounding these moons.

Then Visakha swiftly placed a crimson blouse embroidered with charming pearls on fawn-eyed Radhika's very soft breasts. The cups of this blouse have the tendency to break religious principles. They are soldiers of passion that come out from Radhika's heart, showing their might in subduing Lord Hari. The jewels that hung from fair-eyed Radhika's necklace, that was hung there by Visakha, looked very beautiful and divided Her breasts. It looked as if Cupid, to apologize for his offense to Lord Siva (or 'to destroy Krishna's patience'), poured spotless Ganga water over two Siva lingas with a golden conchshell. After this, Visakha placed a dhruva (steady) broche, that was as clear as a mirror and could reflect Hari's form, on Radhika's chest, that was Vishnupada (the place assigned to Krishna) as a great oblation to the earth, just as the dhruva star and the hairdhama (the form of Lord Vishnu) dwell in the Vishnupada (sky).

The bells that Tungavidya hung around Sri Radhika's buttocks looked like jeweled gates with which Cupid locks up his own home. Are these bells like rasika cranes that are overcome with lust, and show their opulence by sweetly singing on the shore of Radhika's navel, that is filled with the waves of Her three lined belly? Then, Rangadevi hung jeweled anklebells with nice swan-like ornaments on Radhika's lotus feet and sweetly jingling golden and jeweled rings on Her toes. Sweetness itself rolled at Sri Radhika's feet to make itself successful in different ways. Did it appear as Radhika's foot ornament to engage other fortunate souls to praise the glories of these lotus feet, making sounds like 'rana rana'?

Someone may ask. "Sri Radhika's nails and the soles of Her feet are naturally reddish. Why bother smearing red footlac on them?" The answer is, "are there no people worshipping the radiant sun with a tiny wick?" That sun-like footlac has merged with his beloved lotus flowers, the soles of Radhika's feet. Seeing this, the paramahansas, avadhutas and learned sages who desire this kind of liberation dance in ecstasy. They have attained a higher bliss than liberation from the soles of Radhika's feet.

The sakhis said, "O footlac, don't lament, thing 'I am unqualified!" The color of your passion reaches as far as Hari's forehead and locks (when He puts Radhika's feet on His head), increasing their beauty. Hearing these words of Her friends, Sri Radhika pretended to be angry. Her eyes became crooked and She anxiously chastised the sakhis.

She said, "Sakhi! Let Me joke about you when you color someone else's head with the lac from your feet! If I ever get that chance, I would also ridicule you. Why are you so silly to joke about Me without reason?"

Rasa manjari then carefully smeared Sri Radhika's body with sandalwood pulp, camphor, kunkuma, musk, etc. But the king of Radhika's natural bodily fragrance accepted this unguent as a mere servant! Tulasi manjari hung an atimukta (madhavi) flower garland around Radhika's neck and placed a cut lotus flower into Her lotus-like hand, making both the garland and the lotus very sweet. Ranganamala placed a jeweled mirror that reflected Her effulgently ornamented body, in front of fair eyed Radhika's face. Seeing Her own sweet effulgent limbs in this mirror, astonishment kissed Radhika's mind and heart. The daughter of Vrishabhanu, knowing the waves of Her Priyatama's thoughts, thought to Herself, "Where has this unique ocean of My bodily sweetness come from? How will the

rasika (tasteful) honeybee Madhusudana keep His calm when He sees this? If He sees the drops of My unpolished luster, My Priyatama will enter into an ocean of bliss! When will that moment come when He can see this beauty? Why should that unfortunate luster appear in such abundance without being seen by My Priyatama now? Would anybody in this world whose wealth is wasted not lament over that?"

Then, Sri Radhika's friend, The Personification of the Desire to See Krishna, suddenly arrested Her and forcibly took Her to the domain called Loss of Patience. But Radhika became afraid that the assembly of elders would notice it, so She restrained Herself. Then Kundalatika came from Nandisvara on the order of the Queen of Vraja, who is like a desire vine of parental affection, just to give joy to Sri Radhika's bee-like eyes. The sakhis, who are all equal to Sri Radhika in affection, kindness and luster, all became ecstatic when they saw the nectar shower of Radhika and Kundalata's mutual audience and their exchange of smiles.

## Chapter 5

### Sri Radhika Goes to Nandisvara to Cook for Krishna Pratah Lila cont. (6:00 a.m. - 8:24 a.m.)

Sri Radhika told Kundalata, "Sakhi, by Vrajeshvari's grace you have quickly come here. Your arrival is as beautiful as the moon rise in the east at nightfall (a full moon). I understand that Queen Yashoda showers Me with nectar with this order! If I had not gotten this order to cook for Krishna, My mind would be so sad that it would have been better for Me to leave My body. O Rasavati ('humorous girl' or 'good cook'), I see you have come to take Me there for cooking, but first go to My superiors and ask them for permission and then quickly come back."

Drinking the nectar of fair eyed Radhika's words, Kundalata blissfully smiled and said, "Sakhi, You Know it all, so don't delay and come along with me and take Your friends along! Sakhi, don't worry about Your superiors. It won't be the slightest difficulty to get their permission, because Vajreshvari Yashoda controls them with a matchless shower of wealth of barley and cows. And all the people of Vraja are unconditionally favorable to Krishna, the prince of Vraja, who is dearer to them than millions of lives, so there's no fear of them either. Sakhi, Queen Yashoda (Savitri) is eager to collect incomparably tasty things to cook for Krishna, not considering personal gain or loss, fame or infamy, her own purpose or that of others. Sakhi, whatever You cook belittles the nectar from heaven! This is known throughout Vraja! Who is not astonished by Your skill in cooking? O Lotus Eyed One, Ever since Durvasa Muni bestowed his blessings on You (that whatever You cook will increase Krishna's strength, bliss and longevity) not one day has passed that Vajreshvari did not ask You to cook for her son. Yashoda thinks there is no other reason that her tender boy defeated all those horrible demons than because of eating the food which is prepared by Your spotless hands. O Moon Faced One, Knowing Vajreshvari's heart I tell You that every day she is afflicted by feelings of separation from You as she is by separation from her son."

Sri Radhika replied, "Sakhi Kundalata, what you said is not improper, but, O wise girl, It's not right for girls reputed for their chastity to go to other people's yards. And your cousin-in-law, Krishna, is a debaucher with the housewives at

every moment, so I don't want to go to His house!

Hearing this, Kundalata told fair-eyed Radhika, "O nicely thighed one, my cousin is not like you just said. You call Him a debaucher because He is so good looking, but with You He will be alampati ('a decent boy' or alam=useless and pati=garments, viz. He will consider Your clothes to be useless and take them off!) Just trust me and come with me. What to speak of Krishna's yard, You know the aparangana ('own yard' or 'other's yard')! That is proper for a housewife like You and Krishna shivers (of erotic bliss), knowing You to be aparangana ('someone else's wife' or 'His own wife' [a+para]).

Hearing this, Sri Radhika replied, "Stop joking, O wise one! I'm not going there, stop your waywardness! I have My honor not to leave the path of chaste housewives' duties and virtue."

Understanding Sri Radhika's purpose, Kundalata replied, "Sakhi Radha, You don't have to ask me to protect Your virtue as a housewife! That will surely be accomplished. You are helped by the blessings of Durvasa Muni, the best of munis. So don't delay, and go to Vraja (Krishna's abode Nandisvara)!"

Hearing Radhika and Kundalata's joking discussion, Jatila suddenly appeared and said, "O chaste Kundalata, you are always the object of my confidence. O Radha, although it is improper for a chaste girl to put even one step outside of her husband's house, especially to go to the house of that great womaniser, Bakadvisa. Still, I tell You to go there, because the words of Purnamasi, who knows everything, cannot be ignored. I can also not refuse the repeated humble requests of the wife of the king of Vraja, so I'm sending You to her home. But, don't worry. The Supreme Lord, Hari, will protect You! O fair faced one, the Lord of the world, Sri Hari, protects the whole universe. He will not desert chaste girls like You, who stick to their principles. By handing You over to His hands, I became free from anxiety!"

Hearing old Jatila's words, Sri Radhika fell silent and covered up the ocean of laughter that swelled within Her, looking at Her friends from the corners of Her big blue eyes. Sri Radhika pretended to be unwilling to go while She was in Jatila's presence, but She actually considered fate to be favorable to Her, because Jatila was so eager to send Her to Nandisvara. Offering Her humble obeisances unto fate, She then set off with Her friends like Lalita. As She went out of the door and walked through town, Sri Radhika made the alleys shine like gold and jewels with the reflection of Her effulgent body, clothes and ornaments, and Her nice fragrance pervaded all the directions. Sri Radhika was slightly averse to the people that coming and going down the road. She lowered Her eyes and covered Her lotus-like face with Her veil, keeping to one side of the road. In this way, She looked very sweet. But when She travelled on a lonely path, Sri Radhika forgot where She went or where She came out of ecstasy, and engaged in frivolous talks.

The sakhis then said, "Radha, we are far from Your village now and we're approaching the abode of the king of Vraja. Will the desires of Your cataka bird eyes be fulfilled now?" Hearing these words from Her friends, Radhika was overwhelmed by ecstatic symptoms like goose bumps and inertia. Seeing that this obstructed Her progress on the road, Kundalata told Her, "O fair faced One, did You become so afflicted because Krishnachandra did not cross the path of Your eyes? I am aware of Your chastity and Your friends can testify to it. O Abale (weak girl), still You are unable to keep Your heart at ease? You must control Yourself for

a while! I will engage Giridhari (Krishna, who lifted of Govardhana Hill) in carrying the heavy mountains on Your chest."

Lalita said, "O ignorant Kundalata, our very chase friend fearfully flees from that direction where Giridhari dwells. Alas! Why are you forcibly blemishing Radhika and why are you engaging Her like this? Mother Jatila has entrusted this girl to you and now you want to make Her act indecently? Don't you recognize anyone as your equal?"

Kundalata said, "Sakhi, there's no need for anymore useless talk! Look at the only one You desire in Your heart, sitting on that new jewel studded crystal dais. Look! After milking His cows and wrestling with His friends, Krishna now looks out with a anxious heart for You and Your friends to come, knowing that You will come. Sakhi, carefully look at Your lover, who maddens all the housewives of Vraja by embracing them with the aura of His luster. Is He standing in this three fold bending form because He can not carry the weight of His own abundant sweetness? Intoxicated honeybees buzz around His swinging garland of forest flowers. The makara earrings that swing on Krishna's very soft cheeks are expert in teaching His eyes how to dance. He pleases all directions with the luster of His golden cloth that is swung by the wind, and with the bluish waves of His bodily luster. Your Beloved One places His left arm, that defies the beauty of an elephants trunk, on the shoulder of His dear friend, twirling a lotus flower, that belittles His own luster, around in His right hand to subdue all the gopis."

When Sri Radhika drank these nectarean words through the cups of Her ears, She became completely enchanted and Krishna's fragrance streamed in and out of Her nostrils. She began to shiver, and Her body became studded with goose bumps and sprinkled with tears of ecstasy. Calmly She said, "Sakhi, is there no other way to enter into Nandisvara? My feet can't walk any farther! What shall I do?"

Lalita said, "Radha, because You act on the order of You superiors there will be no fault in You, so don't be shy or afraid. It's not your fault if you walk past this debaucher!"

Being addressed like this, Sri Radhika walked on before Krishna. When Radha and Krishna saw each other, they thought, "What is this?" Their bodies emitted waves of great beauty that inundated the sakhis. Even Sarasvati (the goddess of knowlege) cannot describe this shower of sweetness. How amazing! Sri Radhika's moon-like face drank the nectarean rays of the cakora bird, Aghadamana (Krishna), and the cataka bird, Radhika, showered the Girid-hari cloud with rains of erotic rasa (Note: usually cakora birds drink the rays of the moon, and the clouds rain down on the cataka birds). Then, the gopis cleverly covered thier faces with their veils with their left hands, relishing the nectar of Priyatama's lotus-like feet with their lowered eyes as they walked on carefully. As Radhika and Her girlfriends passed by through the town gate, their veils slipped off their heads and Hari cast His Lotus-like eyes on their effulgent buttocks.

One sakhi asked Radhika, "When Hari saw You passing by, He became very happy and Madhumangala hung a garland of golden campaka flowers around His neck. Did You see that? Do You understand this hint?"

Sri Radhika said, "Sakhi, do you think that everybody is like you? Do you want to make every girl a campaka garland around Krishna's neck?" In this way, She passed through the big gate, slightly smiling and frowning at Her girlfriend.

The walls of Nandisvara are made of crystal, the roofs and gates of gold and

jewels, fastened with diamond bolts. Statues of beautiful women made of jewels, carry the chandeliers. Birds of jewels sit up in jeweled trees entwined by vines made of jewels. The rays of the sun are reflected in the jeweled pots hanging over the verandas and many artificial peacocks are dancing on the flags on top of the pots. The abode of king Nanda is so full of regal opulence, it defeats the abode of Indra, the king of heaven, in opulence.

On the northern side of the palace is Balaram's room, on the western side King Nanda's storehouse, and on the eastern side the jeweled temple of king Nanda's ishtadeva, Lord Hari (Laxmi Narayana) which was worshipped by the best brahmanas. On the south is Krishna's bedroom, with its matchless sapphire balcony and on all sides of the pond are many groves. Hari's mother saw Radhika and Her friends enter into her abode and she happily considered this daughter of the sun (Vrishabhanu) the goddess of beauty of all the the three worlds, illuminating her home. When Sri Radhika humbly bowed down to her, mother Yashoda quickly lifted her up and embraced Her, smelled Her head, and lovingly showered Her with her loving tears, inundating Her in a river of blissful nectar.

Mother Yashoda blessed Radhika, saying, "O moon faced one, glory to You! May You give joy to my mind's eye for a Hundred years!" The mind of mother Yashoda, who is a matchless vine of parental affection, was also enchanted by Radhika's girlfriends, whom she blessed in the same way. Yashoda, whose heart melted with affection, saw that Radhika and Her friends were shy when she had some sweet, soft savories brought and served to them by Dhanista. After fondling Radhika, she brought Her to the kitchen.

She said, "O lotus faced one! O giver of fame to mother Kirtida! The creator made You so expert in cooking! Please come into my kitchen and cook, engaging Your friends like Lalita, etc. I have plenty of all the ingredients You may need, in my house. Since You, being the goddess of fortune Herself, cast Your glances on my home, there is no scarcity of anything! Whatever different ingredients for cooking You have seen or heard of are all in my house. Go inside with Dhanista and take whatever You need!

Saying this, Yashoda went to get her son to bathe Him. The sakhis got absorbed in their own duties and the maidservants served Sri Radhika by fanning Her, and so forth. Sri Radhika washed Her hands and feet and took off all the ornaments and necklaces that might disturb Her while cooking. She offered Her obeisances to Rohini, Haladhara's (Balarama's) mother, and entered into the nicely smelling kitchen.

Rohini said, "O daughter, You are an expert cook! I just cooked something to lessen the burden of Your duty. Now, You may cook what You like. Hearing this, Sri Radhika shyly lowered Her lotus-like face, but Rohini embraced Her as if She were her own daughter and fondled Her, forcibly setting Her on a dais covered with a white sheet that stood just before the stove. The fire burned on cedar and aloewood. Next to that was a pile of different vegetables, cut and put into different pots, ready to be put into the cooking pot for making a nice preparation.

Sometimes Radhika checked if the fire was burning well, sometimes She added wood to the fire, and sometimes She lifted the lid to see if it was cooking nicely and stirred the preparation, making Her belly, breast and arm vibrate along with Her garments. Acyuta came from his room and looked through the window of the kitchen to relish the sweetness of this scene with His eyes. Intoxcated by desire, He



said something to Madhumangala, just to attract Radhika with the sound of His voice. When this very sweet sound entered the cups of Sri Radhika's ears, it forcibly took Her mind off Her cooking. But nevertheless, She managed to cook very nicely. The sakhis, being eager to hear Krishna's ascertainment of a meeting place with Priyaji, walked here and there in His vicinity, casting sly, meaningful glances at Him. Krishna, knowing that the time was right, clearly expressed His desires to them.

## Chapter 6 Breakfast and Other Pastimes Pratah Lila continued (6:00 a.m.- 8:24 a.m.)

In order to relieve Sri Krishna from His erotic affliction, one young suka parrot recited verses to Him with the syllables 'ra' and 'dha' hidden in them, so that He could relish them without being caught by His superiors. He sang, "May Lord Narayana, whose body resembles a mountain (dharadhara), be merciful to us!" After that, the parrot repeatedly said, "dharadhara," for which Krishna fondled him and rewarded him with pomegranate seeds.

Krishna asked Madhumangala, "Friend, why didn't I see you this morning? You didn't wrestle with us today! I have people so expert in wrestling games like Prasarpa, Sarpa and Utsarpa, but who is as expert as Me? I jump over rods, My friends praise Me for My skill in different kinds of athletics, and I wrestle alone with each one of them! I lift them and let them down again, holding them with My thighs, knees and shanks. I strongly wave My arms and wrestle with My arms as well."

Madhumangala replied, "Friend, You may not have seen such an expert fighter like me, but if You saw me after I trained, You would be astonished."

Krishna asked, "What did you study?"

Madhumangala said, "Astrology."

"From whom?"

"From Bhaguri Muni's teacher."

Then Krishna asked, "What is the benefit of it?"

Madhumangala replied, "Omniscience!"

To which Krishna responded, "Tell Me, what is on My mind?"

"Do You think I can say what is on Your mind, in such a short time?"

"Then tell Me how you would do it."

Madhumangala said, "I can check Your astrological chart at this moment." Saying this, Madhumangala marked Krishna's chart in the sand with his fingertips, constantly shaking his head and looking at the sky. He said, "See, on the slope of a charming hill there are two ponds on which a golden swan is swimming. You want to catch that swan to play with her, but she's protected by her flock and does not accept Your out stretched hand. Although You try so eagerly by different tricks and means, she cannot be enchanted. O friend, thus I'm aware of everything, being a brilliant astrologer!"

Krishna said, "O great scholar, you've understood My mind! Will I be able to get that swan today or not? Look carefully in the stars."

Madhumangala was silent for a while and then said, "O Krishna, I studied the stars for a means for You to catch that swan. You should take shelter of some colorless branch, remain there and enchant that swan, stealing her heart with the playing of Your flute, looking at the wonderful flapping of her wings. Now that I ascertained this, You must reward me! You must reward me as much as I tried to look into the planets for You!"

When Krishna filled His hands up with pomegranate seeds, broad shouldered Madhumangala ate them, saying, "O friend, do You take a savayas (friend) like me to be a vayas (bird), that You give me this birdseed? Do You think that we (brahmins and birds) are the same?"

Krishna replied, "Both you brahmins and birds recite the Vedas and both are called dvija (twice born), so you deserve equal treatment! But more than the birds, you are also a scholar, so here, take a whole pomegranate!"

Receiving this gift, Madhumangala blissfully blessed Krishna saying, "Since You gave a whole pomegranate to a brahmin like me, I bless You that You will receive two pomegranates in Your hands today! O friend, today You will give the nectar of Your lips to the teeth of Your dear one. You will be blissfully united with Her later today."

Mother Yashoda then called out, "Krishna! My boy, what are You doing? Don't be late! Take Your bath! Your meal is ready, don't let it go cold," and engaged her servants in massaging, rubbing and bathing Him. If mother Yashoda, who was filled with loving anxiety, ever found any imperfection in the work of Krishna's servants, even if they were expert, she personally took over for them to teach them by example. Sometimes, she engaged Sri Radhika's maidservants in all this work, even though everyone forbade her to do this, since Krishna was already in His teens. But Yashoda, out of pure affection, forgot about this. She only knew, "Krishna is my son. He cannot even forget my breastmilk, and these manjari's are still very small!" So, she left them alone, being eager to do her many other duties. Although mother Yashoda's mind was absorbed in thoughts of how the rice and vegetables were to be cooked, were cooking or were already cooked, and about the sweetrice, milk and savories and all the other very tasty preparations to be served to her son, she nevertheless ran around tirelessly with a fixed mind.

After Krishna was bathed, He was dressed in a lightning colored yellow dhoti by His servants, who repeatedly rubbed His hair, and dried it off, with aloe perfume. They combed and placed jati flowers in it that served like a basin for the vines of His curly locks, that defeat Lord Siva's locks in beauty. The Kasmira tilaka that the servant boys painted on Krishna's forehead made this forehead known as the monarch of His moon-like face, and the earrings they hung in His earlobes swung on His two moon-like cheeks like two suns. The brilliant, motionless armlets the servant boys placed on Krishna's arms took over the restlessness of those glossy arms, and the restlessly swinging necklace they hung on His neck attained peace on His motionless chest that was endowed with an abundance of sweetness. The Kaustubha gem they placed on His neck defeated the luster of millions of moons and suns, and a garland of kunda flowers, whose great beauty was desired by the young girls, was hung on Krishna's chest. One servant boy smeared Krishna's whole body with the most amazing kunkuma, and another one hung the bells that reside in Priyaji's ears around His waist as a sash.

They hung jeweled rings and bangles on Krishna's blooming lotus-like hands and

sweetly jingling, intoxicating ankle bells on His lotus feet. Then Krishna sat down on a jewelled dais that was covered with costly cloth where He closed His eyes, thinking "I remember Lord Narayana." While Krishna meditated on attaining the bimba fruit-like lips of His beloved One, and practiced japa of the mantra consisting of Her names, His body was studded with goose bumps of ecstasy.

Then, a servant boy named Kamala called Krishna saying, "O Prince, the Queen of Vraja is calling You again and again for breakfast." So, Krishna and Madhumangala got up, washed their feet, and climbed onto the dais covered with a cloth in the middle of the dining room. Sridama sat on Krishna's left and Balarama sat on His right and all the other boys blissfully surrounded Him as He blissfully ate. Mother Yashoda called Rohini to serve and Sri Radhika handed Rohini one preparation after another.

Madhumangala then said, "Krishna has no appetite, Balarama eats only a little rice and yoghurt, Sridama is a small eater by nature and Subala became asubala (weak) because of eating too little. Alas! Where is that lack of cleverness to eat nicely and where is this food, that is cooked by Laxmidevi (Sri Radhika) Herself and whose taste defeats the sweetness of nectar? In a company of prosaic people that have no eagerness to relish nectarean poetry, poetry composed by a good poet is wasted! These four kinds of foodstuffs are the fruits of all human pursuits taking shape, and I'm the only one whose eligible to enjoy it!"

Sridama then said, "Quickly eat these oblations that are your everything! Fill up your belly with those thing through which you attained your brahmin-hood, O Madhumangala."

Madhumangala replied, "Fool, you're just a cowherd! What do you know about relishing mellows? Go to the forest and do your duty by herding the cows. I've studied all the Vedas and their supplements under my teacher. Anyone who feeds me has fulfilled all sacrifices to the Lord Himself, for He eats through the mouths of the brahmins."

Sridama replied, "O brahmacari, you will not know the sruti and smriti even in a hundred births! You are known as a brahmin only because you wear this thread."

Then, Krishna intervened saying, "Bato! Have you studied the rasa shastras so that you know the purpose and definition of these curries?"

Madhumangala said, "According to rasa shastra, there are eight rasas, but I think there are only six! Through each of our six senses (touch, taste, smell, hearing, sight and the mind) we can relish these six rasas. We can behold the nice form of the food, smell its nice fragrance, taste its sweetness, touch its softness, hear its nice sound while we eat and mentally feel blissful when we eat. Thus, it is relishable through our six senses. Those people who have taken shelter of vyanjana ('vegetables' or 'suggestion') saying that there are eight mellows, don't know anything! Those who give up sabji and dal for some spiritual rasa are like those who leave an oasis to run after a mirage. Those people who do not know that you must chew to get some taste may go on chewing and sucking for millions of lives, but they will never taste any rasa."

Balarama then said, "How do you experience the taste of these mellows, how are the sancaris (dynamic expressions) and how do you taste the sthayi (permanent) mellows?"

Madhumangala explained, "Although the knowers of rasa say that crying comes after an emotional incitement, I experience it before that, of sorrow, if I don't get

my curries! My face becomes joyful and my body is studded with goose bumps of ecstasy when I get my meal. Look! My bodily hue becomes smooth after eating, this is my vaivarnya (loss of bodily color, one of the stages of spiritual ecstasy), and my voice changes of ecstasy when I eat. I get stunned of distress when I cannot eat lots of khir (rice cooked in milk with sugar). Look at me when I sweat, and after I finished eating a lot my clearly dynamic moods are sleep, laziness and thoughtfulness, and although the paramount ecstasy named tastefulness is actually one, it is experienced in many different ways.

"This spinach dish is only attained after having a lot of pious merit, and whoever drinks this dal soup feels himself to be a king! This fried rice and these fried and spiced garbanzo beans are rarely attained, even by Lord Brahma. These papadums (large chips) look like white sheets and the bhaji (Indian tempura) shower our blooming lotus-like eyes with bliss! These hogplums make nectar taste sour and the cakes make us dance in ecstasy at their mere sight. When we see the khir, we're afraid we will die from indigestion and our minds simply want to be immersed in the mangoes and the jackfruits. My birth is condemned if I cannot taste the savories that act like hitching posts to bind up my elephant-like tongue, and these pickles are what my mind was searching for. These moonlike round rotis (a flat bread) are rarely attained even by paying millions of gold coins. This rice, that is sprinkled with ghee (clarified butter) that looks like golden water and that smell as nice as grass which is grazed by the cows of Vraja, is only attained by the great pious merit of having my association!"

Sridama then retorted, "O Bato! You are a brahmin from the forest. You should eat only leaves, fruits and roots! You're not supposed to enjoy all this. Go and perform your penances!"

Madhumangala said, "Bho Sridama, you are right! I performed penances in my last life, eating fruits, roots and leaves only. And now, in this birth, they are transformed into curries! The residents of the material heavens, who are clearly visible to me everyday, know that my enjoyment is not possible for those who did not perform penance. How else can it be? While tending your cows, you came in contact with the slight breeze created by my body as I walked by you, and thus you became purified with the power of my penances. Therefore, today you can share my enjoyment. Thus I have showed you how I remember my last birth. Now, as a reward, you must give me khir!"

Vrajesvari Yasoda told Rohini, "Sakhi, Madhumangala has grown tired of remembering his previous birth and speaking about it. Give this ascetic lots of sweet rice!" But as soon as smiling Rohini went to give him his sweet rice, Subala forbade her, saying, "First, you must feed the monkeys! They are also tired of speaking and they are also ascetics. They tolerate cold and heat. They eat only fruits, flowers and leaves, and aren't they learned and aware of their previous births?"

Krishna said, "Friend Subala! Brahmins are meditating on Brahman and monkeys are only interested in filling their bellies. There's a great difference between them!"

Subala said, "Hari, I cannot see any difference between brahmins and monkeys! There's not even any difference between their names (nara means man; banara means monkey). To make his expertise known to the world, Madhumangala interpreted the word brahman to mean his belly, taking it to be unlimited and

everlasting. He sits down three times a day to meditate on how to fill up his belly, and for this he is fixed in celibacy. Sometimes he is so absorbed in grabbing huge amounts of cooked food that he eats with two hands, just like a monkey!

Hearing Subala's joking words, everyone, including Madhumangala, laughed. Madhumangala then choked a bit, and had to cough loudly, making his face turn red. Queen Yashoda said, "Bato! Don't laugh while you eat! Wait and calm down! O boys, don't laugh and joke with Madhumangala while he eats."

Krishna said, "O friend, today your belly was not filled up because you were hindered by laughter and coughs. Alas!"

Madhumangala said, "Hi hi, mother! Give me sikharini (a sweet yoghurt drink)!" While he drank it with great gusto, the drink beautifully streamed from his chin onto his belly.

Sridama said, "O Krishna, describe the beauty of Madhumangala's face! He fills up the lake of his navel with a stream of sikharini."

Krishna said, "Listen to this Sridama. The waves that swell in the milk ocean of Madhumangala's belly are caused by the nectarean moon of his smile. These waves flow from his mountain peak face as a stream of sikharini and thus sanctify his whole body. Then again, they enter into the navel-lake of his belly, which is hard to cross and hard to fill up!"

In this way, everyone joked during breakfast and Rohini and Yashoda once more served everyone, although Krishna, Balarama and the others were already satisfied. Mother Yashoda told Krishna, "Child, eat nicely!"

Krishna said, "Mother, I have no more appetite."

Yashoda said, "I swear, You eat at least five or six handfuls more! O my child, You wouldn't eat this if I didn't tell you to. Have You become so skinny from eating so little every day? You love this preparation so much. Eat a little more."

Krishna replied, "Ma! I cannot eat anymore!"

Then, Yashoda called Rohini saying, "Rohini, tell Him to eat. He won't listen to me!"

Rohini then said, "O Vatsa (child)! If You don't eat I would have prepared all these dishes for nothing. Why should I then invite king Vrishabhanu's expert daughter for cooking? If You don't eat, then why should we let Her go through all the hardship of cooking?" Hearing these warnings, Krishna ate a little of the rice and vegetables. "O Krishna, where is Your character? How will Your body become strong and nourished if You remain hungry like that?"

Being thus affectionately fed by the mothers, Balarama and the other boys also experienced matchless, wonderful bliss. Sri Radhika drank the beautiful nectarean view of Krishna's form through the window with Her eyes, seeing that Krishna was satisfied and had finished His meal. After breakfast, the servant boys poured water from golden jugs for all the boys to wash their hands and mouths. Everyone got up from their seats and walked one hundred steps to lie down, and eat pan in bed. The servant boys handed them the pan, and fanned them as they fell asleep.

Sri Radhika came out of the kitchen, washed Her lotus-like hands and feet and went to take some rest in private. She was served by Her maid servants, who fanned Her and performed other services to make Her comfortable.

Then Rohini served luke-warm rice and vegetables to Radhika and Her friends in golden trays. Yashoda was taken in by Dhanista and said, "O daughter Gandharvika, Lalita, Visakha, Campakavalli, give joy to my eyes by eating without

reservation. O Radha, daughter, why are You so shy? I'm Your mother as much as Kirtida is. Just joke, play and lie down in my home with Your friends (savayovrita)." The sakhis minds were sprinkled with the nectar of these words, taking savayovrita to mean 'embraced by Krishna,' and they smiled slightly. Sri Radhika closed Her eyes a little out of shyness and took Her meal with Her friends. Her mind was immersed in bliss by tasting the nectarean remnants of food from Her lover's plate, and She cast a merciful glance at Dhanista (who had mixed some of Krishna's remnants into her own food), who thus became very happy.

Sri Vrajessvari fondled Radhika, giving Her different garments, ornaments and unguents. Tungavidya whispered something in Vasakha's ear, making her giggle and shake her head. Sri Radhika, who saw this, understood what was on their minds and said, "O sakhi Visakha! Tungavidya! I should not stay here when I see you whispering in each other's ears and exchanging naughty glances with each other! You're just infatuated housewives."

Then She got up to go home, but Visakha then said, "O sakhi, are You indicating Your desires with this show of fear? Sakhi, Vajresvari told You to freely play, joke and lie down with your vayas ('sakhis' or 'Krishna')! Now why do You make us sad by disobeying this order, going straight home without even taking a little rest after eating?"

Then, Dhanista came and told Sri Radhika, "Sakhi, don't stay with them, they are very crooked! Come with me through the side door, quickly. Your desire to pick bhandujiva flowers for surya puja (or 'the desires of Krishna's eyes and mind') will be fulfilled without hindrance! O sakhi, the queen of Vraja will not find out. Don't be needlessly afraid. Come along with me down this path." Dhanista then brought Sri Radhika to meet beautiful Krishna in a blissful abode in a cave on Nandisvara Hill.

## Chapter 7 Pastimes in the Pastures Purvahna Lila (8:24 a.m. - 10:48 a.m.)

The cowherd boys that were eager to go out to the pastures with Krishna told their mothers, "Oh mother, why do you keep me here for putting on my tilaka and ornaments? What should I do? Why can't I get out of the house? All my friends are meeting with Krishna at this time of the morning. My friend Krishna, who is an ocean of love, waits for me, looking out for me to go with Him to the forest." The mothers replied, "Vatsa, why are you so upset? I only have the tranquilizing, protective, stone left to put on your wrist. I don't hear the cows going out, yet. It's not forenoon, yet, and your friends haven't left their homes, yet! Why are you so restless? If you go unornamented you'll look like a beggar, and your friends, who have been decorated with jewels and golden ornaments, and who have been bathed by their mothers, will laugh at you!"

Even though their mothers were being naturally affectionate, the boys considered them impediments. When they heard even the slightest sound from near the road, they anxiously looked in that direction for their friends to come. Then Vasudama, Sudama, Kinkini, Subala and other boys gathered together from different places,

like the waves of an ocean reaching the Krishna-shore.

Then, one cowherd man came and loudly said, "Listen, boys! King Nanda, who stays in the barn says, 'Let Acyuta happily sleep a little more. Don't awaken Him so roughly. I personally let loose the cows. Just wait a minute. And then go.' "

Hearing this, all the cowherd boys joyfully joined king Nanda in the barn, while more intimate friends like Subala went up to see Krishna in His bedroom. Then, the servant boys like Raktaka, Patraka and the rest, whose love for Krishna never decreases and who are expert in their service, came to mother Yashoda, who gave one of them some gladdening sweetmeats for her son. That boy kept the sweets in his wooden basket on his shoulder, considering them as being more precious than billions of hearts. Another servant boy brought in a wonderful moonstone jug filled with camphor scented water, covered by a wet, crimson sheet, that was colored like his attachment to Krishna, covering the clear whole water of his mind, that was outwardly manifest as matchless jewels of fortune (like the jewels on the jug). Another servant boy held a round crystal box filled with pan, under his arm, as if he were wearing his favorite deity, the moon. Another servant boy carried many kinds of garments and ornaments for the Lord, which were like herbs that enchanted the demigoddesses.

When Hari heard His friends talking near the mountain cave where He sat with lightning-like Radhika, He loosened Himself from Her tight embrace and went to see them. When Krishna's friends saw that He was dressed in Radhika's fresh kunkum-like dress, they took Him to be a cloud embraced by restless lightning strikes, that were unable to let go of Him. Seeing this, the boys began to shower Krishna with their smiles, that were like moon white flowers. After they ornamented His limbs they brought Him back to the palace, where they began to dress him for going out to the goatha (pastures). They hung the Kaustubha gem, whose rays extend here and there to punish the sun's rays, around His neck, and they adorned His head with a crest of peacock feathers, that shone like a brilliant rainbow. Then they hung restless strings of pearls that resembled a row of baby cranes, and a fragrant garland of forest flowers surrounded by blissful honeybees, around His neck. In this way Krishna, who removes the affliction of the people of Vraja, inundated the area of His mother with water (her tears and breast milk) of bliss, as He appeared before the town gate.

Then Vrajesvari, Yashoda, came out crying with Ambika, Kilimba, her sisters and sisters-in-law, being followed by Sri Radhika and Her friends. When the news 'Mukunda goes to the forest' went around, it clearly entered the ear holes of the villagers like 'the sun is setting!'. The cowherd boys then said, "Friends, take the cows out on the path to the forest without delay! We're going to fight for fun with Hari on the slope of Govardhana Hill today!"

The Brahmins blessed Krishna with hand fulls of Dharba grass and peacefully sprinkled Him with drops of water that were sanctified by mantras from the Rig Veda.

Parjanya, Krishna's grandfather, told the cowherds, "Take me to Krishna somehow or other, so that I can cool off my eyes with the nectar of my grandson's lotus-like face, without which I cannot live!"

"O Visarade (expert girl)!" one gopi told another, "find some trick by which we can deceive our old mother. I'm going down the secret path to the cottage in the trysting kunjia."

"Sakhi, what to do now? I hear that Hari is going to the forest through the town gate! I'm so eager to see Him, but my body is stunned of ecstasy, I cannot climb the watchtower! There's no need to make up my hair! Let my chest remain uncovered! If I cannot see Madhava even once my life will leave me! Alas! Let my husband give me intolerable punishment, let my superiors see me, I'm going to Krishna! Time will stand still when He goes into the forest!"

One sakhi told her obstructing mother-in-law, "Oh ugly faced one, why are you screaming!? Am I the only one going out of your house? Look here! Whose bride is not running out of her house, and which mother-in-law is there to stop her?"

Then Krishna, who has eyes like forest lotuses, went out of the barn into the forest with His cows and His friends, spreading a sapphire luster that astonished everyone. At that time, even the slightest feeling of separation from Krishna afflicted Nanda and Yashoda, who followed their son with their eyes full of tears that sprinkled the soil of Vraja. Mother Yashoda and Rohini, understanding that they would not see their boys for a long time, forgot all bodily activities and they became stunned like statues. Father Nanda embraced his son within his heart, after which he quickly became stunned and enchanted.

Mother Yashoda said, "Oh tender boy, if You go into the forest to tend Your cows then we will all follow You. Don't deceive us by going without us. Oh son, don't send us elsewhere, take us with You! We know You cannot tolerate the heartache of Your parents, who are burning in the fire of separation from You. Oh ornament of our town, if You don't take us with You, then these blissful abodes in our town will swallow us by force and we will remain alive in vain. Do You want to hurt us by returning home from the forest only after nine long hours? If You don't want to come home soon, then what shall we do? Where are the soles of Your feet, that are like the spotless and tender leaves of crimson lotuses, and where are the sharp sprouts, thorns and pebbles in the forest soil? Oh, where is Your body, that is as soft as a puppet of butter sprinkled with liquid musk, and where are the scorching rays of the sun that increase their heat at every moment? The life of this unfortunate mother of Yours, that is tearing up her chest, refuses to leave her. It bears the burden of a kingdom of great cruelty! Let the cowherd boys, or king Nanda himself herd the cows. Oh my child, if You don't give up Your eagerness for this, then how can Your friends remain alive? Oh my tender Krishna, why did You take birth in a family of cowherds, where You must walk after the grazing cows? With a body such as Yours, which is softened by the nectar of auspiciousness, You should have been born in a royal family."

Hearing this ocean of faltering words from His mother, Krishna humbly waited before going into the forest and stood in front of her. Mother Yashoda, whose life was almost gone, became aware of this and embraced Krishna, showering Him with the tears of her love.

Mother Yashoda recovered from her swoon, because of Krishna's blissful embrace as Krishna forced her to drink the nectar of parental love. She became overwhelmed with feelings of love as she protected her son's body with the names of Lord Nrisimhadeva, telling Balabhadra, Subhadra, Vardhana and other leading boys that stood before her, "Oh boys, my Krishna is Your younger brother, friend and very life. Don't I know that? Still, this mother cannot remain alive without grinding pulp every day? Although Hari is so tender, He is the leader of all the rowdy boys, and although He is very intelligent, He does not know His limits.



Although He is weak, He is also very dashing. Therefore, You should stay around Him to protect Him. He cannot be controlled by His father, His mother or any of His superiors, but He may listen to You. I hope my request to You will not be in vain. If you see Kamsa's cruel demonic servants You should run, leaving even the cows, and quickly take shelter of us! Oh Subala, Ujjvala, Kokila and the other boys, don't play so roughly with your heart's friend, Krishna. Are there no games in this world for men? Oh Raktaka, Patraka and other expert servant boys, I'll tell you about Krishna and Balaram's nature. Listen! Even if They are hungry They're not aware of it, because They're so absorbed in playing and even if Their throats are dried up from thirst They will not feel thirsty"

Then Yashoda told her husband, Nanda, "The road where our boys walk will be scorched by the sun and this mother even stays alive seeing this father staying home in his golden brick home. Even those women whose sons suffer when they go out to tend the cows, but who still shamelessly continue their house duties without dying of compassion, are worshipped in this world."

Then she told Krishna, "Your friends, who see You going into the forest, have become as hard as thunderbolts! But still You gladden them with Your attributes, having a heart as soft as a flower?"

Krishna, who wore these words of His afflicted mother like earrings, revived her by sprinkling her with the nectar from His moonlike smile. Krishna humbly replied, "Mother, you have not seen the forest path. I feel no trouble in tending the cows at all. It's My greatest pleasure! We're playing in the dense, cool shade of the fragrant trees in the forest on the bank of the Yamuna, looking at the cows. It's also no problem for us to keep the cows together. For that, I have My expert new murali flute. And the paths also don't give Me any pain: the camari deer sweep them with their tails, the trees shower them with their honey and the nabhi deer scent them with their navel musk. These paths are flawless, and as soft as cotton! With its fragrant caves and kunjās where the cuckoos sing, the peacocks dance, the honeybees buzz, where the vines with their different flowers are always swung by a soft breeze, and where there are many cascading waterfalls, Govardhana Hill attracts our minds at every step. The joy of your jewelled abodes give Me nothing compared to the joy I feel in these mountain caves! Here, I am adorned with flowers by My Mayas ('friends' or 'girlfriends') and here I lie down in great joy. Why are you so vainly distressed?"

Saying this, Krishna quickly and secretly embraced the eyelashes of the jewel of girls, Sri Radhika, with His eyes. This meeting made the corners of both Their eyes melt. In this way, the corners of Radha and Krishna's charming eyes cleverly briefed over each other's heartaches. This gave the hearts of the Young Couple some temporary relief.

Madhumangala said, "Oh mother, why are you so upset? Listen, I tell you frankly: there's not a drop of happiness in your town compared to the bliss we feel in the forest. We simply eat the ripe and fragrant bananas, jack fruits, mangoes and pomegranates that fall automatically from the trees. Our friend, Krishna, desires to go to the forest to pick the fruits, leaves and flowers from the desire vines. Such a desire cannot be fulfilled in your town."

Although they are very, very hungry, the cows will not set one foot in the forest without Krishna, the destroyer of His friends' miseries. But now they began to call Him by mooing, so Acyuta, seeing their condition, carefully stopped His parents

from following Him and blissfully began to mark the forest soil with the signs of the disc, the lotus, etc. from the soles of His feet, as He walked on.

While He went into the forest, Hari thought, "Those who love Me feel sad when I leave, so let Me take their minds with Me."

But the Vrajavasis' eyes also thought, "What other objects do we have but Krishna?" so they followed Him. In this way, the Vrajavasis entered their homes like liberated souls that maintain their bodies only as an external custom.

## Chapter 8 Pastimes in the Forest Purvahna Lila (8:24 a.m. - 10:48 a.m.)

When the moon from the ocean of loveliness, Sri Krishna, collected His cows and went into the forest, the heartache of the Vrajavasis became indescribable. The girls of Vraja were unable to control their senses without Krishna, so they take shelter of their friend, swoon. So, they were in a sleeping condition for a long time. That swoon helped all the fair browed gopis in times of distress as a friend, pervading their homes like a yogini to soothe their heartache of separation from Krishna.

That sakhis repeatedly told Murccha (swoon), "Oh inauspicious one, are you embracing our dear friend? Aren't you afraid of us? Leave our friend Nandini (the daughter of king Vrishabhanu) alone!" Who can describe the ways of love, tell me? Although Murccha pacified Sri Radhika's mind from Her severe affliction, still Her sakhis resented her."

In an unseen way, Lalita sent a few clever sakhis to Govardhana Hill. Coming there, these girls were very happy to catch the fragrance of Krishna's flower garland. Hari made His cows enter a fresh meadow on the very cool bank of a pond and played there with His friends. Then these dutis (girl messengers) came there with food sent by Dhanista and secretly met Him and Madhumangala there. Seeing Hari there, these dutis became very happy. Then Krishna asked Sri Rupa manjari, who is a limitless mine of beautiful attributes, about the condition of Sri Radhika, the jewel of young girls.

Sri Rupa manjari told Him, "O best of lovers, when You embrace the soil of the forest with the soles of Your feet, it becomes very beautiful! Now Sri Radhika challenges that beauty by embracing the soil of the pastures. O Hari, You color the forest sapphire, offering it Your own luster. Even if the Creator could not challenge You by discoloring the forest again, Sri Radhika could, by making it golden with Her own complexion! You make the people of Vraja cry when they see Your face, which is grayed by the dust thrown up by the hooves of the cows. Alas! Now Sri Radhika is also crying and rolling in the dust of the earth, making Her sakhis also cry. Unusual as it seems, water now comes from a lotus, although normally lotuses grow in the water. A similar case was with Kardama Muni (Kardama also means 'mud'), who was the son of Brahma (born from a lotus), although lotuses normally grow from the mud! Sri Radhika's hair, dress and garland have loosened, although they are so beautiful (sadhu). Who will remain

controlled in a kingless country? Even the sadhus (holy men) become loose there!

"Sri Radhika becomes very upset when She hears how Your lotus feet are hurt when they tread the forest path. She sighs deeply, no matter in how many ways we try to console Her. When half a sentence like 'pebbles, sprouts or sharp thorns there', from the mouths of Her friends, falls on the edge of Her ear holes, She cries out loud and falls in a swoon. Then, when we try to break that swoon, saying false things like, "Hey Radha, Your Priyatama has come! Get up and look at Him!", keeping Your very fragrant garland of forest flowers beneath Her nose, She wakes up and becomes grave. Then She will ask a friend, 'Sakhi, where is the best of dancers, who makes His wagtail bird-like eyes dance?' The sakhi then says, 'He is hidden in Your house.' Radhika then says 'Are you cheating Me?' upon which the sakhi says, 'Why should I cheat you? You can smell the fragrance of His body. Isn't that proof that I speak the truth?' Hearing this, Radhika becomes slightly happy, but Cupid cannot tolerate that and forcibly aims his five arrows at Her and wounds Her. Then She falls down, shivers, perspires and sprinkles Her own body with Her tears, but alas! She cannot soothe Her cakora bird-like eyes with the nectar from Your moonlike face when She enters Her home! Coming home, She tells Her mind, 'O mind, why are you vainly taking the sakhis false (anrita) words to be just like nectar (amrita)? Because of that, your affliction has doubled!', and then She falls to the ground, again. Radhika then gets up again, and says, 'O afflicted life of mine, you are cursed, being without My friend!' Although She thus curses Her own life, its burdens did not become lighter, but rather heavier. O Krishna, out of separation from You, fair browed Radhika becomes so thin and fragile that She cannot even tolerate the blowing of Her life airs, what to speak of the breeze from fanning Her.

Hearing this news about His beloved, Madhusudana became afflicted at heart. His eyes were filled with tears of love as He told Madhumangala with a faltering voice, "You speak on My behalf."

Madhumangala told Rupa manjari, "Bring that golden lotus Radhika to the forest, otherwise, out of the forest, what will be Her fate? And what will become of Madhusudana, the honeybee, if He cannot drink Her honey?"

Madhava took the garland of campaka flowers from His neck and handed it to Rupa manjari, saying, "O Rupa, let this campaka garland adorn Priyaji's chest" (or 'let Priyaji adorn My chest like a golden campaka garland.') Rupa manjari then swiftly ran back to Sri Radhika with the campaka garland and hung it around Her neck. Thus, Sri Radhika was revived by the embrace of Her lover's fragrance.

Then She was again bitten by the horrible scorpion of separation from Her Priyatama and She became very afflicted. The poison of this bite made the nectarean fragrance of Krishna's campaka garland fade. Sri Radhika planned to deceive Her superiors and to meet Krishna, going out of the house on the pretext of worshipping the sun god, Surya, with Her friends. By some stroke of good luck, Jatila then came in and, following the words of Gargi, said, "O girls, go into the forest to worship the sun, who has a thousand rays (or 'Krishna, who has a

thousand cows'), so that we'll get billions of cows (or 'so that You'll get great bliss'). Let the splendid Mitra ('the sun' or 'Your friend, Krishna'), who is the god presiding over the eyes, make You happy!"

Sri Radhika and Her friends, who were thus favored in their purpose by fate, the destroyer of misery, collected nice eatables for Krishna's pleasure, pretending they were meant for worshipping the sun. They took sweetmeats with them that defeated the pride of nectar, that were prepared by Sri Radhika Herself, and that were unobtainable even by Lord Siva, the master of Kuvera, the treasurer of heaven. Sri Radhika was a little late due to collecting incense, lamps, nice clothes, ornaments and garments for the puja, but Kesava could not tolerate the slightest delay because of His intense eagerness to meet Her. The matchless ocean of His patience and tranquility were diminished to a spoonful.

Acyuta then engaged His duti (girl messenger) Muralika (His flute) in getting the golden garland, Radhika, around His neck. The sakhis wore her song's on the ears as ornaments. Muralika threw Sri Radhika into a river of eagerness. It seemed as if she had entered into Her ears like some goddess, casting Her fear and shame far away. Sri Radhika did not know anymore where Her lotus feet were stepping or what Her sprout-like hands were catching. She was just shivering and showering Herself with Her tears.

Seeing how slow Her friends were in dressing Her in garments suitable for Her abhisara (love journey) into the forest, Sri Radhika admonished them and began to dress Herself. But, out of anxiety, She adorned Her buttocks with Her Gostana necklace, Her neck with Her waist bells, the end of Her braid with Her lalatika (an ornament for the forehead), Her eyes of musk, Her forehead with tilaka made of eyeliner and Her body with footlac instead of kunkuma. Then She set out, like sweetness personified, with Her charming blue sari on, which looked like a cloud holding a bright lunar orb within itself, on earth.

Hari's flute sang as pleasantly as someone who knows all the scriptures, and silenced even the pika birds, who are very sociable. When Hari called His cows with His flute it was as if the earth showed goosebumps of ecstasy on her skin in the form of erect blades of grass. The trees showered honey as drops of perspiration. The parrots, pikas and peacocks became stunned. The clouds, considering themselves very fortunate, shed tears of ecstasy and the directions fanned Hari with their soft, cool breezes. Without Krishna's wish, all these creatures felt themselves being addressed by the word 'cow' as Krishna's flute sang, "Come, My cows!" The cows heard Krishna's flute song, that was actually meant for them, and replied with their mooing. All the melodies and musical scales, as well as the goddesses in heaven, swooned when they heard Krishna's flute song. Who can censure Krishna? The mountains melted like no other object, although they are the hardest objects in the world, they felt the most love for Krishna. Seeing the melted boulders flowing here and there, the thirsty birds and deer began to drink this fluid with great fun!

Sri Radhika said, "Aho sakhis! These deer are justly called Krishnasara, for they

take Krishna to be the essence (sara) of things. Even if their wives are attracted to Giridhari, the ocean of mercy, they do not become envious, rather, they follow them to make them happy. Sakhi, look! These does very eagerly run to Krishna, turning their backs on their bucks, but when they hear the song of Krishna's flute they become stunned, like pictures! Look! These birds were drinking from the waterbasin when Krishna's flute song turned the water into stone! Now their beaks are stuck halfway in the water and they are anxious to pull them out again."

In this way, the gopis were scented by describing the nectarean sound of Krishna's flute, drinking this nectar through the cups of their ears and serving it to each other. Although the inertia, horripilations and shiverings of ecstasy caused by Krishna's flute song obstructed the gopis from going near Him, they still swiftly went to the garden named Madana Rana (erotic fight), urged by their passionate attraction to Him.

There they entered the Sun temple where they bowed down to the Sun god and prayed to him, "O Lord! O ocean of mercy! Quickly show us the only Lover of our hearts!"

Sri Radhika entrusted Her puja paraphernalia to the fairies (vanadevis) there and proceeded to the charming forests around Her own pond (Radhakunda). The luster of Vrishabhanuja (Radha, 'the daughter of Vrishabhanu' or 'the sun in the month of Taurus (May)') adorned the surroundings of Govardhana Hill, making Hari's lotus-like heart bloom up of joy at once.

Madhusudana, the rasika honeybee Krishna, then thought to Himself, "My beloved Padmini (lotus-like Radhika) is now beautifying the forest around Her pond with Her dearest friends! Otherwise, how could My heart suddenly become so happy?"

Then suddenly a soft breeze carried Sri Radhika's bodily fragrance in Krishna's direction. When Krishna sensed it, He became very agitated by desires for erotic happiness. Then Krishna stopped playing His flute, being unable to control His restless mind, just as the young honeybees cannot find peace without the fragrance of the sweet malati flowers.

Madhumangala, knowing Krishna's mind as if he were a demigod said, "O Pinchabushana (He who is adorned by a peacock feather), I've got something to do. I'm going now. Today I went to Bhaguri minu to learn astrology and I had a great doubt that I asked him to dispell, but he couldn't. Fortunately, Garga muni, who is praised by all the munis, has come to take bath at Surya kunda. He alone can clear my doubts."

Krishna, the subduer of Kesi, replied, "O friend, My mind is also very eager to see Garga muni, but it is not polite to go and see him with so many friends.

Madhumangala said, "If You think its not polite to go with so many boys, then let's just go the two of us. See! The swanlike sun has swam to the middle of the lake of

the sky. It's close to noon time! The cows are resting in the cool kadamba forest, and our friends also want to take rest. Don't strain them unnecessarily with any more platful games!"

Hearing Madhumangals'a dashing words, the cowherd boys said, "O friends, You just go together." So Krishna and Madhumangala blissfully went to Radhakunda, swiftly passing through Pramoda vana.

Approaching Radhakunda, Krishna said, "Madhumangala, where have We come to? This is not Govardhana, nor Vrajabhumi, because everything here is so golden! Is it Mount Meru or Ilavrita Varsha, that have sent expansions of themselves to Vraja? But why is Cupid then piercing Me with his arrows as soon as I entered that wave of luster?"

While Krishna thus spoke to Madhumangala, being very anxious to see Her, Radhika became dizzy of His great sweetness, just looking at the bluish forest around Her pond, that showered Her with the Nectar of His luster, like a charming cloud quenching Her intense thirst. From a distance, Radha and Krishna took each other to be the lightning and the campaka vine (Radha) or a cloud and a tamala tree (Krishna)? Then, for some time they wondered, "Is this my Lover (Krishna)? Is this My beloved (Radha)?" Aho! Then again They identified each other with the aforementioned objects.

Thus ends chapter eight of Srila Visvanatha Cakravrti's "Krishna Bhavanamrita Mahakavya," describing Krishna's morning play in the forest.

## Chapter 9 Flowerplays and Loveplays (10:48 a.m. - 3:36 p.m.)

One gopi said, "Radha, look! Madhava ('the spring' or 'Krishna') has come, making all the vines blossom and making all the directions nicely fragrant! Surely Your efforts in picking flowers and worshipping the Lord of the lotus flowers ('the sun' or 'Krishna, the Lord of the lotus like gopis') will be successful."

Sri Radhika replied, "O bewildered girl, look! Hari has come to catch Me! I cannot even flee. My thighs are stunned and My body shivers. Why are you laughing so silly instead of protecting Me? O restless eyed one, I'm dying of fear!"

That sakhi said, "O Radha with confused eyes, why are You afraid of that darkness (Shyama, Krishna), whose heroism and pride will be diminished by the Lalita-sun? I cannot believe that this debaucher will be able to forcibly touch You, the crown jewel of all chaste girls in the world."

Sri Radhika said, "Sakhi, you speak the truth. But, fate became angry with Me and made the sun, who destroys the darkness of the vows of chaste girls, appear on

earth. He forcibly closes all the lotus flowers when they are separated from Him, making them attracted to Him. All the people speak about Him like that."

The sakhi said, "Gandharva, If You are really scared, then quickly enter into this kunjia and wait here for two or three hours (with Krishna). We may need that much time for picking flowers for Mitra ('the sun' or 'Krishna') without being in anxiety (otherwise Krishna will disturb us because You are with us)."

While the gopis considered all this, Krishna suddenly appeared in their midst, like the moon appears amongst the lilies. The gopis then began to stop the waves of the ocean of their ecstasy with a sand dyke of their neglect and false anger towards Him. The boats of their eyes fell into the whirlpool of the obvious sweetness of each of Krishna's limbs and began to rotate there. These eyes shyly looked at the ground, like boats sunk after having fallen into the whirlpools. But anyone who says that this is a sign of shyness, does not know the truth!

When the great soldiers of Krishna's fragrance entered the nostrils of the Vrajagopis and smashed the gates leading to the inner chambers of their patience, Krishna said, "O plunderers of the forest, who are you?" When the nectar waves of Krishna's voice entered into the gopis ears, everything within them became inundated. When Krishna got no reply from them, His eyes started spinning as if He were angry, and He said, "Oh! What are you saying so proudly? Have you come to my garden abode to plunder it? Today you should come to My upakantha ('close to Me' or 'around My neck') or have you anyway come here with such desires? Quickly and clearly tell Me now, who are you?"

The gopis replied, "We are no one!"

Which poet in the world is able to make a comparison with the sweet way in which the gopis concealed their erotic feelings, showing bashfulness, restlessness and fear? These poets can be compared with the seekers for brahman, who desperately try to ascertain it by saying neti neti (it is not this, it is not that)

When Krishna heard the gopis' words, His mind became filled with tears and He became pierced with even more arrows of the mind born Cupid. Although He tried to hide His feelings, His shivering revealed them clearly to the gopis. He proudly told them, "O moon faced ones, are you telling Me, 'We are no one?' Alas! Alas! Usually words are not seen with the eyes, but I can see you clearly! Not only are you stealing flowers, but you also stole your own personalities. Day and night I was thinking, 'How will I catch these girls that steal My sumanah ('flowers' or 'mind')?' Now, finally, I caught you coming to atmabhu ('My land' or 'Cupid'). O bewildered young girls, now I will make you reap the fruits of your offenses! Accept them!"

Sri Radhika replied, "O impudent one! Every day we pick flowers to worship Mitra, who creates a grand festival for the eyes of everyone in the world by destroying the darkness, who causes the Padmini's ('lotuses' or 'the gopis') to blossom up with the touch of His kara ('rays' or 'hands') and who fulfills all

desires. Why are You needlessly angry?"

Krishna said, "O Fair Faced One, If you worship Mitra, I will not be angry, but how can I trust You, since women are always lying? If You're really picking flowers for the god, then take an oath and I will forgive You Your offenses. You will see My saintly behaviour, even with flower thieves (or 'heart thieves') like You!"

Sri Radhika said, "O Krishna, we are very famous in Vraja for our thievery, and You are surely the greatest saint. Who will not confirm that? What is the use of repeating it without reason? Can Your qualifications, like truthfulness, simplicity, purity, absence of desire for other people's property and so on be seen in anyone else in the world?"

Krishna said, "O proud girls, are you turning the tables on Me, the Lord of Vrindavan, who is praised by all the saints, by calling Me a thief? You carry such pride in your hearts! Even though you're just cowherd girls you're showing such skill in speech! Are you so proud because of your fresh youth, your wealth, your fidelity to your husbands or your expertise in dance and acting according to the scriptures on art? Now I will see how proud you are in this nikunja, showing You the skill of My arms."

Saying this, Giridhari came up to Sri Radhika, but Lalita got in front of Her and proudly chastised Krishna, saying, "Who is there who wants to touch this chaste housewife by force, in front of Lalita? Go away, Casanova, if You want to be safe!"

Krishna said, "O Lalita, when I see you showing so much force, it seems to Me that you want to fight (Cupid's battle) with Me! And, being bewildered, you will tell Me whatever you want. So now, I will squeeze you in My arms and your friends may all see it! O foul faced one, will you repeatedly tell Me, 'No! Don't!'"

Lalita said, "O woman thief, You're always raping innocent housewives, but I am Lalita, and I'm not afraid of You at all!! On my own strength I can protect myself and my dear friend, Radhika, and I can take flowers from any forest, right in front of You! O impudent One, why don't You stop us by force? Why would You tolerate us?"

Krishna laughed and said, "Look Radha! If You agree with the words coming from Your friend's mouth, then You will never get free from My grip! I will bite Lalita's lips with my teeth and scratch her itching tongue, also. Silence is a sign of agreement."

Sri Radhika said, "O king of cheaters, what are You saying? Don't You know who I am? There's no young girl in Vraja more famous for her chastity than Me! My friends are very dedicated to the ways of the incorporeal Cupid, and Lalita is the best of them. Because of her harsh nature, she can defeat even You!"



Krishna said, "Radha, Your two mountain-like breasts represent Your mountain-like pride of two things: 'I am worshipping the sun' and 'I am very chaste'! Today, I will pierce them and scratch them with My nails! Even if You hit Me with these two mountains, I can tolerate it."

Hearing these words, the sakhis all flashed beam-like smiles from their moon-like faces. Krishna passed them by, and when He touched Radhika's breasts with His hand, both His and Radhika's body was studded from tip to toe with goosebumps of loving ecstasy, being pierced by Cupid's arrows. Shouldn't Cupid be proud of the erotic affliction he gave Them at that time?

Sri Radhika became enchanted when She was touched by Hari's hands. Then Her friends loudly said to Krishna, "O cheater, what are You doing!?"

Sri Radhika screamed and carefully stopped Her lover's hands with Her lotus-like hands, crying without tears in an averse mood. When She stopped Krishna's right hand, Krishna pulled at Her veil with His left hand. This inundated all the directions with indescribable waves of sweet nectar, causing Madhava to forget His desires to embrace Radhika or kiss Her lips and He just remained standing there, being constantly immersed in this shower. At that time, the hair on Krishna's face looked like the deep darkness which could not be dissipated by His bright, shining, moon-like face. Or, was the moon defeated by the darkness that swooped down upon Him? And how can this moon shine so brightly, despite being defeated by the darkness? Has he made friends with his conqueror? No, that is not possible, because friends don't stay up-and-under, but share equal positions. Then has the moon become the servant of the darkness? Wouldn't that be embarrassing in this world?

"And where have these two fishes on that moon come from? Did they get stuck on him when he rose from the Milk Ocean? That is not possible, because fishes are naturally restless, and these fishes aren't! Then are they blue lotus flowers? No, that cannot be, because they would not remain closed, sitting on the lap of their friend, the moon. Then are they two wagtail birds? If they were, then who has brought them to the moon and why are they dancing there?" Saying this to himself, Krishna considered His eyes to be very fortunate. His own body and all the directions were constantly inundated by the nectarean stream of Sri Radhika's bodily splendor, and He drank the ever attractive honey of Her female glances coming from the corners of Her eyes, with His own eyes. In this way, Hari became stunned, giving joy to the sakhis. Because of Krishna's astonishment, Radhika was able to loosen Herself from the bondage of His arms. Krishna was as if defeated by a weapon of beauty and He began to yawn (like Siva yawned from Krishna's jimbha jvara, yawn missile).

Sri Radhika became very beautiful when She tightened Her blouse and sash, that had loosened from Krishna's grip. It was as if She bound Her assistants up in Her erotic fight with Krishna. She tied Her half loosened braid into a knot on the back of Her neck with Her left hand and chastised Her sakhis with the index finger of Her right hand, loudly saying, "O cheaters! Just wait, just wait, I will revenge

Myself in time." Then, She gave Krishna atanu ('intense' or 'erotic') pain by piercing Him with the arrows of Her sharp glances, but She also gave Him joy by showing Him Her eagerness to bind up Her hair and dress. This vision made Krishna consider His birth blessed.

Sri Radhika said to Krishna, "Bho Lord (brahmin) of Vrindavana! Bho pious soul! Bho famous One! I will go to the house of My mother-in-law to get a reward (dakshina) for Your (brahminical) activities here! Once You had that matchless, extraordinary reward You will never pay to us for prakama ('pious benefit' or 'sex') anymore"

Krishna said, "Radha, I'm a qualified person to receive Your matchless reward! Look at My endeavors in preparing the sacrifice to Cupid, before You give Me the dakshina and teach Me the procedures, so that My auspicious work will become successful. The learning of any scholar who does not praise and approve of such work is useless!"

Kundalata then said, "O cousin-in-law, if Radhika agrees to this, then we will know Your scholarship and we will know that She is a learned girl, also. As long as a grinding slab and a piece of gold do not rub together, how can we know their glories?"

Gandharva said, "O pious Kundalata, I can see that you love your cousin-in-law, Krishna, even more purely than your dearest husband Subhadra. That must be why you are teaching Him the kama sastras (erotic scriptures) and now that you know His expertise in it, you personally want to reveal the qualities of your disciple?"

Visakha said, "Hey Radha, if You have faith in Kundalata's examination of Krishna's expertise in the sacrifice to Cupid, then engage Him in the desired work! Otherwise, if you let this job be done by ignorant people Your erotic work will not be completed."

Krishna said, "Hey Radha, what is the use of this vain examination? In this world Your friend Visakha is famous for her dedication to atanu dharma (erotic duties). Let her come with Me to a lonely place to test if I pronounce the mantras from Vatsyayana muni's kama sastra, that I have studied, purely or impurely. It is forbidden in the scriptures to pronounce these mantras in public."

Kundalata said to Radhika, "Hari has spoken well! You must order Visakha to test Him!"

Hearing this, Sri Radhika sprinkled Her lips with Her nectarean smile and said, "Sakhi, Visakha, Kundalata cannot give up her very bad desires in any way, so go and be tested by Krishna in solitude!"

Hearing this, all the sakhis giggled, covering their mouths with their veils. Then, Visakha smiled and said, "Radha, only Your indifference has protected You from

Krishna's hands, but that is now also dying out at every moment! Now, I don't see any other means for Your protection than Your fortunate assistants. O morose heart, if You desire Your own happiness, then enter into this solitary kunjja and take shelter of that! We have come here to help You get Krishna's bodily association, but now You became so favorable to Him that You don't need any help anymore. You have already sprinkled the sumana prada ('giver of flowers' or 'the mind') punnanga tree (or 'Krishna, the best of men') with ghanarasa ('water' or 'sweet words') causing Him to blossom (with desires)."

Just then, Nandimukhi came with Vrinda, handed Hari a letter and blessed Him (being a brahmin girl), saying, "All godspeed to You." Krishna opened the letter and read it to Himself. Everyone could see that its contents made Him very happy. After reading it, Krishna left towards the north without saying anything.

Although Radhika was sad for not seeing Krishna for even a moment, She appeared very happy externally, just to make a show before Her sakhis. Then, She and Her sakhis respectfully approached Nandimukhi and anxiously asked her, "O Nandimukhi, who sent that letter?"

Nandimukhi replied, "Purnamasi."

Radhika asked, "What for?"

Nandimukhi answered, "I don't know."

Radhika then said, "Come on. Tell Me the truth."

To which Nandimukhi replied, "She sent Him to another kunjja to enjoy another girl."

Radhika: "He would never do that right in front of Me!"

Nandimukhi: "He is so clever that You would never notice it."

Hearing this, Radhika doubtfully looked at Lalita, who pacified Her, saying, "Radha, when He is with You, Hari can never desire another girl! If the young honeybee tasted the honey from the blooming malati vine, can he ever remember anything else? This Nandimukhi speaks nothing but lies ever since she was born. Her tongue will be the guru of Kali Yuga. What do You think, O beautiful One? Krishna falsely left us just to tease us!. That letter was also false, so why should You be in vain anxiety? Nandamukhi is falsehood personified!"

Nandamukhi said, "Lalita, Purnamasi is knowlege personified. She is the leading lady here in Vraja. She's the birthplace of all religious principles. She is the mother of Sandipani muni, who is Vedic purpose perfonified, and I am her assistant. Can you just call me a liar?"

Lalita said, "We keep you on Purnamasi's vow. Now tell us the truth!"

Nandimukhi said, "Sakhi, what should I say? Purnamasi forbade me to reveal it. But taking your oath I can also not remain silent anymore. Swear me, don't disbelieve what I say." Sri Radhika swore it and Nandamukhi said, "Yesterday Krishna went to see Purnamasi, and politely requested her, 'Holy mother, You are the greatest knower of all mantras and herbs. Sri Radhika always sits on a mountain of vama (an unfavorable mood towards Krishna)! How can I delude Her sakhis and take Her off that mountain? O goddess, not even a billion gopis are able to astonish Me with erotic bliss as good as She can! Only She can adorn My manobhu ('support of My mind' or 'erotic bliss'). Is She a kalpalata (fancy vine), akalpalata (a vine of ornaments), or a vajrayanti mala ('a long garland around My neck' or 'a victory flag')?'

"Hearing these sweet words, Purnamasi was pleased within, but outwardly she said, 'Krishna! How can I do such a thing all of a sudden? Sri Radhika is the most chaste girl! She's an ocean of bashfulness and She's high born. Should She just sit on Your lap, like the lightning embracing a raincloud?' Hearing this, Aghabhid went home. At nighttime, Purnamasi practiced all the Vedic mantras and in the morning she came to me and said, 'Nandimukhi, go and give this letter to Krishna.' Following her order, I quickly went to give Him this letter. That's all I know."

Sri Radhika said, 'Bho sakhis, what mantra has Purnamasi sent to Krishna through Nandimukhi, that He went to practice in solitude? Let's run home and then do our Surya puja! Krishna is enchanted by this mantra. Let's offer our obeisances to the place He stays (viz. Let's avoid Him).

Nandimukhi laughed when she drank the nectarean words coming from Vrishabhanu's daughter and said, "Whatever You said was improper! Why should You vainly be afraid? Why would that boy, who makes You give up Your chastity, maddening You with a single drop of His beauty, practice this mantra just to destroy Your vama?"

Sri Radhika said, "Bho sakhis, Bhagavati maintains a matchless sanyassa vow, studying the kama sastras the whole night, and Nandimukhi has given up all sense enjoyment under her guidance, but Kundalata has realized the auspiciousness of oneness of brahman and the jiva soul (or 'she has attained oneness in sexual union with her husband, Subhadra's cousin, Krishna). In this way these three ladies take the housewives to the stage of samadhi (or 'they make the housewives give up their righteous principles, giving them much affliction!'; there is also a more intimate meaning, but the translator chose not to disclose it)."

While this discussion was going on, Rupa manjari saw the moon (Krishna) rising in the eastern side of the forest and she told Radhika. The daughter of Vrishabhanu then said, "Krishna has attained full beauty on the strength of His mantra japa and He has come here to enchant us and give us anxiety. O sakhis, what shall I do? O sakhi Lalita, This moonlight is quickly destroying My patience from afar! What shall become of Me when this moon of Vraja comes close to Me? I

understand He has attained matchless perfection in having His desires fulfilled. Lalita, where is a good hiding place? If I stay here, He will confuse My intelligence. Who knows what will happen when this mantra awakens?"

Saying this, Sri Radhika contracted Herself in anxiety and carefully walked towards the temple in the ashoka kunj. When She heard the jingling of Her own ankle bells, She was afraid that it was Krishna following Her. She hid Herself between the branches of the Kadamba tree, fearfully looking behind Her again and again with a crooked neck, anxious to protect Herself from a possible attack from Krishna.

Although Acyuta saw the pure kunkuma splendor of the jewel of ladies, Sri Radhika, from afar, He did not follow Her, but instead asked Her sakhis, "Where is Radhika?"

Lalita said, "Krishna, She went home."

Krishna said, "Lalita, the time that you always cheated Me is now gone. I've now attained mystic perfection and I can see through your deceit!"

Nandimukhi whispered in Lalita's ear, "Lalita, if Madhava now knows everything, then why should you vainly be at fault by refusing to tell Him where She is? Become glorious by indicating Radha's whereabouts to Krishna with your eyes. And if you say, 'Radhika will become angry if I reveal Her presence to Krishna,' then I say don't be afraid. What can Radhika do to you with false anger?"

On Lalita's indication, Krishna went to the vanjula kunj where Radhika was hiding and said, "O Lady, what are You doing? Are You sitting alone here to attract Me with some mantra? Here, I have come! Now You may do with Me what You like. You have become so powerful with this mantra that I won't be able to stop You if You want to bind Me up in Your arms or bite Me with the weapon of Your teeth."

Sri Radhika made Her first strike with Her knitted eyebrows, Her fresh nectarean smile and Her unfavorable shouts with faltering voice. Krishna drank that nectar through the cups of His eyes and ears and became enchanted by it. What to speak of tasting the nectar from Her lips, what condition would Krishna be in when He knew its greatness?

Krishna then came up to Radhika and held Her hand, but Radhika said, "No! No! This is not proper!", and when He touched Her breasts She repeatedly contracted Her body, cursing Krishna. When Krishna forcibly wanted to bite Her lips, that were as red as bimba fruits, Radhika yelled again and again. Then, when Krishna wanted to take Her inside the Kunja cottage, Cupid began to dance. Krishna forcible held Radhika to His chest and brought Her to the bed in the nikonja. Radhika swung Her thighs, neck and feet out of protest, saying, "No! No! No!" It seemed as if Cupid twanged his flower bow of campaka flowers, or that a raincloud took possession of the restless lightning. During their erotic fight, Radha and Krishna were sometimes unconscious and sometimes enchanted, being filled with

profuse sweetness. Their erotic cleverness was shown through rays of nectarean love in an undifferentiated way.

Thus ends chapter nine of Srila Visvanatha Cakravrti's "Krishna Bhavanamrita Mahakavya," called "Flowerplays and Loveplays."

## Chapter 10 Relishing the Nectar of Playing in the Kunja (10:48 a.m. - 3:36 p.m.)

While Radha and Krishna blissfully spent Their time in the kunja, Lalita and the sakhis sat in their assembly under a tree and Nandimukhi and Vrinda had their long cherished desires fulfilled by seeing Radha and Krishna's loving pastimes. The six seasonal (India has six seasons, not four) Laxmis came to that assembly of sakhis to hear what their services were. Seeing them, Vrinda said, "Bho seasonal goddesses! Adorn the forest for Radha and Krishna's pleasure. O Vasanta laxmi (goddess of springtime), go to Govardhana Hill and stay at the Rasa Sthali (the place where Krishna dances the Rasa Dance in the springtime Parasauli village and Candra Sarovara)! O Sarada laxmi (goddess of autumnal beauty), stay on the bank of the Yamuna in the land of desire trees! O all of you Laxmi's, surrender everything to the service of Radhakunda and its forests to give fun and astonishment to your masters, Sri Sri Radha and Krishna! Be blessed, O limitlessly fortunate goddesses. The rainy season should stay east of the kunda, the autumn south, the Hemanta (the season between autumn and winter) in the west, the winter in the north, the spring should stay in the trees around the kunda and the summer inside the water to make water play successful!"

Hearing these words, the Ritu laxmis (seasonal goddesses) that are experienced like no one else, offered their obeisances to Vrinda and the sakhis and went to do their services as was proper, for who will not endeavor to become blessed like this? Meanwhile, Krishna smeared Radhika's erotically inciting body with black aguru and musk and dressed Her in His own clothes and ornaments, giving Her even His own flute from His belt. He seated Her facing the north and She silently sat there in Her usual bashful mood, dressing Krishna up in His usual dress, like His yellow dhoti. Then Krishna sat down next to Her. He heard the sounds of ankle bells and waist bells so He knew that the sakhis were approaching and He gave a signal with His eyebrows to some maidservants, that stood before Them, not to say anything to the sakhis.

When the sakhis came there and saw two Krishnas, they were amazed and said to each other, "Bho sakhis! What country have we come to, where there are two Krishnas? They both wear peacock feathers. They are both black like the tamala tree. They both wear garlands of forest flowers and beautiful yellow garments. Aho! Their beauty enchants our minds!"

When the sakhis inquired from the bystanding maid servants, the maidens said,

"We also don't know who is who! They were already like this when we came here, and when we ask Them what happened, They become scared!"

Vrinda said, "Lalitika, I think the One doing mantra japa with the rudraksha beads in His hand, sitting on His kusa asana (a mat made of woven pampas grass) is Krishna! He gave Radhika a form like His own with the use of some mantra, because He wanted to enjoy Her without having to be afraid of the people around."

Visakha said, "Sakhi Vrinda, holy mother Purnamasi has become a trouble maker for us in all respects. This lusty Krishna has given Radhika a form like His own by practicing these mantras. I don't know Who is Who!"

Chitra said, "Sakhis, listen! What will we say to Jatila when we come home and she'll ask us, 'Where's my daughter-in-law?' That's our dilemma!"

Nandimukhi said, "Chitra, why are you worried? In order not to disturb Jatila's faith in Sri Radhika, He will certainly give Her female form back. But it's not good that She sits by Krishna's side on the strength of this mantra japa. Who knows what's on the mind of He who practices that mantra? He may take Her elsewhere!"

Then the sakhis said to Krishna, thinking Him to be Radhika, "Bho! Bho! We know Who of You is Who! Now, put on Your own dress again. Radhe, what's the use of anymore trickery? Come out of the kunj. Let Krishna sit there on His kusa seat, saying His mantras. We're going home. We've wasted so much time! What a mistake. Have we left home at an inauspicious moment?"

As Lalita said this, Krishna, who had practiced Radhika's voice and bashfulness, said "Lalita, whatever mishap happened to Me today, should not even be spoken out loud! I will whisper it in your ear in a lonely place. Sakhi, you are My helper."

When the sakhis heard Krishna speaking in Radhika's voice, they had no more doubts that He was Her and they surrounded Her/Him. When He wanted to take one sakhi to another place, touching her with His lotus hand, that sakhi was startled and said, "Aho Radhe! Your hands, fingers, feet, cheeks, forehead, ears and every limb of Yours has become like Hari's! Only has remained the same. Tell me, how did this happen?" But they did not ask why the touch of Her body caused the same erotic sensation as the touch of Krishna's body did. They thought that Krishna could naturally transfer this ability on another's person's body, also.

Then, Krishna, playing to be Radhika, said "Bho sakhis! I don't know what Krishna did after He hypnotized Me with these mantras, but listen to what I saw much later, when I came back to consciousness. Krishna took some water in His hand for acamana (washing the mouth). He pursed His lips, and blew on the water three times. Then He smeared My whole body with this water, although I tried to stop Him. Fortunately, that water didn't touch my throat, as I kept My mouth closed. I was amazed to see that I had taken Krishna's form! Krishna sat on His

kusa mat again, practicing His mantras. Whatever else happened cannot be said openly, but I can also not keep it to Myself. If I find any of you alone, I will tell it. I'm too shy to speak out in front of all My sakhis."

Hearing this, all the sakhis said, "Radha, we are Your intimate friends. Why should You be shy before us?" But Krishna, playing Radhika, remained motionless and silent. So, all the sakhis went out in a bewildered state, leaving only Lalita behind.

The sakhis outside thought, "If we cannot hear it, then no problem. We'll ask Lalita everything when she comes out." With this faith, they all waited outside while Krishna entered the kunjya with Lalita, where He embraced her, drank the nectar of her bimba fruit like lips and pulled at her blouse, girdle and breasts.

Lalita said, "Sakhi! Radha! What are You doing?"

Krishna said, "Sakhi! This is the secret that I wanted to tell you!" Then Krishna began to speak with Lalita in His own voice and enjoyed her. Wasn't their erotic mood enriched with the rasa of laughter and astonishment at that time?

Lalita consulted Hari for a few moments, and then quickly went outside, where she blissfully told Visakha, "Come, come quickly and inquire from Hari about what happened!" When Visakha came to Krishna, Lalita made her experience the same as what she had experienced. After that, Champakalata and all the others were gradually enjoyed by Madhusudana. When the sakhis met each other again, they were not very shy about the signs of Krishna's love making on their bodies, as they were all in the same condition. There was no contradiction between them.

Then, Lalita and her sakhis, along with Vrinda and Nandimukhi, went to the place where Radhika was sitting in Krishna's garb. Seeing them, Kundalata said, "Come, come O sakhis! O chaste girls, where did you come from so late? Where do these erotic signs on your bodies come from? Your restless eyes are devoid of eyeliner (or 'free from designations'), your hair is loosened (or 'living entity liberated from bondage'), your lips have lost their color (or 'renounced') because of someone's bites, and your breasts have been scratched (or 'the cycle of rebirth is broken') by someone's nails! Madhava, who has given You sayujya ('union with Him' or 'integral liberation'), is sitting here on His mat meditating. Then tell me, who has done that to you? This is very amazing!"

Nandimukhi said, "Lalita, there's no need to speak about anything else now. Tell me quickly what happened with your sakhi, Radha. Does She still have Krishna's form? Where is She staying?"

Lalita said, "O Nandimukhi, our sakhi Radhika stays in the vine cottage, having Krishna's form. She's too shy to come out, but being wise She thought of a solution for a long time, after which She privately told us, 'If Nandimukhi and Kundalata passionately embrace Me, then My shameless misforming will fade away. It will not fade even after using thousands of kinds of medicine! On the strength of Nandimukhi's severe penance and Kundalata's great chastity, the



contamination of this mantra and the garb that this debaucher Krishna made Me wear, will vanish!"

Nandimukhi said, Lalita, is there any loss if Radhika embraces you or any of your billions of sakhis? I think you're lying to us about who's calling us."

Hearing this, Vrinda said, "Nandi, these stupid housewives like Lalita have not performed any austerities and Krishna has already turned their chastity into a will-of-the-wisp!"

Kundalata said, "Vrinda, you are the goddess in charge of the forest. How many perfections haven't you attained and how many herbs don't you know? You quickly go to Radhika and cure Her alone."

Hearing these words, all the sakhis laughed and Lalita said, "Why are you vainly quarrelling? Hari sits on His mat, practicing mauna (silence). Are you afraid to ask Him?"

Hearing this, the sakhis' faces became beautified with slight, sprout-like smiles and they went to see Radhika, who was still wearing Mukunda's clothes. With Lalita up front, they came before Her, the corners of their eyes playfully shy as they said, "Bho, crown jewel of mantra knowers, You've had Your desires fulfilled now. Why are You still practicing silences? Answer my questions!"

Sri Radhika, taken to be Krishna, was as if awakening from a dream. She carefully opened Her eyes and said, "O sakhis! When did you come?" Looking around here and there, She said, "Where is that impudent boy, Krishna?" and threw the peacock feather from Her head with Her left hand.

Lalita said, "Sakhi! You are Sri Radhika! Why were we vainly shy in Your presence? There is another Radha, dressed up like Hari, hiding in the kunj. This false Radha bewitched us! We thought that she was You, and we went up to her, but luckily we were saved. Fear could not leave our hearts when we saw this false Radha!"

Speaking like this, the sakhis pretended to be astonished. Seeing this, the keeper of the forest, Vrindadevi, slightly smiled and said, "O sakhis, These two are your boy-or-girlfriend. You can see Them with your own eyes.

Nandimukhi said, "O sakhis, I previously saw two Madhava's and now we see two Radhikas! It's no loss to us, but we know it's a great loss to you, for which we are very sad."

Visakha said, "Nandimukhi, only dvarapa ('doubts' or the time period of this story) gives us sorrow? You desire it's end, that is proper, for ascetics like you always like to end the suffering of others. Doing this, the merit of your occupational duty will increase (or 'It's normal for you to desire the end of Dvapara Yuga, when the Kali Yuga will start. Because during that time period,

irreligion is everywhere and you can enjoy those irreligious activities.')

Then the sakhis removed Krishna's color and ornaments from Radhika's body and dressed Her in Her own ornaments again. Then, Krishna came and imitated Radhika's voice again. While speaking, He imitated Her slightly feigned fear and shyness, half covering His greatly astonished moonlike face with His veil. Drinking the honey of Sri Radhika's lotus-like face with His honeybee glances, He said, "Bho sakhis, let this impudent boy misform My body. It's alright! The most astonishing thing is that He enchanted My sakhis by wearing My dress and by imitating My beautiful form and nature! O sakhis, why do you stay at the side of this boy, who is expert in conjuring hundreds of illusions? Don't be so deluded. Come here! Are you blind, making yourselves laughing stocks like this? It would be good if you could help Me escape and hide in a mountain cave. Otherwise, if you stay here, the same thing that happened to Me may happen to you all!"

Vrinda and the others said, "Aho! How wonderful is the greatly sophisticated trickery of Giridhari! That person whom the sakhis first took to be Radha has now again appeared as Radha! O sakhis, now just do what Radhika tells you to. Go along to that mountain cave and leave the bewildering second form of Radha!"

Hearing this, even Vrindavana's desire vines began to smile, finally having their desires fulfilled. Kundalata said, "O Lalita, I can only think of one solution to this problem. Nandimukhi should go to Sandipani muni's mother, Purnamasi, and bring her here."

Lalita replied, "O sakhi, Purnamasi is just the cause of all the trouble. She won't speak about this, but rather, she'll just play another trick on us! I offer my obeisances to her from a distance!"

Hearing these words of the sakhis, Radha, Krishna, Vrinda and Nandi began to laugh and said, "O Saraswati, who gives these words to the sakhis, you revealed the truth now! Obeisances unto you!"

Krishna became even more thirsty after drinking the nectar-like words churned from the ocean of love and all the gopis became intoxicated from drinking the honey-shower of the most nectarean jokes from Sri Krishna's lotus like mouth.

Thus ends chapter ten of Srila Visvanatha Cakravrti's "Krishna Bhavanamrita Mahakavya," called 'Relishing the Nectar of Playing in the Kunja.'

## Chapter 11 Playing on Swings in the Rainy Season (10:48 a.m. - 3:36 p.m.)

Surrounded by the sakhis, Krishna came out of the kunja and the honeybee-like glance of His beloved One drank the honey of His sweetness. It was as if millions

of Cupids, being defeated by Krishna in beauty, worshipped a drop of the beauty of His toenails. Looking at Radhika, Krishna placed His left arm on Her shoulder, making Her shiver with ecstasy, like a golden lotus flower shivering on the high waves of an ocean of sweetness. From both sides sakhis handed Radha and Krishna betel leaves. Sri Radhika took one with the fingers of Her left hand and put it in Krishna's mouth. Krishna took one with His right hand and put it in Radhika's mouth. Krishna held His left arm on Radhika's shoulder and from there He wanted to touch Her bosom with His left hand, but She slapped Him with Her hand. It looked as wonderful as a lotus flower trying to relish a chakravaka goose swimming in a pond of natural beauty, being obstructed by a red lotus flower. Radha and Krishna walked over a path which was shaded by trees.

Occasionally the sun afflicted Radhika, making Her perspire, so Krishna shaded His dear One's beautiful face by bending over so His crown covered the sun. Radha and Krishna looked like a rain cloud and the lightning on earth, on top of which were two moons (Their faces), that shown even in daytime, always causing the blue lotus eyes of the fair sakhis to blossom. Seeing the moons of Radha-Krishna's faces rise, the chakravaka geese became sad, the peacocks blissfully began to dance, the swans became afraid and the male cakora birds became very happy. These contradicting moods of joy and sorrow are a natural creation of Lord Brahma.

Slowly, slowly Radhika and Krishna walked over the path that was shown to Them by Vrinda, bringing Them to the play forest named Varsa Harsa, the joy of the rainy season. Being defeated billions of times by Radha and Krishna, Who were like the raincloud and the lightning on the ground, the raincloud and lightning in the sky thought, "We're not qualified to stay above Radha and Krishna, but where shall we go? The whole firmament is pervaded by Their splendor." Thinking in this sad way, they became white from crying drops of rain (as clouds become white in the rainy season). They looked like a blue umbrella inset with gold, serving to protect Radha and Krishna from the summer heat. These showers were like two of the symptoms of sattvic ecstasy, crying and suddenly turning pale. They offered praise to Radha and Krishna with the soft, faltering voices (another symptom) of their rumbling.

When Radha and Krishna played in the Kadamba forest, the trees with their thousands of gradually ascending bluish branches, and their golden flowers that showered honey with love, conquered the beauty of the rain clouds and the lightning. The very long jeweled platforms between these kadamba trees gave pleasure to Krishna day and night, being showered by honey from the flowers in the trees that was protected by ever wakeful honeybees. On each side of these platforms two pillar-like trees were standing, whose branches embraced each other above the platforms, supporting emerald balconies where flower garlands were hung. From these beautiful branches beautiful red ropes inset with pearls were hanging. They were holding up the swings, that each had two golden seats on them, that were swung by a soft breeze.

The maidservants artfully picked the stems off fragrant flowers, and spread the

blossoms over the seats of the swings, covering these petals with soft, thin sheets. With their nice fragrance and softness these swings were able to attract Sri Krishna. Shyama saw the best of these swings, one with a flag on it, and climbed on it. It was as if ecstasy personified sat down on the swing that was served by the goddess of beauty.

To get completely showered by the rain, Krishna pulled His beloved One, who held His hand, on the swing and placed Her facing Him, like bliss personified facing a sleepless pond of love. The maidservants served Radha and Krishna by throwing flowers, performing arati to Their lotus-like faces, singing, straightening Their necklaces and Krishna's turban and serving Them pan and garlands.

The prana sakhis (maidservants), standing on each side of the swing, tied up their veils with their sashes, stepping back and forth to push the swing, bending their bodies as they pushed. Two other fortunate sakhis stood on each side of the swing, holding tasty betel leaves in their hands, which they put in Radha and Krishna's lotus-like mouths whenever the swing slowed down. Other advanced maidservants, who had sweet characters and who were floating in a current of divine love, showered Radha and Krishna with the best flower petals from their hands.

The goddesses in the sky praised their own fortune of seeing Radha and Krishna's swinging pastimes. They became stunned from ecstasy and, although their hopes for attaining a gopi-body were unfulfilled, they eagerly showered flowers on the Yugala Kisora. The clouds also joyfully showered their rains, that turned into honey when it collided with the flower shower. These honey drops looked like pearls when they fell on the gopis' bodies, and made friends with the pearls that were already there. The sweet songs of the gopis pervaded the sky and the fragrance that came out of their opened mouths stirred the honeybees, that offered praises to these gopis.

The moon of bliss gradually waxed during Radha and Krishna's swinging festival, in which Their necklaces, earrings and garlands danced, Their waist bells and ankle bells became suitable instruments for making music, and Their faint smiles became the audience of all this. Radha and Krishna's lotus-like eyes swung on the waves of the swelling ocean of each other's bodily luster. Seeing this, the sakhis gained a great wealth of bliss. That desire, which worked unfavorably for the development of the pastimes by agitating Radha and Krishna's minds, could not disturb this swinging festival at all. The sages say that this is because of the power of the lila shakti (playpower, personified by Vrindadevi).

The branches of the tree on which the ropes of the swing were hanging began to swing along and the leaves and flowers could thus serve Radha and Krishna by fanning Them. The flower garlands hanging in these branches, that were strung in many different ways, also swung along and the honeybees were unable to catch them, though they carefully tried. These bees looked very beautiful as they buzzed and wandered along with these swinging garlands.

Radha and Krishna wanted to swing faster, so They kicked off more speed with Their feet, giving Their sakhis lots of loving bliss with Their expert rising and descending. They looked very funny as They swung up and down. When Krishna was below, Krishna's flower garland embraced Her blouse. This vision made the sakhis very happy. Radha and Krishna saw Their own reflections in each other's bodies without seeing each other. This made Them very sad, and They sighed deeply. This breathing then dimmed the shining of Their mirror-like bodies, and, not seeing Their reflections anymore, They became very happy.

Then, the ocean of playful sports, Sri Krishna Himself, began to push the swing faster, just for fun, making it go so high that Radhika's buttocks touched the leaves on the branches of the kadamba tree. Then She became afraid that She would fall and said, "Aha! Don't swing anymore! No more!" When Madhava heard this He began to laugh and, instead of slowing down, He began to push the swing even faster! Sri Radhika's braid loosened, Her veil slipped off Her head and Her ornaments were dishevelled. Seeing that She could not break off the speed of the swing anymore with Her feet, because She needed them to keep Her sari from blowing up. Krishna began to laugh. His eyes were satisfied and again He increased the speed, so that Radhika gave up Her seat and embraced Him around the neck. Krishna also embraced Her. In this way, the bodies of the Yugala Kisora, that looked like one blue lotus flower and one golden campaka flower, became one. From that union, the fragrance of these flowers also emanated, piercing through the heavenly planets and ultimately reaching the nostrils of Padma, the goddess of fortune, and other residents of Vaikuntha.

Seeing Radha and Krishna on the swing without any support from Their hands, the sakhis came and stopped the swing. Sri Radhika got off and mingled with Her sakhis, telling them how Krishna played with Her. Then She took the chief of Her eight sakhis, Lalita, seated her next to Krishna on the swing and began to sing with love. Krishna did with Lalita what He previously did with Radhika. After doing the same thing with Visakha and all the other sakhis, Krishna got off the swing. Then He expanded Himself into many forms, sat on each swing in one form and took two sakhis with Him on each swing, lifting them up with His arms and swinging with them. What is, after all, not possible to do for Krishna, the ocean of love? Each gopi saw that Krishna was sitting on the swing with her alone, drinking the honey from her lotus-like face. That is not so astonishing, for what is impossible to do for the desire-potency of the son of the lord of Gokula.

There was a lotus shaped swing on which Mukunda climbed, with His dear gopis, as soon as Vrinda showed it to Him. The central whorl of the lotus had pillows on it. Krishna placed His left arm on Radhika's shoulder as the eight primary sakhis sat down on the eight surrounding petals, and the sixteen secondary sakhis sat on the sixteen outer leaves. In great bliss, Vrinda brought tasty dates, rose apples, grapes and other kinds of fruit. The sakhis ate what Radha and Krishna left on Their plates. Before this, they drank a juice whose taste defied the pride of nectar and afterwards, Radha and Krishna and the sakhis lovingly gave each other golden, shining, betel leaves.

Nandi and Vrinda were happy to push the lotus swing. The faces of the maidservants lighted up in bliss while they sang different songs. Through the swinging play, Krishna attained victory over the gopis and gained the jewels of their kisses and embraces. Then He took them off the swings and wandered with them from forest to forest.

Seeing Radhika's face, Krishna thought, "Sri Radhika's beautiful face, with Her soft smile that casually opens itself, reminds Me of the buds of the yuthi flower," and He picked some of these yuthi flowers, strung a garland of them, and wore them on His chest. The rainclouds in the sky resembled Krishna's bodily luster. The lightning resembled the gopis' luster and the red indragopa worms on the ground resembled the red prints of the gopis' footlac. When the Krishna-cloud showered its matchless rains everywhere, the flowers and vines bloomed up and the corn-like gopis became incomparably beautiful and experienced great bliss. The monsoon-forest was also immersed in showers of joy of erotic rasa.

Thus ends chapter eleven of Srila Visvanatha Cakravrti's "Krishna Bhavanamrita Mahakavya," dealing with Radha and Krishna's pastimes on the swing in the rainy season.

## Chapter 12 Wanderings in the Forest (10:48 a.m. - 3:36 p.m.)

Then, Radha and Krishna, the generals of king Anuraga's (constant passion) army, being surrounded by Their silimukhi ('honeybees' or 'arrows') soldiers and keeping the elephant named Cupid ahead of Them, came to the autumnal forest. Sri Krishna told Sri Radhika, "O restless eyed One, look at this auspicious, beautiful pond with this golden lotus flower in it surrounded by dancing honeybees and khanjana birds. This pond is like a mirror reflecting Your face. The clouds make these ponds yellow in the rainy season and give them their own smooth blue color in the autumn. O Sakhi, have the ponds and the clouds now made friends with each other? The clouds gave up all their water to the ponds, that were like ascetics whose water and clay had dried up from the summer heat. Then these clouds became white and vanished in the sky. Look, O dear One! The honeybees give up their taste for all the other flowers out of attachment to the malati flowers. Tell Us truly, sakhi, did your mind become afflicted (with lust) because of that?"

Hearing Madhava's joking words, Sri Radhika, the jewel of ladies, smiled and slightly contracted the pupils of Her lotus-like eyes. Madhava drank the nectar of these lotus-like eyes with His eyes, that swelled out of eagerness. Then, Hari accepted a lotus flower in His lotus-like hand from Vrinda. He looked at it, kissed it and praised it greatly, saying, "O lotus flower, you've defeated everyone on earth with your fragrance!"

Sri Radhika became a little envious, so Hari told Her, "Sakhi, why do You frown when I praise this lotus flower? Your face is glowing slightly reddish! O restless eyed One, is it because Your pride was diminished? Anyway, after smelling both this lotus flower and Your face I will know who smells the best, and I will sing the glories of that one with My flute!" Saying this, Hari kissed Radhika's face in an unseen way and said in amazement, "Ahaha! Sakhi, Your face smells incomparably nice! O fair faced One, don't be vainly angry with Me."

To pacify proud and angry Radhika, Hari told the lotus flower, "O damn you, fool! Aren't you ashamed to blossom in front of the face of this girl who has defeated you in beauty and fragrance? O cheater, you're acting according to the nature of one who was born from the mud!

"Radha, Your face is more fragrant than the lotus flowers, that can be seen in the wind, who teaches the vines and the branches of the tree how to dance at every moment. Although these vines and trees gave thier honey to the wind as a reward, the wind is not interested in it. O angry girl, listen! Instead, the wind makes the edge of the veil over Your lotus-like face dance to get its precious fragrance, thinking, 'Today I have become fortunate!'"

Lalita said, "Why didn't You leave that honey from Radhika's lotus-like face, whose slightest whiff of fragrance even gives You topmost bliss? Today You devoured me with this anxiety, O Krishna!"

Krishna replied, "Sakhi, don't be sad. Is there any loss if just once, five or six drops fall undrunk from the rivers of sweetness that constantly flow in all directions from Sri Radhika's pond-like face?"

Saying this, Krishna lowered His eyebrows and forcibly embraced Sri Radhika's body with His snakelike left arm, freely drinking the nectar of Her lips. Seeing the faces of the Yugala Kisora, the sakhis were very satisfied.

Krishna and His anuragina gopis (that were very much in love with Him) wandered through every kunja, over every road and by every pond, river or hill until they arrived in Sri Vrindavana, the crown jewel of all forests, which is surrounded by the Yamuna river, where the swans and cakravaka geese give joy to one's lotus-like ears with the sounds of their quarrels, where the trees constantly bear ripe fruit and where the hilltops are all nicely rounded.

The many crystal, sapphire, coral and gold bathing ghats were reflected in the water of the Yamuna and appeared to the viewer to be like pairs of ghats. Near the ghats are beautiful kunjias with flower gardens where the honeybees sweetly sing and where wagtail birds dance in many beautiful ways. The bakula, karavira, kesara, kadamba and kubjaka trees with the fresh alika, kunda, kataki, campaka, atimukta (madhavi), jata, lotus, mountain jasmine and golden yutjika vines are like householders that do their duty giving charity of jackfruits, mangoes, guvaka, langali, gostati, bananas, pomegranates, kolis, dhavas, nimbas, pippalas, banyan beads, kimsuka and other fruits and flowers.

There are groups of four trees each, each of them entwined by pairs of vines. Their branches entwine each other as they ascend, so the wise men call these places kunjās. These big branches with their flowers, leaves and twigs look like jewelled temples with their balconies, roofs, towers, walls, gates and doors. Some of these kunjās are square, some eight cornered, and some are round, shining to give erotic joy to the eyes and minds of Radha and Krishna, their Master and Mistress. The sukās, sarikās, catakās, peacocks, bees, casās, tittibhās, kalinkās, cuckoos, pigeons, cakorās, caranayudhās and other birds fill all the directions with their songs, and the ruru deer, the salis, monkeys, buffalos, samurus, srimarās, camuru deer, kapila cows, rabbits and other animals always lick each other there with equal affection.

The Malayan breeze carried the fiery poison from the snakes' fangs and touched the flowers in the celestial nandana gardens and the bodies of the demigoddesses there, thus becoming polluted. To purify himself, he bathed in the heavenly Ganga and then proceeded to Kailasa, where he bathed in Parvati's pond and smeared himself there with the pollen of the lotus. From there he proceeded to Vaikuntha, where he became ecstatic from getting the honey from the flowers of the playtree of the husband of Kamala, the goddess of fortune. Then he was kissed by the limit of fortune by coming to Vraja, where he became so astonished and blissful that he took shelter there and resides there now forever.

While Radha and Krishna thus wandered through the autumn forest, Sri Radhika pointed at the deer, the trees and the charming birds that She saw before Her and that enchanted Her mind and Her eyes. She pointed them out to Krishna with Her index finger, asking Him what their names were. They saw many fresh flowers that They picked with Their own hands and which They strung on the stems of the vines. Thus they made necklaces, bangles and armlets with which They decorated each other.

Krishna said, "Priya, I will adorn You with these ornaments! Why do You keep away Your breasts? Look! I'm not agitated when I touch them. The vedas repeatedly describe Me as steady."

Hearing this, Sri Radhika told Kundalata, "Sakhi Kundavalli, can anybody know the cousin better than the neice? Tell Me the truth. Is your cousin really so glorious?"

Kundalata replied, "Radha, You are glorious Yourself. Therefore, my cousin aspires for Your glorious position. You desire fearless union with Him and fame as a chaste girl at the same time."

Krishna said, "Sakhi, who does not know the Gopala Tapani Upanishad or Durvasa muni, the son of Atri Muni, who is an expansion of Lord Shiva? They praise Me everywhere as a brahmacari (a celibate student)! Spend some time with Me in solitude."



Sri Radhika told Lalita, "Lalita, The Creator surely made the male sex with the essence of naughtiness and shamelessness! You can see that in these male bees that taste the honey of those (female) vines."

Hearing this, Krishna pointed at a tamala tree which was entwined by a golden yuthika creeper and said, "Radha, look! You call males shameless, but look at this female vine openly embracing this male tamala tree!" So, Sri Radhika quickly covered the fresh vine with Her apron.

Thus, Radha and Krishna were immersed in a river of nectarean fun. With jingling ankle bells They entered a golden place in the middle of Vrindavana, where there was an eight petalled lotus flower made of rubies on a jewelled platform, with gems shining like the sun, the lightning and the moon. When that lotus flower appears in the minds of the anuragi devotees, it creates a festival there. They consider their lives to be successful when they drink its incomparably sweet honey. This lotus flower, that showers nice rasa which is rarely obtained even by those who are after it, is situated at the foot of a desire tree, that always makes Krishna and the gopis relish their erotic festival and it is here that they attain an ocean of good fortune. The leaves of this desire tree are like sapphires, the flower clusters like diamonds, the sprouts like coral, the fruit like rubies and all the six seasons serve him, so he removes all the distress of the fair eyed gopis.

When Krishna came there and climbed on the whorl of the lotus flower with Sri Radhika, who is the whorl of the lotus-like group of gopis, the lotus flowers that decorated His ears were dangling. When the gopis opened their mouths, groups of happy bumblebees greedily began to swarm around them. Is it a steady raincloud embracing a bolt of lightning, or a bolt of lightning holding a raincloud, coming to earth to shower the desire tree with all it desired?

A parrot in this tree sang, "Aho! The tips of the nails of Madana Mohana, who enchants even Cupid, enchant millions of Cupids. And the corners of His eyes create billions of Cupids who agitate Sri Radhika by shooting their arrows at Her. Sri Radhika also relishes Sri Krishna's luster with the corners of Her eyes. Although the great sages like Sanandana and Parasara do not know the sweetness of Krishna's lovely threefold bending form, the devotees that take shelter of Vraja can hear about this from the clever words of the Suka ('parrot of Vraja' also, a reference to Sukadeva Goswami, the speaker of the Bhagavata Purana). The sweet nectar of Madhava's pastimes, that are described by this suka parrot, is rarely obtained even by the demigods. Suka, the son of Vyas, described it in the Bhagavata, which is the nicest fruit for those who took shelter of the desire tree of the Vedas. Although this nectar is precious, it thus became known to the world. O King of rasikas, Krishna, what can I say about the tenderness of Your feet? When they touch the ground, Your loving gopis shed tears of anxiety, wishing to give You shoes. When You stand in Your charming threefold bending form, You carry Your whole weight on Your left foot. Then, the profuse reddishness on the sole of that foot becomes angry and wants to leave to go to the heel. There is an indescribably beautiful line between the reddish soles and the bluish upper side of Your feet, whose honey is constantly agitating the honeybee-like eyes of the fair

browed gopis. You keep Your left foot on Your right side, so that Your heel can kiss the border of Radhika's sari, which hangs down over Her feet, with great passion. The Creator shows his skill in craftsmanship by smearing the soles of Your feet with liquid vermillion and drawing a flag, lotus flower, and so forth on them. When the housewives of Vraja see this just once, they are enchanted. You eagerly show these signs to Your beloved one, saying, 'Look, Priya! I am the Lord! Why don't You believe Me?' but still She won't give You the proper respect! O moon-like Krishna, as soon as the gopis just once see the beauty of Your knees that are covered by Your dhoti, their uncovered hearts are afflicted by Cupid's heating. O lord, seeing the beauty of Your very broad and round hips, the chaste girls of the world are shivering, being pierced by Cupid's arrows. You are sprinkled by their nectarean smiles and let them be sprinkled by the nectar from Your lips.

"Your navel is like a lake of nectar and the hairs coming up from it are like vines. There is a charming abode of flowers (or 'good hearted people') all around it. O beautiful One, Your lotus-like navel is like the abode of Cupid. How amazing! Usually the lotusflower is on top of its stem, but with You it is under. As soon as the fair browed gopis' eyes fall on this they become blind to the water flowing from them as they are pierced by Cupid's arrows. The very crafty Creator collected the essence of beauty of all the three worlds and made Your three lined belly with that. The wise men, who speak the truth, say that these three lines are joined with Your middle like no other man's waist. When You stand in Your threefold bending form, it looks very beautiful, as if Your very thin waist bends to the lest out of fatigue of carrying the burden of Your broad chest. When You stand in Your threefold bending form, the right side of Your middle shows navalilata, lowness and weakness of the three lines, and the left side puskalavalitva, or nourishment and strength, because it is now able to carry Your bodily weight. Your belly, which is more beautiful than a soft banyan leaf, blows up and falls in along with Your breath, and in some romantic moments it is the stage for moon faced Radhika's jewelled necklace. The vine-like mark of Indira (Laxmi) on Your chest looks like a golden stripe on a grinding slab, and the very thin hair vines showing the footprintt of Bhrigu Muni look like the fibers of a lotus stem. The Srivatsa sign on Your right chest and the Laxmi sign on Your left chest look like golden and pearl necklaces reflected in a shining sapphire mirror.

The great passion within Your mind comes out in the form of Your Kaustubha gem, which shines like hundreds of moons and suns, pervading the whole world with a reddish glow. The housewives desire to be embraced around their necks by Your arms when they drink the sweetness of Your beautiful neck that has three soft, slightly crooked lines on it, with their eyes and thus they lose their patience. The sproutlike fingers on Your lotus like hands that adorn Your arms, that defy the beauty of snakes, make Your murali flute drink the nectar of Your lips, even if they only slightly dance on its holes. Your lips are sprinkled with drops of the nectar of Your smile and are worshipped by the shining peaks of Your teeth. Although they are known as adhara (insignificant), they are not adhara in their attachment to You. How can they not defeat the bimba fruits in comparison? If the fresh sprout of a sapphire tree was connected with the bubbles of the blackish water of the Yamuna on each side, I could worship Your nose with some kind of

analogy! The gopis became blind to the glistening of Your makara earrings that's reflected on both Your soft cheeks as they swing against them while hanging from Your fresh, sproutlike ears, that are at equal height, as it shines in their eyes. Your eyes make the fish, the wagtail birds, the lotus flowers, the cakora birds, the bumblebees and other items successful with mere drops of their natural humors like playfulness (the wagtail birds), attractiveness (the lotus flowers), truthful target (cakora birds) and good taste (the bumblebees). Although Your eyes follow the Vedic injunctions (or 'they extend to Krishna's ears'), they have become mad and began to destroy the vows of all the chaste girls, becoming great debauchers like the honeybees, being immersed in a swelling ocean of constant passion (anuraga).

"Which girl will not shiver from passion when she even once sees Your halfmoon-shaped forehead, which is surrounded by Your curly locks and which is carried by Your eyebrows, that are like Cupid's bows that shoot halfmoon flower-arrow glances at them? These are not Your hairs, but the whisk of king Cupid, that is made of the fibers of lotus stems marked with musk and erotic rasa. These fibers became crooked because of their association with Cupid. The moon of Your sublime glories, that pervades all Your limbs, becomes embodied in the soft smile that appears on Your face and that illuminates the mind of even Lord Brahma and other Lords of the universe with their rays. O life of all the fishlike gopis of Vraja! O enchanter of the world! Thus I praised You. But how can I praise Sri Radhika, the queen of Your life, who enchants You with even a mere drop of Her luster?

The expert Creator collected the very red downward lotus flowers smeared with liquid vermilion (Sri Radhika's feet), a golden quiver for Cupid's flower arrows (Her shanks), two jewelled boxes (Her knees), two downward pointed banana trees at equal height (Her thighs), a well of nectar (Her navel), the sky (Her waist) surrounded by three circular waves (Her three-lined belly), a lalita leaf with a series of Cupid's lines on it (Her pubic hair), two inseparable pomegranates (Her breasts), lotus stems (Her arms) with sprouts (Her hands), a conch shell (Her neck), banduli flowers (Her lips), fresh buds of the kunda flowers (Her teeth), a sesame flower (Her nose), blackbees (Her curly locks), fresh sprouts (Her ears), a full autumn moon (Her face), clouds with the thin drain of the Yamuna (Her hair), to make the young desire play vine named Sri Radhika.

"O Goddess Radhika, I offer my obeisances unto Your toenails, whose rays defeat the shining of the moon! When You shyly bow Your head when You come before Hari, He can still see Your face reflected in Your toenails! When You sit on the Yogapith (a meeting place in Vrindavana), Lalita, who stands on the east, uses a lotus flower to whisk away the honeybees that come to Your lotus-like face. South of Lalita stands Tungavidya and north of her Indulekha, who is playing her vina. South of her stands Visakha, and on her left stands Chitra, who waves a whisk to evaporate the perspiration that arises on You from Your ecstasy of seeing each other, from Your faces. Northwest of You is Rangadevi and her younger sister, Sudevi, is on Your southwest, wiping the tears of love from Your eyes with with her apron, while she cries from love herself also. West of You stands Champakalata, who very blissfully puts betel leaves that shine brighter than the

sun, into Your mouths. These girls that try to cross over the oceans of Your forms and pastimes drown, because of carrying the big mountain of love in their hearts and they become afflicted. Can my voice possibly describe these countless girls who are grasped by the crocodile named Cupid and whose position is coveted even by Kamala (Laxmi) and Adrija (Parvati)?"

In this way, the expert parrot turned pale while he described Sri Radhika's glories and his voice choked. So, Madhava told Vrinda, the keeper of the Vrindavana forest, to reward him with some juicy grapes. This suka parrot became very fortunate to be praised by the gentle and friendly sakhis like this. He passed the test (pariksit) by describing Radha and Krishna's (bhagavata) sweetness, just as Suka muni described God's (bhagavata) sweetness to king Pariksit in the Bhagavata Purana. After the parrot fell silent, Sri Radhika began to play Her vallaki vina, holding it in Her lotus-like hands as Krishna held His hamsika flute in His lotus-like hands. It was as if They wanted to defeat each other in expertise in singing and playing music! Their music turned water into stone and stone into water. That's quite normal, but even the hearts of the munis in Satyaloka, that were absorbed in non-dual vision, melted and poured down on earth. That was most amazing!

After some time, Radha and Krishna entered a jewelled abode and most happily sat down there on a love bed, where They fulfilled the wishes of Lalita and her sakhis by submerging beneath the waves of the ocean of Cupidity. With great skill the maidservants then made sashes, earrings, necklaces and crowns of flowers, a flower bed, a canopy and a whole cottage of flowers, as well as different kinds of vines, trees, deer and birds for their Master and Mistress. Radha and Krishna sat down, and Their maidservants served Them tasty fruits and roots from the forest there, along with betel leaves.

Thus ends chapter twelve of Srila Visvanatha Cakravrti's "Krishna Bhavanamrita Mahakavya," called 'Wanderings in the Forest.'

### Chapter 13 Radha and Krishna Drink Honey (10:48 a.m. - 3:36 p.m.)

Again, lotus-eyed Krishna wandered through Vrindavana forest and after a while He came to the Hemanta forest (the season in November-December). The paths that were shaded by thick trees to protect Him from the summer heat were now morose out of separation from Him. The Hemanta season looked just like Hari's union with the gopis, who have big buttocks, because now they covered their bodies with clothes from the cold, just as they covered their bodies in an unfavorable mood when Hari wants to make love with them. They scream and shiver from cold just as they scream and shiver when Hari wants to make love with them, and they keep their knees together from cold just as they keep their knees together in an unfavorable mood when Hari wants to make love to them.

Krishna told Radha, "Sakhi, the moonlit nights in the Hemanta season become longer and the sunlit days become shorter. The sun's rays now grow weaker, so Your lightning-like body starts shivering from cold (or 'lust'). O lover, I can not describe the greatness of the cold that brought You to this condition. Quickly enter the abode of My heart, which is a suitable shelter in the cold seasons, being warmed up by my eagerness for You. Here You can give up Your stunned condition, which was caused by the cold."

Saying this, Krishna pulled Radhika close to Him with His arms. Although rasika Radhika said, "No! No! No!" She was firmly and forcibly embraced by Priya Krishna, who kept Her at His chest. Because Her waist firmly rubbed against His waist, Krishna's sash loosened, and His flute that He kept there, fell on the ground as if it was angry.

Lalita picked it up and told it, "O hard, cold, flute! Although your only quality is the beauty of your song, you are full of faults! O disturber of the world, now you shall get your just dues!" Then, she hid the flute in her braid. Sri Krishna, the flutes master, did not notice it out of erotic intoxication. When Sri Radhika thus wandered through the Hemanta forest with Vihariji (Krishna, the enjoyer), Vrindadevi, the keeper of the forest, most joyfully presented Them with small wintercoats of crimson, tawny, blue and golden colors.

Krishna said, "O beloved One, these red amarantha flowers carry the color of Your heart's passion for Me, the yellow jhinti flowers carry Your bodily complexion, the blue kuruntaka flowers carry the color of Your heart's erotic feelings for Me. Wouldn't this garland of fresh flowers increase My desires? O lady, look at this orange vine! She's so proud that she won't even hide her fruit in Your presence. But, if You just slightly open Your blouse with Your finger and show her Your orange-like breasts, that vine will fall into an ocean of embarrassment!"

Hearing these words, Sri Radhika smiled gently and showered Krishna with the nectar of Her sidelong glances. Then, They came to the forest names Sisra sukhada, the forest that gives joy in the winter, where the lotus flowers are happy always to receive the rays of the sun from the sky. The sun is the enemy of the Vindhya mountains, so Durga, who lives in the mountains, asked her father, Himalaya, to send his snow soldiers there to defeat the sun. Seeing them chasing him, the sun fearfully fled to the direction of his son Yama, the south. Later, he will be strong enough again to return northwards and to fight the cold, but at present he is afflicted by these attacks.

In this way, Krishna, the friend of the women, moved about with great fun. He saw some kunda flowers and in great joy began to pick them to decorate Priyaji with. Seeing this, Sri Radhika smiled, covering Her face and pulling up Her nose. Then Krishna said, "Radha, why are You pointing at Me to Your sakhis, covering Your shy, smiling face, that suggests disgust?"

When Sri Radhika failed to reply, Lalita came up before Kundalata and told

Giribhrita (Krishna), "All the people of the three worlds praise You as Punyashloka, One who is praised with nice verses. Now why are You so eager to touch this flowering Kunda vine (or 'menstruating Kundalata')? You are her long desired object, so she cannot refuse You. She has become very much afflicted by Cupid's arrows.

Kundalata said, "Lalita, where in the world are there such pure women as you? You have given up all household duties like a headache! Now you are vainly looking amongst the vines." When she said this, everyone laughed loudly.

Sri Radhika said, "Sakhis! There is only one Kundalata amongst us, and she is in great fear. But we're just speaking of a kunda vine and this made her so angry! The spotless sakhis can now ascertain why."

While Krishna heard Radhika's ambrosial words, that are not heard even by the Vedas, He came to the forest named Vasanta sukhada (giving joy in the spring time), where the mango trees are dripping from top to root with drops of honey, that makes the earth very happy. Krishna said, "Here the trees are householders and the vines their wives. They're holding a great charitable festival on each auspicious day. That's why the papabhrita and other birds happily return to them every day to keep themselves alive. Here, Cupid is the king. The spring is his minister, the Mayalan breezes his general, the honeybees his spies, the pika birds his punishers, the gopis are to be punished and the mountain caves are the jails. Look, O Lady! Has Govardhana become the king of all mountains, destroying their enemy Indra? The great mountains like Meru and others have now hidden their giant forms and are worshipping him with their luster. The Ganga flowing from Govardhana's golden table lands (Manasi Ganga) make him look like mount Meru. The snowy splendor of his caves make him look like the Himalaya. His high peaks that want to block the sun are like those of the Vindhya hills, and the silver boulders that form Our thrones make him look like mount Kailasa.

"Sakhi, this Rasathali named Parasauli is where You enjoy the Rasa dance every night. Let Us rest here for a while on the jewelled platforms." When They did so, Vrindadevi, the keeper of the forest, brought Hari His honeywine. When Sri Radhika looked into the silver cup to see how sweet the honey was, She saw Priyatama's face reflected in it and began to drink the nectar of His face, considering it to be sweeter than the honey.

She said to the Creator, "Vidha, how many times haven't you been cursed by the gopis, whose minds were burning in the fire of anxiety, for creating the bashfulness that witholds them from looking straight at Krishna's face? But now that you made this honey in which we can see Krishna's face without obstacle, our minds are no longer burning in the fire of agony, but attained the pinnacle of ecstasy, instead! We praise you a hundred times for this!"

Krishna said, "Sakhi, now You forcibly drink the nectar of My lotus-like face! I don't know what the drinking of this honey will do to You. Hearing this, Sri Radhika became annoyed with Krishna, as if He had removed the reflection of His

face in their glasses by drinking the honeywine. Krishna held the glass with honey under Sri Radhika's lips and said, "Drink, drink drink!" but Radhika raised Her eyebrows, smiled, and said, "No, no, no!" turning Her lotus-like face away. However, with playfully moving glances, Krishna forced Her to drink. He also forced Lalita and her sakhis to drink, so that their eyes turned reddish, their garments loosened and their intoxicated state destroyed their shame. Then the sakhis made each other drink, also. Sri Radhika became confused and dizzy from intoxication.

In their intoxicated state, the gopis said, "Why does the su-su-sun fa-fall from the sk-sky? Wh-why du-does the er-earth t-t-turn? Wh-why do the te-trees da-da-dance? D-dear One, pr-protect me!" Saying this, some gopis hung on Krishna's shoulder, some on His arm, some at His chest and some on His back, while their veils fell off and their hair loosened. Krishna, having all His limbs pressed upon by the gopis' big breasts, embraced them all tightly with His arms. The gopis then forcibly kissed Him, restlessly bending their sweet necks. How many times was it that the maidservants did not try to stop their giggling by covering their mouths?

Krishna told these maidservants, "O fickle eyed ones, look what your mistresses are doing! They're all joining together to defeat Me, whereas I'm but alone! It's improper of them to rape Me like this! It is My great fortune that you're not helping them."

Then Madhumati came and handed Krishna a cup of honey to make Him drunk, and Krishna accepted it with bent hand. Again and again He made the gopis drink, saying, "Di-drink, di-drink!" He held the drink to His mouth but He bit on His lips, so that none of the wine came into His mouth. In their drunken state, the gopis wondered, "Is it day or night? Are we women or men? Are we dressed or naked? What should we do?" with unordered speech. Krishna pointed at them, showing the maidservants.

Tulasi manjari asked Krishna, "Dear One, why don't You drink any honeywine?"

Krishna said, "Tulasi, I constantly drink the honey of their golden faces that are reflected in My glass. Can't you see? My body is studded with drops of perspiration! Just come and serve Me by softly fanning Me."

But none of the kinkaris came close by, afraid that Krishna would rape her, so clever Krishna took the cup to His mouth and pretended to drink. Then, He made His eyes turn red and roll as if He were drunk, as He was practiced in doing that, and He made His limbs slacken so the manjaris smilingly approached Him. Then clever Kundalata closed the gates of the cottage and Krishna stopped the kinkaris from escaping and drank the nectar of their lips. Then Cupid personally began to dance, twanging his bow as he saw the kinkaris prohibiting Krishna, saying, "No! No!" Again and again Krishna drank three kinds of honey - from cane, from flowers and from ground cane and He made the kinkaris drink also. The maidservants, being protected by Krishna's drunkenness, began to fan Him, thinking that the pearls that were scattered over His body after His erotic battle

were sweat drops of fatigue. The sakhis that had not drunk the honey out of great ecstasy of giving wonderful jewels of their love to Hari, became amazed to see that the moon of wisdom of the drunken gopis was getting slightly freed from the eclipse of ecstasy that was caused by drinking the honey of sweet erotic rasa.

Thus ends chapter thirteen of Srila Visvanatha Cakravrti's "Krishna Bhavanamrita Mahakavya," called 'Radha and Krishna Drink Honey.'

#### Chapter 14 Radha and Krishna's Water Play Pastimes (10:48 a.m. - 3:36 p.m.)

As lotus eyed Krishna wandered through the forest called Nidagha Subhaga (the beautiful summer) He saw Madhumangala and asked him, "O friend, why did you leave Me to go to the forest of sweet mangos and jack fruits all alone?"

Madhumangala said, "Friend, You think You're such a great rasika (knower of mellows), so today I will argue with You. Tell me, what is rasa? Let the brahminical dvijas (or 'birds') of the rasa shastras ('the scriptures on rasa' or 'the blooming mango vines') witness our discussion. O friend, the cowherd girls can purchase Your heart with the mere movements of their eyes and You wander in the barren gardens of unfolded jasmine and malati flowers with them, but still You call Yourself the greatest rasika and so do the people, because they always consider a worthless person to be qualified. I make my belly an ocean of flavor by filling it up with the juice of mangos and jack fruit, but still You consider me to be tasteless. O proud One, You can call me tasteful, like You, if I can hungrily wander from forest to forest. O friend, Your Vrindatavi is full of varieties of fruit that are rarely available within the three worlds, and You are fond of rambling there. The whole world knows that. But You are not interested in the flavors arising from this Vrindavana! Nothing else but that can give me sorrow.

Krishna replied, "O brahmin boy, don't wander in the forest as an arasika (tasteless person)! I wander around in Vrindatavi because the cold water pleases My tongue on the summer days, the touch of the lotus flower pleases My skin, the fragrance of the sweet jasmine flowers pleases My nose, the fresh, red palasa leaves please My eyes and the sweet cooing of the pigeons pleases My ears. Thus, all My five senses experience top most bliss!"

Madhumangala said, "Krishna, these ripe mangos please all my senses at once. They give joy to my eyes with their emerald-like splendor. Their juice pleases my tongue with its ruby-like taste. Their fragrance gives joy to my nostrils. Their softness pleases my skin and their name pleases my ears! They always increase the desire of my senses."

Vrinda said, "Madhava, look at this effulgent forest near Radhakunda, which is like a new jewel on the crown of the three worlds, protecting Your pastimes with Sri



Radhika. Even the greatest poets are unable to find the proper words to describe it."

Radha and Krishna were very enthused by Vrinda's words, that worked on Them like the ambrosial moon rays that made the waves of Their desire swell. So, They went to Their kundas (Radhakunda and Shyamakunda), that are the abodes of Their pastimes, and whose waters are filled with divine mellows. Of these kundas, Radhakunda is the foremost. It is surrounded by the kundas of Lalita and the other sakhis. Lalita's kunj is on the north. Visakha's on the northeast. Chitra's on the east. Rangadevi's on the southwest. Tungavidya's on the west and Sudevi's on the northwest. The forest maidens always maintain these kunj, making gates of flowers and jewelled mirrors there. Radha and Krishna always swing here, or play Holi, flowerball games, hide-and-seeek and watersports on the banks or in the waters. They relish hundreds of kinds of fruit there that defeat the taste of nectar. They play dice, dance, joke and relish the poetry of the parrots. Sri Radhika became manini (angry and proud) here and Krishna breaks that pique. This Radhakunda is the abode of all auspiciousness and the enchanter of everyone's eyes. All four sides of the kunda have jewelled steps and jewelled bathing places (ghatas) on each side of which there are jewelled platforms shaded by delicately peaked roofs. Each ghata has trees on either side, whose branches hold ropes with swings hanging on them. In the middle of the kunda is Ananga manjari's island, which is connected with a bridge to the northern bank of the kunda. Sri Radhika is immersed in bliss to lay Her sister to rest here with Krishna in a moonstone cottage.

Between the east and southeast of Radhakunda is a golden bridge which connects it with Shyamakunda, the abode of all playful sports that is famous like nothing else in this world. Around this kunda are the kunj that are accepted by the cowherd boys, like Subala. When lotus eyed Krishna stood on this bridge with His dear ones, they saw that the peacocks were dancing on the shores with spread out tails, swans that were agitated with love pangs were singing in the water and swarms of bumblebees buzzed around in the sky.

Seeing these extraordinary things, Krishna said, "Radha, look! The pikas, tittibhas, chatakas, swans, sukas and haritakis all join together, singing their own songs. Here we can hear all the six seasonal birds together at the same time! Look at the great festival of the young bees by Your pond. In the spring they drink the honey from the blooming, new, mallika flowers. In the summer they drink from the soft jasmine flowers. In the monsoon from the yuthika flowers. In the autumn from the lotus flowers. In the hemanta season from the kuruntakas, and in the winter from the best kunda vines. They're like householders with many wives whom they enjoy according to the season.

"O fair limbed One, the hundreds of high branches of the trees that stand on all four sides of Your kunda meet each other, covering Your pond in such a way that the sun cannot touch the water even in the daytime. The wind enters through the four open kunj gates like a beggar to beg some of the fragrance of the lotus flowers. The honeybees become angry at that and they chastise him, saying, 'bham

bham!', but still the wind does not give up its softness. Radha, all the beauty of the kunda reminds Me of You. Just as Your lotus-like face always blossoms, Your kunda is also filled with blossoming lotus flowers. Just as You have restless, young, fish-like eyes, Your pond is filled with restless, young, fish. Just as Your soft, sweet smile emits waves of foam of abundant, subtle sweetness, Your pond is also filled with a lot of sweet foam-waves. Just as Your charming braid swings like so many wandering honeybees, Your pond is also covered with humming bees, and just as Your breasts look like chakravaka flamingos, Your pond is also filled with playing chakravakas. The kunda also shines as bright as You do."

Krishna then compared Radhika to all the holy rivers, saying, "Radha, You are the Surataranghini (the Ganga is the river (tarangini) of the gods (surah) and Sri Radhika is a lady (rangini) enjoying erotic play (surata)). You are Bhanuja (the daughter of the sun is the river Yamuna, and the daughter of king Vrishabhanu is Sri Radhika), sometimes Saraswati arises in Your words (Saraswati is a river and also the goddess of music, sound, learning and speech), You are My only Narmada (giver of joy or holy river of the same name) and You appear as Bahudamsa ('keeping Your arm (bahu) on My shoulder (amsa)' or the holy Bahuda river), but in Your kunda You are fully manifest to Me. Thus, O nicely thighed One, the holy rivers are purified by Your ghana rasa ('water' or 'erotic mellow'), like the lightning illuminates My deep, cloud-like (ghanarasa) form." As Krishna said this, He held Sri Radhika's hand, that had jingling bangles, with His own hand. Sri Radhika laughed at this with humor (rasa).

Vrinda devi said, "O Krishna, that place with whose water You want to wash Your limbs is not a pond, but a hilly ground of stone-like unfavorable moods! You won't be able to bathe there, leave this place, O moon of Vraja" and loosened Krishna's hand from Radhika's hand, taking Radhika to the place where She could change into bathing clothes. Krishna followed Her there, and peeped at Radhika through the holes in the foliage. When His honeybee-like eyes fell on Her lotusbud-like breasts, Sri Radhika suspected Him to be spying on Her. She anxiously looked in all directions and covered Herself with a thin garment.

Krishna and the gopis pulled each other into the water, like restless vines blown into the water by Cupid's gale. Then, the gopis, who are fond of ghanarasa ('erotic mellows' or 'Krishna') began their fight in the ghanarasa (water). They relished Krishna's beauty and Cupid relished their bodily beauty. The gopis stood in the water in a circle, holding hands, making breast-like waves by softly slapping the water. Krishna stood in the middle of that circle like a sapphire whorl of a hundred petalled lotus flower, smiling brightly and beautifully.

The gopis said, "O killer of Aghasura! O You who never gives up His vow! Those breasts that You were always so eager to see and touch, polluting the housewives, have now automatically come up from the water. It's Your good luck that they have become so easily available now! Now bless Your eyes by looking at them and bless Your hands by touching them."

After hearing these shameless words, that destroyed the patience of the Cupid-

elephant, from the mouths of these otherwise shy girls, Krishna said, "So be it!" and placed His hands on the gopis' breasts and on the breast-like waves in the water. Then He asked the gopis, "Is this a breast or is this (wave) a breast?"

When Krishna touched their breasts, the doe eyed gopis at once broke their circle and fled in all directions. Kundalata, who was standing on the shore, made her restless, fish-like eyes play in that water scene, and, being eager to witness Radha and Krishna's water fight, said, "Hari! You are a waterfall of beauty and so are Your lovers, so just spend some time fighting in the water and when You are defeated, perform the act of offering praise to the victors."

Krishna said, "What did you say, Kundalata?" Then Kundalata turned the tenses around, making Krishna active in defeating the gopis and passive in praises, being praised by the gopis as the victor.

Hearing this, the gopis said, "O Madhava, now under Your influence, Subhadra's wife, Kundalata, has reversed the tenses, after Saraswati made the true words arise in her."

Krishna said, "Alright. When you win you, you will experience the bliss of accepting forced kisses from the defeated One. Is this why you desire victory? And if by chance I am defeated, then where will I run to find peace?" Then Krishna asked Nandi, "Nandimukhi, what should be the stake for this water fight?"

Nandimukhi said, "O enemy of Aghasura, it is written in the smriti shastras that if a rich man is defeated in a game the victor can take his wealth and bind him up, also!"

Krishna said, "O Nandimukhi, we are rich people. Our bangles, armlets and anklets are our wealth. If I am defeated, then the gopis may take that and if I defeat them, I will take their ornaments and bind them up in the ropes of My snake-like arms!" Hearing these words, the gopis frowned with eyebrows that were like beautiful, flickering bows, and admonished Nandimukhi with so many shouts. The gopis surrounded Krishna, holding each other's fingers and throwing water at Him with the sides of their hands. It looked as if they shot water arrow of love at Him from red lotus quivers. Krishna faced all the gopis of the circle and wandered around with light steps, defeating hundreds and thousands of them by splashing them all with water, as if He threw Cupid's darts at them, making them fearfully flee.

Madhumangala, standing on the edge of the kunda, saw this and cried out, "Hee hee! The gopis surely were defeated! Now these vainly proud girls are fleeing, hiding their wealth! Take all their ornaments off and give them to me. I will sell them in the city of Mathura, so that I can buy my very dear Sitopala sweets!"

Hearing this, Lalita chased him, saying, "O crooked one, just wait, just wait!"

Then Madhusudana forcibly entered the cage of the lotus-like gopis' arrow-like

glances and began to drink their nectar. He took off all their jewelled ornaments, that jingled, as the gopis loudly cried. Hearing that, the cuckoos and the peacocks also increased their sound volume. Krishna began to fight Cupid's battle with the gopis, first hand to hand and then nail to nail. Shame and fear drowned in the waves of the pond as Krishna and the gopis kept each other bound in each other's snake-like arms. Then, after three or four seconds, they let go of each other again to pick lotus flowers from the pond and throw them at each other. Krishna then took away the gopis' blouses, ornaments and veils, so that they shone with erotic sweetness. Their bellies looked like banyan leaves moved by a soft breeze.

With faltering voices, they asked Nandimukhi, "What is this?" as they covered their exposed breasts. Wet locks of hair stuck on their faces, through which it seemed that they were not lotus-like girls, but beautiful generals of king Cupid, giving great fear to moon-crested Shiva for being bound up with their ropes.

The gopis asked Nandimukhi, "What is this Nandi? Why do you let us play such immoral games with this boy who has no manners?"

Then, Nandimukhi asked Giridhari, "Why are You doing such immoral things?"

Krishna boldly came up to her, and smilingly said, "O Nandi, after I won the water fight I went to collect My prize and I smelled the golden lotus flowers that were surrounded by honeybees. I didn't smell the gopis' fragrance. I felt couples of chakravaka birds with My hands, but not the gopis' breasts! Tell Me what offense I committed!"

Nandimukhi laughed and said, "Hari, You speak the truth, and it is shown by the gopis' anger towards You, for their lips are bitten and their breasts are scratched by You!"

Krishna said, "O Nandi, never trust these gopis! They are baskets full of deceit! They did this themselves. And even if I had done it, then I was not aware of it. It's only a very small offense. There's no fault in what I did. These housewives did not loudly forbid Me to touch them, saying 'This is not a golden lotus flower. It is my face. And these are not chakravaka flamingos, but they're my breasts!' Now why are these proud girls so angry with Me?"

Nandimukhi said, "Krishna! O gopis! Stop quarrelling! There's no need to play for stakes. Let me see instead how nicely you can play music on the water!"

Hearing this, Krishna and the gopis began to slap the water with their hands, playing nice rhythms and music. When this sound, that defeated the rumbling of the clouds, echoed on the shore of the kunda the chataka birds began to wander around, the peacocks began to dance like mad, with their tail feathers spread out, singing, 'ke ka', and Madhumangala began to slap his armpits and danced along with them, exclaiming his 'hee hee!' When the trees on the shore of the kunda heard this, they showered streams of honey into the water a tears of love and the honeybees praised them. Krishna and the gopis, who are oceans of divine rasa thus

completed their water play and came back to the edge of the kunda, where they were instantly served by their maidservants. Radha and Krishna entered a jewelled temple, where Vrinda, the keeper of the forest, served Them savories, jack fruit and other various kinds of fruit that tasted sweeter than nectar. With love, Radha and Krishna fed each other and then They were engaged by Cupid in tasting the nectar of each other's lips. After They thus completed Their water play, Radha and Krishna again played, but now in the pond of the full nectarean sweetness and beauty of each other's every limb. And when They grew tired of that, They fell on a soft bed of flowers where the maidservants serviced Them with betel leaves, water, mirrors and dresses, fanned Them and massaged Their feet. Then They fell asleep.

Thus ends chapter fourteen of Srila Visvanatha Cakravrti's "Krishna Bhavanamrita Mahakavya," called 'Radha and Krishna's Water Play Pastimes.'

## Chapter 15 Radha and Krishna Play Dice and Worship the Sun God (10:48 a.m. - 3:36 p.m.)

Sri Radhika told Lalita, "Sakhi, just as an elephant plucks lotus flowers, Krishna has forcefully defeated us in the fun of honey drinking, water play, swinging and so on. These are all power games. Lalita, now think of a game we can play that requires some brains. Thus we can swiftly diminish Krishna's pride!"

Lalita said, "Radha, You are Yourself the moonlight for the lily-like dice game, so, O proud girl, what can the darkness of defeat do to us? It won't give us any sorrow."

Being thus advised by Lalita, Radhika told Krishna, "O Mighty Prabhavishnu! O Dearest One! Why don't You accept the challenge of the dancing girls of our desires to defeat You in the clever dice game?"

Krishna replied, "Do You make the dancing girl of the desire to defeat Me really dance in Your heart? But when the king of victory sits down on the throne in the palm of My hand, that dancing girl will swiftly perish!"

Hearing these words of Aghari, restless-eyed Radhika ignored Him with a slight wink of Her vinelike eyebrows and had the dice game board brought by Sudevi. Nandimukhi sat on Krishna's side as witness and Vrinda on Radhika's side. Kundalata conducted the tossing of the dice, Madhumangala advised Krishna on the desired score and Lalita advised Radhika on this. First, the dice stones danced on the stage of Sri Radhika's red lotus-like palm and then they leaped up and down as they fell on the table. Bakari's eyes submerged in the high waves of beauty of Radhika's breasts and armpits, but because He was experienced in holding and tossing the dice, He was not disturbed or contaminated even slightly. Has Sri Radhika become Jayasri, the goddess of victory, throwing Her stones with the right score, sometimes saying 'dasa dasa' and sometimes 'vidu vidu'?

Hearing Radhika say, 'dasa dasa', Krishna said, " Priya, You have thrown vitti, not dasa! You must be jokingly asking Me for dasa (or damsana, for Me to bite You)! Now where is Your talk of victory?" Sri Radhika held Her stones in Her corner and Krishna, who was unable to take His stones from Her corner, thought of a way to spy on Her and out of eagerness to win, began to play by having His stones struck by Her.

When clever Radhika defeated Krishna by throwing the right score, the tender sakhis became very harsh and said, "O Madhumangala, why are you bowing your head now? Where is your shouting of 'hee hee', your dancing and your efforts to sell our bangles to buy Sitopala now?"

Sri Radhika said, "O sakhis, this brahmin boy is fond of Sitopala, so go get some white (sita) stones (upala) from the top of Govardhana Hill and shower his head with them. Let him relish the taste! A-re! Why are you quiet now? Now all your brahminical qualities of muni dharma like tolerance, patience, peace and gravity become manifest!"

Then, when Krishna lost His Kaustubha gem in the next throw, the sakhi's said, "This gem has touched many gopis breasts. How can he be worn by our dear sakhi? It should be swapped for a bangle or purified by washing it many times." To humiliate Krishna, the sakhis said, "This is not the forest for tending cows and killing Bakasura, Vatsasura and Putana! This is a dice game in which clever people's intelligence is tested in the assembly. This Saraswati stream of the sakhis' words uprooted the tree of Madhumangala's cleverness.

Fearfully, he told Krishna, "Friend, give me the Kaustubha gem. I have some work to do. O Son of the King of Vraja, if the gopis attack You when You are alone, then I'll tell Queen Yashoda and I'll let her bind them up with the ropes of punishment and throw them in the dark cave of embarrassment!"

Krishna said, "Damn you, fool! Why are you so afraid? Look, I will defeat them. Don't be so stupid as to announce My defeat with your panicky gestures!"

Madhumangala angrily replied, "Even when I speak for Your benefit You become angry! Then let the Kaustubha be taken from Your hand. I'm going! Let these young girls play with You and make You dance around."

With a wink of His eye, Krishna got the support from the assembled sakhis and falsely spoke, "O assembly, I've defeated these whimsical young girls, but just see their harshness."

The assembly of gopis said, "Krishna, if You win, then why didn't You say anything when the gopis attacked Madhumangala?"

Krishna said, "I was astonished!"

Visakha said, "I offer my obeisances to Your eyebrows and Your crooked glances that are like women that became our enemies by ruining our chastity. Now they are demonstrating the falsity of Your words, becoming our sakhis and making us happy, though."

Nandimukhi said, "Give us Your Kaustubha gem, Madhubhidi!", and smiling Kundavalli took it from Aghantaka's chest and hung it on Sri Radha's chest. Then Krishna's reflection fell in the Kaustubha gem on Radhika's chest.

Then Kundalata said, "O Krishna, how beautifully You are reflected between Radhika's breasts! Out of great love this king of jewels keeps You on the breasts of Your beloved One."

While tears rolled from His eyes, Giridhari told His own reflection, "Blesses, O blessed you are, Pratibimba. You are the all beautiful Krishna. I'm simply your reflection. I always desire to be where you are now, between Sri Radhika's breasts!"

Sri Radhika, seeing Krishna's beloved face reflected on Her bosom, cursed Her blouse from stopping His touch and Her shyness for stopping Her from looking at Him. She was stunned and immersed in bliss.

Kundalata then said, "O oceans of rasa, play again! This time, put Your embraces at stake."

So, They played again and Krishna, who won by cheating, became eager to collect His prize. When Radhika resisted, Mukunda said, "O proud girl, why do You frown and contract Your body? I have won by proper means! Although You are sukala, or naturally generous, You have become such a miser, now."

After Krishna collected His prize, They played again, putting kisses at stake. This time Radha won, showing great impudence. Krishna smiled and kept His cheek close to Radhika's lotus face, saying, "Sakhi, I'm defeated in this assembly. Collect Your prize of kisses."

Hearing this, Sri Radhika and Her sakhis looked at Him and laughed, covering their mouths with their veils. When the laughter calmed down somewhat, Sri Radhika said, "O brave boy, I did not defeat You!"

Then Krishna said, "So be it!" and repeatedly kissed Her cheeks by force.

Radhika angrily told Kundalata, "Kaundi, darling of your cousin-in-law, after ascertaining this dirty prize you are laughing. Why don't you play with Krishna?" and stopped playing.

Wide eyed Kundalata said, "Sakhi, now I play for Krishna's flute and Your vina. This time You will win this dice game."

Then, Radhika indeed won. So She said, "O Krishna, give Me Your flute." Krishna felt in His sash, but He could not find the flute. So, He asked Madhumangala where it was.

Madhumangala said, "Where am I, a wanderer of the forest for so long, and where are You, roaming around here like mad, just for fun? Where am I, religion personified, and where are You, attached to gambling, drinking and women? Your Kaustubha gem is already lost. Now You also lost Your enchanted weapon, the flute. Now You can blissfully sing the 'ri ri' song with Your mouth, wherever You go!"

Lalita said, O noble one, well spoken! Now that the flute is gone, how will your friend attract the gopis into the forest? And, how will He pass the time? You're in big trouble!"

Madhumangala said, "What do you say, Lalita? You alone have love for Krishna and you alone are merciful to me. O blessed one, you will have to solve this poor brahmin's problem." Hearing this, the fair eyed gopis laughed.

Lalita angrily said, "O twice born one, she who accepts you as priest and gives you the divine remnants of offerings to Durga, that Chandravali, the friend of Padma, mounts your shoulders and comes into this kunjia to relieve the erotic affliction of your friend, Krishna."

Krishna said, "Lalita, stop joking and tell Me where My flute is!"

Lalita said, "How do I know?"

Krishna said, "Lalita, you are My shelter! Did your friend, Radhika, steal it?"

Lalita said, "Vishnu!! No one of us steals other men's property!"

Krishna: "Then did you take My murali when it fell from My sash while we were swinging?"

Lalita: "Madhava, I swear on the sun that I did not take it."

Krishna: "Then did you steal it while we were drunk?"

Lalita: "Acyuta, I swear on Lord Vishnu that I did not take it!"

Krishna: "Then did you take it while we played in the water?"

Lalita: "O lotue eyed One, I swear to You I did not take Your flute."

Krishna: "Then where has it gone?"

Lalita said, "O assembled sakhis, behold this fun."



Kundalata said, "O cousin, You lost Your flute during the dice game! If You cannot pay Your prize now, Radhika will bind You up with the ropes of Her vine-like arms and bring You to King Cupid. What argument do You have against that?"

Nandimukhi said, "Radha! Aho! If You bind the son of the king of Vraja with these ropes, we cannot bear to see His suffering. So spare us and just take His yellow scarf."

Madhava told Madhumangala, "Friend, you have studied astrology, so look in your charts to see who took my Murali?"

After some study, Madhumangala said, "Krishna, Lalita took it!"

Lalita said, "O crooked one, I didn't do it!"

Then Giridhari said, "Alright, then open your blouse and your braid and let Me see. Otherwise, what fear would I have (to look for it Myself)?"

When Lalita heard this threat, her garments shook and Hari came up to her, held her braid and opened her blouse with His nails, which made her wink at Him, towards Radhika. Thinking that Radhika had the flute, Hari then went to Her, but Radhika winked towards Visakha. Then, coming to Visakha, she again hinted to Him towards other sakhis. Which gopis blouse was not ripped open in this way?

Then one forest nymph came and said, "Jatila has arrived in the Surya temple!" Hearing this, the gopis at once gave up their blissfull sports and went to see Jatila with fearful eyes.

Seeing Radhika, Jatila asked Her, "O daughter, why are You so late?"

Sri Radhika said, "We went to bathe in the Manasa Ganga."

Jatila: "Why didn't I see Kundalata there?"

Radhika: "She went to get My priest."

Jatila: "Why didn't she come here all this time?"

Radhika: "Look, there she comes with the priest!"

Then Kundalata came with Krishna, who was dressed as a brahmin boy and told Jatila, "Today I couldn't find a brahmin boy anywhere in Vraja, even after a long search. But now I've found this disciple of Garga muni from Mathura, who knows all sciences. Even the scholars and the intellectuals praise this boy as the best of brahmacharis. Very eagerly I've brought Him here! Please accept Him as priest for your daughter-in-law"

Jatila told the priest, "O best of brahmins, simply on seeing You I feel blessed! Engage my daughter-in-law in worship. Then, all my desires will be fulfilled."

Krishna, who wore a white robe, who kept a book and darbha grass in His hands, whose eyes were peaceful and whose sweet voice could embody the songs of the Sama Veda, told Jatila, "O old one, although it is improper for a brahmacari to look at women, I will nevertheless help your very chaste daughter-in-law, whose body is covered with garments, to worship the sun (or Me), who fulfills all desires."

Krishna pronounced a blessing and told shy Radhika with the lowered eyes, "O chaste girl, accept Me as the performer of the service of the Lord of the day, the sun, Mitra (Your friend, Me). Now collect Your paraphernalia and remember Mitra, please him tremendously. I will pronounce the mantra 'om jaya sarva vyapakeshwara' (glory to the all pervading Lord) jagaddhitakarini (the benefactor of the world) bhaskara (the Radiant One) iksana tamonuda (the destroyer of the eyes' darkness) sasvat padminigana vikasaka (who always causes the lotus flowers, or the gopis, to blossom) bhano dharmadaya (O sun, who grants religious merit) paramartha savitre (O transcendental sun) kamadaya (fullfiller of desires) mahase astu namas te (all obeisances unto you, O Great One!)"

Jatila said, "O best of brahmins, My son, Abhimanyu, will give You millions of cows! May You live long and free from trouble! I pray for this boon for You."

Aghasatru (Krishna) said, "So be it."

Madhumangala said, "I will recite prayers to the sun god," while his eyes fell on the ample food offerings.

But, Jatila said, "You fool! Friend of a debaucher! What are you doing here? This charming bluish boy will do the puja for my daughter-in-law every day from now on!" At the end of the puja, Jatila gave gold in charity, but Hari did not accept it, so Madhumangala took the gold and ate the food.

Krishna told Radhika, "O most chaste girl, just say bhavaste namah (homor to the effulgent One), do parikrama (walk around the temple in a circle) and offer Your obeisances with Your head on the ground."

So Radhika did so, Her heart filled with sentiments towards His ambrosial cleverness. But while She offered Her obeisances, Krishna's flute fell out of Her braid, making a sound like 'thanat!' But She didn't realize it.

Then Jatila said, "What is this, what is this ?!", took the flute and shouted, "hum! hum!" with reddish eyes of anger, chastising doe-eyed Radhika like a snake.

Sri Radhika said, "Arya! Today this flute just fell from the slope of Govardhana Hill! That's where I got it from. Because it gives Me so much trouble, I wanted to throw it into the Yamuna. Why are you so angry?"

Jatila said, "O polluted, lowborn girl! You're always trying to cheat me. I will tell the assembly of elderly gopis about You and we will consider a suitable punishment for You and that lusty boy."

Krishna said, "O old one, why are you angrily shouting at your daughter-in-law? I don't understand. I'm your benefactor, so tell Me everything frankly, even if it is embarrassing."

Jatila said, "Arya, o son of a brahmana, do You know the king of Vraja?"

Krishna said, "Yes, he is famous even in Mathura Puri!"

Jatila: "He has one son..."

Krishna: "Yes. He has killed Aghasura, Bakasura and Kesi! I know Him"

Jatila: "Listen, He has the tendency to wreck the gopis chastity. There's no one, except my daughter-in-law who's managed to remained pure. He attracts them with the enchanting songs of His flute into the forest, where He...Om Sri Vishnava Namah!"

Hearing Jatila's words, Krishna smiled and said, "Really? What is this flute like? Give it to Me!" He took it in His hand and looked at it as if He'd never seen it before.

Jatila said, "Arya, O expert One! If You like, You can take this jewelled flute with You, out of Vraja, to Mathura. Let the chaste girls here be fixed in their family duties. Now, if You will follow me, I will quickly return to my home with my daughter-in-law. O ocean of qualities, please come here every day to do surya puja for us. Be kind to Your devotee and her daughter-in-law."

In this way, the nectar vine of Aghari's pastimes, that pervades the three worlds, blossoms in Vraja at midday. I have picked the flowers that are very dear to the fair eyed gopis and that Cupid uses to make arrows that pierce their hearts. Anyone who is pierced like that becomes happy in Krishna's company! After Jatila honored Hari, who was clad as a brahmin boy, she went home with Radhika and Her sakhis. Krishna also went home, holding hands with His dear friends, occasionally looking behind Him to see Sri Radhika, until He had returned to His cows and cowherd boy friends.

Thus ends chapter fifteen of Srila Visvanatha Cakravrti's "Krishna Bhavanamrita Mahakavya," called 'Radha and Krishna Play Dice and Worship the Sun God.'

(3:36 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.)

Although She was fixed in Her love for Her dearest Krishna, Sri Radhika lost Her patience when He vanished from the corners of Her eyes, that were like His abode and looked like spotless lotus flowers. Then afflictions like sorrow forcibly attacked Her heart, entering it to break it. As She was afflicted by the disease of separation from Her Pranapriya, Her sakhis tried to cure Her with the medicine of their consoling words, but all was futile. Sri Radhika experienced a second to last a millennium, Her parent's home to be like a waterless well and Her shame to be like a net as hard as diamonds. Although Her sakhis served Her as was proper by repeatedly smearing Her body with sandalwood paste, lotus pollen and camphor, the heat of her afflicted body made these substances dry up and then they had to apply them again. Just then, Chandanakala, one sakhi who was excited by divine love, came before Her.

The sakhis asked her, "Where do you come from?"

Chandanakala said, "From Vrindavana."

Sakhis: "What for?"

Chandanakala: "On the order of queen Yashoda!"

Sakhis: "What was that order?"

Chandanakala: "To engage Radhika in quickly cooking something for Krishna and to bring it to her."

Sakhis: "What is Krishna doing now?"

Chandanakala: "He's playing different ball games with His friends."

Krishna said, "A-re Sridaman, what are you saying? Don't you remember that the stories of My glories bust open your ears, and that I almost crushed you with My boltlike arms, wielding a rod? If you desire your own welfare, then you should get out, right after hearing about our fight.

Sridama said, "Sridama, who is famous for his power, has been victorious and will remain victorious, that can be seen on Your shoulders (Sridama sat ther after defeating Krishna, Bhagavata Purana 10.18.24), but You still diminish Your own glories by showing Your restlessness with Your angry and proud face? You're so proud of killing these demons, but for no reason. The brahmins killed Putana with their mantras, and did You enter Aghasura's body alone, or what? And if You say, 'I lifted Govardhana Hill', then I'll say it went up in the air by itself, being pleased with our Govardhana puja! Why are You so proud?"

"O sakhis!" Chandanakala said, "in this way Krishna became very enthusiastic to

fight with His friends, who worshipped His splendid rays with millions of hearts by sprinkling Him with the nectar drops of their proud words. Being love personified, He spent some time with two or three of these friends on the bank of the Yamuna." In this way Chandanakala saved Sri Radhika's life by throwing Her Fishlike heart from the dry land of separation from Her Priyatama back into the nectar river of Krishna consciousness by telling Her stories about Him. Then, she told Radhika that queen Yashoda, whose heart was moistened by affection for her son, Krishna, had ordered Her to cook a meal for Him.

Before cooking, Sri Radhika was ornamented with sixteen sweet akalpa ornaments: a bath, garments, ordure of sandalwood paste, tilaka, a lotus flower, makari pictures on Her cheeks, footlac, flower garland, braid, pratisara amulet, ear ornaments, eyeliner, nose pearl, drop of musk on Her chin, flowers in Her hair and betel leaves. Then, there are Her twelve abharana ornaments, namely Her crest jewel, graiveyaka neck ornament, anklets, keyura armlets, sash with bells, hoop earrings, regular earrings, bangles, necklaces, anklebells, finger and toe rings.

After being thus ornamented, Sri Radhika eagerly said, "This afternoon seems to last like a thousand millennia and still the day is not over, yet. This deceitful Creator made this afternoon just like a rod to crush my insect-like heart." Then, She began to cry streams of tears and Her face wilted with sorrow.

Lalita then quickly found a remedy by bringing Radha upon the watchtower, saying, "Radha, come out of the sour ocean of Your sorrow. Look at the dust thrown up by Krishna's cows there in the east!"

Sri Radhika said, "O auspicious One, this is not dust, but camphor powder to cool off My afflicted eyes, entering from afar. Or is it a medicine to revive My bird-like life airs, that had come up to My throat, bringing it back to My heart?" Just then, a cool breeze blew from the east, so Sri Radhika said, "Lalita, I'm very fortunate that this merciful eastern wind that carries the sweat drops of your beloved One is reviving Me! This wind is not only in name, but also with its qualities the life air of the world. O sakhi, is the loving son of the king of Vraja remembering My miserable condition of separation from Him, quickly coming towards Me now, Keeping His cows in front of Himself? How can He move swiftly when His gait is naturally slow like that of a lusty bull? And how can He come closer while He's on the distant foot path?"

Lalita said, "Radha, why are You so sad? Your lover is almost here now! He wears spotless tilaka and has restless curly locks hanging over His forehead that is surrounded by humming bees. The fragrance of His tulasi garland pervades all directions and He destroys all Your sorrow with His slightly lowered crimson turban with a peacock feather stuck in it. He does japa of His cows' names, according to their colors, on a jewelled mala, calling them by name, 'Hee hee Pinge. Dhumre. Dhavali. Sabali. Syeni. Harini.' and counts them, eventhough they are innumerable. In this way, He soothes Your eyes that are burning with the fever of separation from Him. Radha, listen to the sound of His flute, that attracts all the girls of Vraja from their homes and that causes Cupid to arise in their hearts. Let's

deceive our superiors and go to the garden to pick flowers." So, Radha quickly followed Her sakhis downstairs, Her patience being diminished by Her eagerness to see Krishna..

Hearing Krishna's flute, Shyamala sakhi said, "Sakhi Bakulamale, you don't have to decorate my ears with flowers anymore. They are already decorated by the song of Krishna's flute! Let me go, I fall at your feet. I will be cooled off only by the Krishna-cloud. There's no need for me to put blackish mascara on my eyes, because blue mascara Krishna is coming from the forest to relieve the affliction of my eyes!" Saying this, Shyamala threw off all of her ornaments and quickly came to see Sri Radhika.

The doe eyed gopi group leaders (yutheshwaris) said to each other, "Bhadra, don't delay! Chandravali, give up your sorrow and look at Krishna. Dhnaya, give up your complacency. Kamala, quickly come out of your house! Pali, why are you still feeling sad? Quickly come and be revived by the nectar of Hari's beautiful limbs."

To facilitate Krishna's meeting with His dear ones, Balarama, Sridama and the other boys went ahead of Him to Nandishwara with the cows that were calling their calves with their mooing and that ran ahead to meet them. The boys then entered Nandishwara to lift their mothers out of the ocean of their sorrow. When Krishna slowly entered the village (Yavat or Barsana) He threw the slender gopis into a whirlpool of erotic bliss with His restless, lazy glances. His flower garland swung on His chest and He was playing ball with the gopis' flowerball-like minds in which the ocean of His youthful, natural beauty was swelling. With His luster, Krishna made the roads look like forests of blooming blue lotus flowers and the gopis' bee-like eyes feasted on the sweet honey of these lotus flowers. Krishna's anklebells jingled loudly as He slowly moved on into Gokula with His dear friends.

Seeing this, Shyamala said, "Sakhi, there's no need to proudly hold onto your shame. Radha, Varada Pasupati has come! Look at Him with the bee-like pupils of Your lotus-like eyes. If You worship Pasupati like this, You will find relief from the onslaughts of His enemy, Cupid. Such auspicious opportunities are rare."

Sri Radhika replied, "Shyama, quickly run there and worship this Mahesha by offering Him your two soft lotus buds. O fair faced one, if your desires are fulfilled in a moment through this worship, I will be submerged in an ocean of bliss and nectar."

Shyamala said to Lalita, "Sakhi Lalita, Don't lie to me. Why did this young honeybee leave the blooming vines, and why is he dizzy?"

Lalita said, "Sakhi Shyama, it's true! This young honeybee fell on the incomparably fragrant malati vine and cannot move anymore."

As Radhika and Shyama's discussion cooled off Krishna's ears like a stream from a pond of love, Sri Radhika's blossoming, lotus-like face, with Her dancing, wagtailbird-like eyes, hid in the blossoming vines again, after having once been

seen by Krishna's eyes.

Anxiously, Giridhari thought, "Aha! The thirsty chakora bird of My eyes only stuck out its beak to drink the nectar of the rising moon. A-re Creator, you big offender! Damn you for taking this nectar away, again."

Sri Radhika thought, "O Lajja (shame)! You don't have to leave My whole body. Just leave the corners of My eyes for a while, so I can just once lick the nectar of Krishna's face. O cloud of bliss, be pleased with Me. Don't obstruct My vision! O Cupid, I fall at your feet. Don't make me shiver anymore." Then, She repeatedly told Herself with love, "How will I be so bold to lift My eyes just once to look at Krishna?" Just then, Her sakhis cleverly pulled at Her from a vine kunj, bringing Her into Krishna's sight. Sri Radhika looked at Krishna with anxious eyes. How amazing! As the red Saraswati stream of Krishna's glances became one with the blue Yamuna stream of Radhika's glances, they turned as white as the current of the Ganga. The Triveni, in which Radha and Krishna's elephant-like hearts thus united also caused the lotus flower of the gopis' eyes to blossom. That is also amazing! Thus the rasika couple, Radha Madhava, became stunned on the road. Seeing this, Radhika's sakhis anxiously took Her home and Krishna's sakhis also took Krishna home. These helpful friends consoled Them, promising Them that They could meet again after sundown, so that They would not faint from misery. Then, Sri Krishna, who is the embodied spirit of parental affection and the external life of His mother and father, came home. Upon seeing this, Visahka sent Tulasi manjari off to queen Yashoda with Krishna's favorite nectar pie.

Sri Radhika said, "Visakha, this shameless womaniser wants to put His hands on My girdle. He forcibly attackc Me here on the road. Did you see that, O curious one? Although I cried out loud, that ravisher of maidens wouldn't let me go! Quickly call Jatila and bring her here."

Madly lamenting in this way, Sri Radhika became weak. She shivered and perspired out of affliction and when She opened Her eyes, She was astonished to find Herself lying on a bed of flowers. Just to defeat Cupid's onslaughts, She asked Her sakhis with a faltering voice, "Where is My dear One? What am I doing here? Is this house Priyatama's flower garden or the house of My superiors? Is it evening, morning or night time? Am I asleep or awake?"

One sakhi said, "O lotus faced One, You have left the garden and come home. Your Priyatama also went home after playing with You in the kunj. He's now soothing His parents' intense affliction of separation from Him! He will come later to make Your lotus-like eyes bloom again."

The lake of Vraja, that had dried up from the severe heat of the sun of separation from Krishna, was now again blissfully filled up by the ecstatic showers from the Krishna cloud that made the lotus like faces of the Vrajavasis bloom up with satisfaction once more.

Thus ends chapter sixteen of Srila Visvanatha Cakravrti's "Krishna Bhavanamrita

Mahakavya," called 'Afternoon Pastimes.'

Chapter 17  
Evening Pastimes  
(6:00 p.m. - 8:24 p.m.)

While Krishna entered the meadows, the demigoddesses in the sky said to each other, "Sakhi, the sun and Krishna are both friends of the lotus flowers and they are both effulgent, but Krishna, being heavy or valuable, stays on the earth, while the sun, being light or cheap, hangs in the sky with its yellow light. The Creator is a big fool trying to compare them with each other. Is there anyone who would compare a mustard seed to gold? The sun shines only in the day, but Krishna shines day and night. The sun is merely visible to the eyes, but Krishna showers the eyes with a stream of transcendental bliss. The sun only reveals moving and nonmoving beings, shedding his light on them, but Krishna reveals the religion of sacred love, love for Him. The sun has harsh rays, but Krishna's soft rays are like an ocean of sweetness. The sun has a thousand go (rays), but Krishna has billions of go (cows). The sun only removes the material darkness, but Krishna removes the darkness of maya (illusion). The beauty of the sun is sometimes covered by the clouds, while Krishna's beauty defeats that of a cloud. The sun is unable to remove the lady loves' fear of the upcoming day by placing his kara (rays) on their chakravaka-like breasts. He redeems them from distress in name only, but Krishna is really the best boat for the gopis to cross over the ocean of their love pangs when He places His kara (hands) on their chakravaka-like breasts.

The earth is surely blessed by the sunrise, but this same sun also sets again, whereas Krishna blesses the earth with the touch of His lotus feet day and night. At the end of the day the sun goes to the gavadishwara (eastern) asa (direction, and Krishna, who is a mine of incomparable qualities, goes to fulfill the asa (desires) of His gavadishwara (parents, the masters of the cows), going out of the sight of us unfortunate demigoddesses." The sun experienced this kind of chatter from the devis (demigoddesses) like nectar to his ears. "He's really a fool to think that they speak about him when they see that Krishna goes to the east! He falsely thinks himself to be so fortunate and attractive."

When Krishna strolled through the streets of the town, He was showered with flowers moistened by the tears of the demigoddesses that stood on the roofs on both sides of the street, and when He looked up, all the fair eyed gopis thought, "Krishna is looking at me!" and shivered with the highest bliss, praising their own fortune. When Krishna entered His parents' livingroom, He merged into the nectar ocean of their affection, while the sun sank into the salt water ocean as a penance to attain Krishna's audience once more.

Even cool things like lotus pollen, fragrant usira grass, camphor, sandalwood paste and lotus flowers were not able to bring down Gandharvika's hot fever of separation from Krishna. Just then, one sakhi came from Nandishwar and began to



sprinkle Her earholes with drops of the nectar like stories about Krishna, being ordered by Lalita.

Doe eyed Radhika came back to Her senses, got up and carefully asked her, "Sakhi, today My utterly afflicted desert-like ears are blessed because they experienced a wonderful nectar shower in My dream that cooled them off and made them happy."

Lalita said, "O fair faced One, Tulasi manjari has come from the house of queen Yashoda to Shower You with nectarean stories about Your lover. That's how You woke up."

Lotus eyed Radhika then told Tulasi, "Tulasi, glorify My Priyatama's qualities before the assembled sakhis."

Tulasi said, "When Krishna came to the town gate and father Nanda saw Him, Nanda extended his arms and embraced Him. Father Nanda's body was stunned and studded with goose bumps of ecstasy as he took Krishna on his lap. Together, They shone like a beautiful, blue lotus flower in a lake on Mount Kailasa. Nanda baba slightly removed Krishna's turban to smell His head and showered Him with his tears of love. He covered Krishna's face with his face, so that they looked like a spotless autumn cloud covering the moon who removed the heated affliction with his cool rays.

"Queen Yoshoda spent the evening in great distress, walking out of her house onto the palace courtyard and back again, her face dried up from different worries about her son's delay in returning home. Suddenly, she saw her beloved boy and her eyes emitted a Yamuna-stream of tears and her breasts a Ganga-stream of milk. Stunned with ecstasy, she embraced her boy and asked Him about His welfare. She was not able to see Him properly because her eyes were filled with loving tears. Then, Rohini, Balarama's mother, performed a charming arati ceremony for Krishna by waving small golden lamps, which held burning wicks, and then placed Him on His mother's lap. Is Krishna like the moon, sitting on the lap of His birth place who is like a nectar ocean of parental affection? Is He the king of love-jewels, sitting in His own mine, or is He a sapphire ornamenting a doll, tinted blue by His effulgence, smeared with the musk of nectarean affection, placed nicely on her lap by fate?

"Although Krishna already sat on His mother's lap, Yashoda was still stunned with ecstasy, so Krishna affectionately told her, 'O mother, I'm already sitting on your lap! Why don't you look at Me instead of showering Me with your tears?' Saying this, He wiped the tears from her face with His own hand, making her happy like a female swan on a lake. With her breast milk, mother Yashoda washed the cowdust from Krishna's body, and lovingly fondled Him. Seeing that there was no end to Yashoda's ecstasy, that flew from her like incomparable waves, Vatsalya Laxmi, the goddess of affection, brought her back to her senses and engaged her in caressing Krishna's body with her hands and engaging her maid servants in anointing and bathing Him.

"Yashoda melted with affection as she told Krishna, 'Vatsa, O abode of pure love, I was very worried when You were in the forest tending Your cows! O moon faced One, you're not even slightly kind to me. O child, lotus of Your family, You don't take Your mother with You into the forest even once. O merciful One, although a very long day has passed and although Your father repeatedly tried to take You home, and eventhough Your friends could not tolerate their fatigue, hunger and thirst anymore, You still did not come home. Why should this mother continue to maintain her hard and useless life'

"Madhu mangala then said, 'Mother, my very whimsical friend Krishna was merged in an ocean of playfulness with His balali (boyfriends or girlfriends) and forgot Himself, what to speak about you? I'm His only superior, O mother! If I didn't control Him, then Krishna wouldn't be home yet!'

"Queen Yashoda said, 'Well spoken, Bato! Every day I see nail marks on Krishna's body, but these balas just don't listen to my prohibition! Every day again they forcibly scratch His body, that is more tender than a blue lotus flower, while they wrestle with their arms! Alas! What should I do to stop these naughty boys?'

"Radha!" Tulasi continued, "after hearing this conversation, I was ordered by Queen Yashoda to do my scheduled duties. Then Rohini went to the kitchen, while mother Yashoda fondled Krishna along with Purnamasi, Kilimba, Mukhara, Gargi and all the rest. After bathing, Krishna was dressed in His usual yellow garments and His hair was bound in locks on the sides of His forehead. He was smeared with sandalwood paste and adorned with a Vaijayanti garland of forest flowers. Then they put on His waistbells, necklaces, armlets, bangles, the Kaustubha gem, earrings, anklebells and spotles tilaka. Then Balarama, Madhumangala and the other boys came and mother Yashoda seated them all. Blissfully she served them nice sweets, scented cold water and three kinds of food (to be chewed, licked or sucked on). While they were eating, she said, 'O boys, these dishes are very dear to you!' and served them the five kinds of cakes, like sidhukeli, that You cooked. Their five senses merged into the ocean of the nectarean fragrance, softness, taste and forms of these cakes.

"While eating, Madhumangala said, 'O mother, whoever is so fortunate to smell these cakes loses his taste for the heavenly planets or liberation. Curses on the Creator for not giving me an unlimited belly! I call anyone who says, 'No, thank you.', while this is being served, an offender!.' Radhe, after hearing these jokes from Madhumangala and after joking with him, Krishna finished His meal and took rest for some time, chewing betel leaves, with His mother's permission. Then, I came here to see You."

Saying this, Tulasi untied Her apron and gave Radhika some Krishna prasad (leftover food from Krishna's plate). Sri Radhika and Her girlfriends had their ears sprinkled with Tulasi's nectarean Krishna stories and their tongues with nectarean Krishna prasad that were like two rivers that cooled them off and made them happy.

When Sri Radhika heard that Krishna had gone to the barn to milk the cows, She left home on the pretext of taking Her evening bath and came to the garden on the bank of Pavana Sarovara (in Nandigram) where She climbed up on a wonderful watch tower with Her girlfriends. Here She could drink the ambrosial beams of Murari's moon-like face with Her chakora bird like eyes and find great bliss.

She said, "Are the golden strings that tie the pearls to Krishna's turban, that stands on His curly locks that cover His face, slightly swinging? Or has the sun, the swallower of darkness, risen above the moon, winding the stars on the string of His rays with the restless lightning? Krishna's earrings, that restlessly swing on His cheeks and that destroy the darkness of the gopis chastity aren't really earrings, but two boats that dance to produce love, being unable to stay right in front of Krishna's moon-like face. Krishna's arrow-like glances, that reside above these Makara earrings, aim to pierce our minds. But, they lose their concentration on the target as they become afraid of the humming of the bees that circle over their flowers, intoxicated by drinking their honey. It is as if Cupid's carriers, the Makaras, that dance under these arrow-like glances, have tied them down.

Krishna's clear and smooth eyes have two wives named Tara (pupils) and the union of them produced sons in the form of His restless glances that attract the housewives' patience out of their abodes and polluted them. Look! The glances of that swan are like rivers of Cupidity that flow in all directions. The sanchari bhavas (transitory ecstasies) like joy, eagerness, patience, bewilderment, and so on, are like dacoits that climb on the sapphire boats that float on these rivers and that loot the flickering eyes of the gopis, that are like merchants. Sakhi, there's no mild smile emanating from the bimba fruit-like lips of Your enchanter, nor is there any honey flowing from the bandhuka flower-like lips for the honeybees of the world, but camphor water is flowing from Cupid's coral fountains, entering into our eyes! Just see!"

When Radhika entered this ocean of bliss on a wave of bashfulness as She described Her lover's moon-like face, Visakha brought Her to life, saying, "Sakhi, look at Hari's pastime of milking the cows. This sight will make You experience Jatila's sour words to be as sweet as nectar. Sakhi, look! The cows became enthusiastic when Hari called them by name, saying, 'Dhanavali, Sabali, come!', and mooing, they jumped over each other to come near Him. Krishna, being pleased with them, lightly scratched them on their backs with eyes glowing with loving tears. Look! The prince of Vraja keeps His knees on the ground, keeping a jeweled bucket between them as He milks the cows. The milk in the bucket reflects His face, which is like the moon rising from the ocean of milk. His turban was slightly loosened as it touched the cows' bellies, so that His curly locks came out from under it like swarms of bumblebees and His lotus-like eyes stopped dancing. After first worshipping Mother Earth with two or three squirts of milk, Krishna took some milk to moisten the cows' teats and His own fingers. His hands moved up and down while His milking made sounds like 'sana sana' and 'ghamsa ghamasa'.

"O moon faced One, the other cows became very anxious when they saw that Krishna had finished milking one of them. Look! Shyama's hips and thighs are marked with spotless drops of milk and the cows and calves drank the nectar of His fresh, youthful luster with tear filled eyes, keeping their necks bent. The cowherd boys called the multicolored cows after having most blissfully milked them, saying, 'Let go! Come here! Hurry up! Take them! Go!' in different words. Even the greatest poets could not count the number of cows that were as blackish as Giridhari Himself."

After milking the cows, Krishna heard indications from His dear friends about Radhika's whereabouts. So, He went to the watch tower in the garden near Pavana Sarovara, being overcome by desires for love play. On other days He may return home. On summer evenings, He swims in Pavana Sarovara to find relief from the heat. Thus, some fortunate rasika souls can be immersed in the nectar ocean of Krishna's pastimes.

"Is the sun, that destroys the darkness in the day with its thousands of all pervading, lion-like rays now swallowed by the lion of darkness in the sky, and has dissolved in it?"

Thus ends chapter seventeen of Srila Visvanatha Cakravrti's "Krishna Bhavanamrita Mahakavya," dealing with Radha and Krishna's Evening Pastimes.

## Chapter 18 Pastimes at Nightfall (8:24 p.m. - 10:48 p.m.)

Seeing the drops of Krishna's luster reflected in the mirror of the sky, some foolish people, who did not investigate any further, may say, "The moon has risen." But, this Krishna, who stands before the town gate is actually an ocean of bliss! The lotus-like gopis on the watch tower shyly covered their faces when Krishna looked up to them, while the moon was rising. Seeing this, the lotus flowers in the water closed their leaves out of embarrassment, their pride having been diminished. How foolish they were to compete with these lotus-like gopis. At twilight, when neither the king of the day, nor the king of the night reign, some citizens are happy and some are sad. Somewhere the chakora birds, seeing the moon rise, became very happy and elsewhere, the chakravaka flamingos began to cry when they saw the sun go down. Some honeybees blissfully buzzed around the blooming lillies while others remained enveloped within the closed lotus leaves.

Seeing a lamp, the darkness in the house fled into the forest, and the fragrance of the forest flowers entered into the house, like householders who flee into the forest, renouncing their fearful household life, and then returning home when their renunciation collapses. Cupid, whose pride increases at night, entered the gopis' hearts like a snake and began to destroy their patience and shame there. When the king of both day and night ruled indecisively, the gopis' awareness of their house and caste duties was lost. Then, the night removed the powerful

evening. Does the opulence of darkness ever remain for long?

In Her parental home Radhika had laid Her dearest One down on the bed of Her mind in the golden house of Her body, that She has closed off with the gates of Her eyes. Just then, Her girlfriend, Induprabha, came from Nandishwar and said, "Radha, that moonlike Krishna in whose absence You are so distressed, has no liking for any other girl but You in Your absence, and although He steals the hearts of everyone in the three worlds, His heart was stolen by You and He eagerly longs for You."

Hearing this, Visakha said, "Induprabha, the stories you're telling me about Krishna are like a shower of nectar, thirstily drunken by the chakora bird-like ears of the sakhis."

Induprabha said, "Sakhi, when the king of Vraja sat down in Nandishwar to take his supper, he seated Giridhari on his left and Baladeva on his right, looking just like Kuvera flanked by his gems Padma and Shankha.

"King Nanda invited his brothers and their sons for supper every night, and they sat around him to eat like chakora birds that were thirsty after the nectar of Hari's moon-like face. Krishna and Balarama looked like the Himalayas of transcendental bliss surrounded by mountains of love. Rohini sometimes served one, sometimes two or three sweet and light dishes. When Krishna and Balarama praised her cooking, she felt indescribably happy.

"Father Nanda and his brothers told Krishna and Balarama, "O boys, if You eat this Your bodies will be nourished, and if You eat that You'll become strong, so eat!" Krishna and Dhenukari (Balarama) ate with gusto whatever the cowherd men served Them with minds melting with affection. Again and again Nanda, Yashoda and the elders urged Krishna to eat with the gestures of their eyes, and only when Krishna ate something were their honeebee-like eyes satisfied. This was their only purpose in joining Krishna for supper. The rest was just custom.

"As Hari's friends concluded their supper with Him, their glances brought them the Nectar of His sweet lotus-like face, with which they lovingly washed their mouths. Then they all went to their own abodes, chewing betel leaves given to them by their servants. O Radha, with a smiling face Krishna lay down on a flower bed on the veranda, surrounded by His friends. Listen to what He told them out of separation from You, and how He praised Your great sweetness. He said, 'O Subala, where is that beauty that pervaded the whole meadow, that destroyed my patience and enchanted Me when I came there in the afternoon to tend My cows, followed by My cowherd boyfriends? Ahaha! Is She like nectar churned from the ocean of sweetness, waves of charming lightning strikes wrapped in garments, the personified Raja Laxmi (goddess of regal opulence), or a bunch of Champaka flower stems for Cupid? Is there a blooming lotus flower smeared with kunkum on top of this lustrous aura, or a full moon rising from the ocean of erotic mellows, I'm not sure! The glances of these restlessly dancing jeweled wagtail birds are striking and hurting My eyes. Aho! What is this? I became stunned with curiosity.

Just then, this object which was wrapped in dark clouds (a blue sari) disappeared in the vines and I could not lick it. Even the slightest awareness of this object arouses lusty feelings in Me. The peon of My heart went out to search for this object and My eyes went ahead of him to show him the way. Until now, this peon has not come back. Was he maybe caught and bound up by Cupid's dacoits?'

"Subala said, 'Aghahara, as soon as that Radhika, for whom You are searching, and who is praised by all, saw You, She rolled on the ground in ecstasy, bereft of Her patience and feeling great pain in Her heart. Streams of tears flowed from Her eyes over Her body as She cried. Seeing Her distress, the sakhis said, 'Hey Tanvi (slender girl), Mukunda has come to make You happy!'

"Radhika then said, 'Where is that ocean of rasa? Where?' The sakhis showed Her that night was falling, so the pain of separation from You was somewhat relieved, and She shyly covered up Her body."

Induprabha continued, "When He heard this from Subala, Krishna cried big tear drops of love that fell from His lotus-like eyes. His eyes were like two chakora birds that vomitted one pearl after another, that had been mistakenly eaten by them, as they took it to be lunar nectar. I was there with Krishna to serve Him and, anxiously looking at me, He told me, 'Sakhi, quickly go and tell Radhika that She should meet Me at the base of the desire tree on the bank of the Yamuna.'

"Meanwhile, the assembly of cowherds was waiting for Krishna, so He went to the performance hall to hear the sound of the mridangas and other instruments. Then He was called by His mother to take rest on the balcony of His bedroom after having been fondled by her. Then, Your incomparably clever lover managed to come to the meeting place on the bank of the Yamuna without being seen by the people. Now, You eat a little something before You deceive Your superiors and passionately go out to meet Your beloved One." After saying this, Induprabha left.

Jatila called Radhika for supper, and seeing that She was too shy to eat in front of her, she said, "O chaste girl, if You are shy, then take Your favorite dishes and eat them with Your girlfriends (bhaktas)."

Taking the word bakta to mean Krishna, Sri Radhika smiled slightly and hinted to Her girlfriends with Her glances. Gladdening Jatila with Her humility, She said, "Arya, with your permission we will take the dishes to my bedroom." Arriving there, the maid servants mixed that meal with the remnants of Priyatama's meal, so that it became as fragrant and relishable as the honey flowing from His lotus-like mouth, just as all water that is touched by Ganga water can destroy the sins of the world and is praised as such.

While eating, Lalita said, "Sakhi Radha, listen! Your superiors have fallen asleep inside the house and Your husband, Abhimanyu, sleeps far away in the barn tonight. So, let Your memory, intelligence, patience and shame sleep here on the bed, while You most blissfully go out to meet Your lover in the play kunjja. Don't be afraid to go out. Your strong love will accompany You at every step to show

You the way and Cupid's soldier will follow You to protect You. Embrace Your girlfriend named 'heart's eagerness' and go out right now! You won't feel the slightest fatigue on the way. O smiling faced One, if You fear the bites of the people's eyes, cover Yourself with a white cape, wear a garland of jamine flowers (also white), a pearl necklace and smear Your body with camphor and white sandalwood paste. If You are afraid Your ornaments will betray You, then take off Your anklebells. The slightest rays of Your moon-like nails can adorn the whole world! The Creator, seeing that the cosmic moon is impure compared to them, and simply repeats their luster, cuts it with a line of ink (a half moon)."

Being thus incited by lusty feelings through the words of Her girlfriends, Sri Radhika, who is an ocean of Matchless qualities, went out of Her home, not considering the obstacles caused by Her superiors, entering the forest like the stream of a river of great loving sweetness. Wearing an enchanted dress, She waited for Her expert and clever maidservants, who were checking out Her superiors before running behind Her into the forest. If someone asks what would happen if any of Radhika's superiors were to find out and angrily go out in search of Her, then the answer is that Yogamaya, Krishna's mystic power of illusion, being entrusted with this duty, will arrange for some solution.

As She entered the forest, passionate Radhika thought that every sound She heard was Krishna's flute, every kadamba tree She saw was Krishna, any sweet fragrance She smelled was Krishna's fragrance and whatever She saw was Krishna's form. Feeling Her braid sometimes touching Her shoulders, Radhika shivered, fixed the bow of Her restless eyebrows and asked Lalita, "Lalita, did you see that peculiar thing? Your snake-like lover placed His arm around My shoulder and forcibly embraced Me around the neck."

Lalita replied, "My dear friend, Madhava is in great need and You have become most magnanimous by giving Your heart to Him. How can I stop You, despite being a knower of right and wrong in smritibhava ('moral Vedic principles' or 'eros')? O spotless faced One, You became the greatest donor! There is one great donor on earth named Karna (indebted his life to Duryodhana in Mahabharata; also, literally 'ear'), but You lend two ears to Krishna, and although one generally donates onebali (sacrificial offering) You give Krishna three balis (the three lines on Radha's belly) during a festival of one hundred Cupids. Radha, You gave Your eyes in charity to Krishna and You thrust Your nose into the ocean of His fragrance. Now, Hari has bound Your braided hair around His neck as if it were His arm, knowing it to be His only.

Hearing these kinds of jokes from Her friends, Radhika became shy. Then, She slowly entered into the bakula forest, remaining patient, although actually Her patience was already swallowed by hundreds of thousands of arising desires.

Seeing Sri Radhika, Krishna told Himself, "Ahaha! What is this? I hear the singing of Her anklebells! Or is it the sound of a chakora bird? If these sounds enter My ears, I know that the tree of My fortune is bearing fruit."

Visakha repeatedly doubted her own eyes when she saw Mukunda embracing a young tamala tree. Quickly and joyfully she told lotus-eyed Radhika, "O fair faced One, look! Madhava is standing over there!"

Hearing this, Sri Radhika thought, "How many times haven't I seen this tree before? This is not my lover, but a tamala tree." How amazing is Sri Radhika's loving delusion! Although She was anxious and dizzy with impatience at heart, She still thought that Krishna was a tamala tree.

Sri Radhika said, "O clever Visakha, out of eagerness to see Krishna My eyes became bewildered. Is it proper for you to joke with them? But actually, your bewildering words are right, for the spring season and the motionless tamala tree are both called Madhava."

Visakha said, Radha, I'm not joking. But I told You this tamala tree is Krishna just to console You, since You're so eager to see Him. Since You are an ocean of cleverness, You shouldn't be deceived by my words. Anyway, just be satisfied by looking at this nice tamala tree for a while."

Hearing these words of lotus faced Visakha, Hari took off His yellow scarf and covered up His jeweled ornaments for fun. Then He held out His arms like the branches of a tamala tree so that He looked just like that best of trees.

Seeing this, Visakha said, "Radha, Krishna's there in the distance, standing under a desire tree. O lotus faced One, as long as You cannot enter the bakula grove with Him, You just patiently stay here for a moment, keeping Your hand on the trunk of this tamala tree. Don't be afraid that we will leave You here, because we know that anyone who ever takes shelter of this tamala tree, will never be afraid." Saying this, Visakha left with Lalita and the other sakhis and hid between the vines to see how Radhika slowly, slowly approached the fresh tamala tree with increasing erotic feelings, falling in an ocean of astonishment and climbing a mountain of erotic bliss at the same time.

Sri Radhika thought to Herself, "How many tamala trees haven't I seen? But this tree has exactly the same luster as the prince of Vraja. I praise the Creator for making such an unlimitedly sweet immobile being. Now I will satisfy the thirst of My eyes on this being." Tears of boundless bliss streamed from Radhika's eyes as She said, "O incomparably beautiful tamala tree, how can I praise you more? You aren't just a tree, you are Sri Krishna Himself! O king of trees, shower Me with sweet honey as I most firmly embrace you. I'm burning in a forest fire of lust at every moment! Thus, I will be immersed in the waves of an ocean of sweet bliss."

Deluded by Her intense, passionate love for Krishna, doe eyed Radhika could not immediately recognise Him and She even mistook His yellow dhoti to be Her own luster reflected in the tamala tree. When She anxiously looked in all directions as She firmly embraced the tamala tree, Krishna, the Ocean of Divine Love, who had become dizzy with erotic intoxication, embraced Her in return. Then, Cupid pierced Radha and Krishna's bodies as They united and stole the very beautiful



jewels of Their minds. Thus Madhava became just like the tamala tree and Radhika like the golden vine who embraced Him. After some time, Kundadanti (Sri Radhika, whose teeth are brightly white like kunda flowers), who was kept on the waves of the erotic battle, recognised Her lover and was carried away by waves of embarrassment. She was constantly astonished at Her own matchless innocence and at Krishna's cleverness. Even Saraswati, the goddess of speech, was not able to end Her descriptions of what Radha and Krishna began to do there on the bed of flowers to make Cupid's kingdom successful, even if she had made the eyes of the witnessing gopis her guru (teacher) for a long time. Saraswati became stunned out of paramount ecstasy and cried streams of tears with a choked voice.

Thus ends chapter eighteen of Srila Visvanatha Cakravrti's "Krishna Bhavanamrita Mahakavya," dealing with Radha and Krishna's Evening Pastimes.

## Chapter 19 Radha and Krishna Engage in Nocturnal Pastimes (10:48 p.m. - 3:36 a.m.)

Out of love for Her sakhis, Sri Radhika tried to arrange for their meeting with Krishna also, so She told Him, "O Priyatama, in this forest the greatly offensive king Cupid reigns, piercing My girlfriends, who are searching for You, with his arrows."

Acyuta said, "O You who are showered with the matchless nectar of affection, You know that it is My unbroken vow to look after anyone who simply looks for Me in this forest, keeping that person in My heart. I marked Your girlfriends with My blessings (or 'with My nail and bite marks')." Saying this, Sri Hari went elsewhere and some maid servants came to serve moon faced Radhika, dressing Her so expertly that the sakhis wouldn't be able to see that Krishna had made love with Her. She looked just like She did before They united. They made a new flower bed as well, so Sri Radhika appeared as a vasaka sajjika (a girl who waits for Her lover in the nikunja).

Then, Sri Radhika heard Her girlfriends coming, and pretended to be morose. She asked them, "O where is My dear One? Bring Him here. Otherwise, what's the use of My body and My ornaments?" Seeing the bodies of Her girlfriends studded with love marks, Sri Radhika covered up Her smile and said with slightly knitted eyebrows, "Aho friends, how sad! How did your bimba fruit-like lips and Your breasts get cut like this? Did you enter a cave to catch a snake or something?"

The sakhis replied, "The snake that has bitten us is under Your control! You sent Him to us. O fair faced girl, You are famous for this in Vraja, so don't laugh vainly! Won't Hridevi (the goddess of bashfulness) stifle You when we start describing Your character?"

After Lalita said this, Krishna came on the scene and said, "Bho sakhis! Listen as I

describe Sri Radhika's wonderful, charming character. Today She came to Me and told Me, 'O Dear One, please embrace Me and take the nectar of My lips. Fully extinguish the fire of burning desire in My heart!' When I heard these words, I was submerged in an ocean of astonishment. Sri Radhika made Her patience and bashfulness sink in the deep mud of the Yamuna by embracing Me and seating Me on the bed, and after defeating Me in the erotic battle, She ran out of the kunjja. Now I take shelter of you sakhis." Sri Radhika shyly covered Her face with Her veil when She heard all this.

Lalita said, "Krishna, are You lying?"

Krishna said, "Lalita, I swear on the sun! Ask your friend, Radha."

Lalita said, "Radha, is this true?"

Radha said, "I cannot remember what I said when I was so deluded as to embrace a tamal tree!"

When the sakhis heard this, they were inundated in an ocean of laughter. Then Krishna said, "O sakhis, these solitary erotic dealings are not so astonishing. I can never forget that Sri Radhika once asked Me to shower Her with the nectar from My lips."

Sri Radhika said, "If I could get My hands on Your flute, I would enchant everyone by playing on it and lure them into the forest, making them act according to their individual natures."

Hearing this, Sri Krishna said, "So be it", gave Sri Radhika His flute, and went elsewhere with the sakhis, just for fun.

Then, moon faced Radhika dressed like Sri Hari and placed His flute at Her lips. Sri Hari, in His turn, took Her form and mood, being surrounded by Lalita and her girlfriends. Just as Krishna spoke to the gopis when they first came to Him to dance the Rasa with Him, Sri Radhika now also said, "O housewives of Vraja, you are world famous. Why have you come here today? Why are you wandering here and there? You should be more careful, being just weak girls. Go back to Vraja! Don't stay here! It is the duty of women to serve their husbands. Have you come here to look for flowers, maybe? These you can also find in your own gardens."

Hearing this, Krishna and the gopis made morose faces and began to scratch the ground with their nails, moistening the soil with their tears. They said, "O Dearest One, O very form of Divine Mellows, we are always thinking of You. Don't speak such words, O ocean of Divine Love! We are burned by the fire of lusty desires, but we will cool ourselves off with the nectar of Your moon-like face. Don't hack down the vine of our desires, that You sprinkled with the nectar of the songs from Your flute, with the axe of Your harsh words."

By showing Her sweetly smiling lotus-like face Sri Radhika removed all the gopis'

distress. Then She made love with Krishna who had assumed Her mood, words, dress and looks. Seeing the erotic cleverness of Krishna, who was dressed as vama (contrary) Radhika, and Sri Radhika, who was dressed as naughty Krishna, the sakhis submerged in an ocean of fun. They were also repeatedly embraced by Sri Radhika, who was dressed like Krishna. Seeing this from a distance, Vrindadevi, whose eyes were moistened by tears of love, considered Her birth to be successful.

Then Sri Krishna took Radha away from the other gopis to a secluded place to play with Her, leaving the gopis pitifully asking all the banyan, kadamba and other trees about Their whereabouts before they finally saw Radha and Krishna's love play through the slits of the nikunja walls, thus removing the sorrow from their eyes. Sri Krishna then took Sri Radhika with Him from forest to forest, ornamenting Her with wonderful garlands and ornaments. Then, when Radhika said, "I cannot go any further. Take Me wherever You want", He quickly left Her. Sri Radhika moistened the soil with Her tears, wailing, "Ha ha Madhava!" and then Her girlfriends came, surrounded Her and joined Her in Her lamentation, saying, "O Dearest One, come here and make us happy! We will put Your delicate lotus feet on our hard breasts, for we are afraid that these lotus feet will be injured when You tread on the pebbles and sprouts of the forest paths. Don't place Your lotus feet there!"

Hearing these lamentations, Sri Hari smilingly re-appeared amongst the gopis. His yellow cloth shone like lightning and His body shone like a blue cloud. It was as if Radha and Krishna had placed Their golden and bluish complexions in each other and these colors had made friends with each other. One gopi held Krishna's hand, another one His lotus feet, another one placed His arm over her shoulder, that shivered with ecstasy. Radha made Krishna relish the gestures of Her eyebrows, making Krishna cry.

Then Vrinda approached lotus eyed Radha and Krishna said, "Radha, You have defeated Your lover in Your delusion! Krishna, accepting Sri Radhika's grave mood, You were also embraced by Jayalami (the goddess of victory). Radha, now give me Hari's murali flute!" Sri Radhika then gave Vrinda the flute and Vrinda returned it to Mukunda, who pretended to be amazed and said, "Aho! I am Krishna, not Radha!" These clouds and lightning strikes are showering each other with joy by exchanging their colors. Then They each assumed Their own forms, and sat down on the Rasa sthali (the place of the Rasa festival) where the forest goddesses served Them.

Krishna asked Radhika a riddle, saying, "What is alive, though dead and lovingly enchants the three worlds, living in a body of nine gates, like actual embodied souls?"

Sri Radhika said, "O Hari, it is Your crooked flute, that enjoys the nectar of Your lips as its fee, that You give to her." Then, Radhika said, "O jewel of My life, tell Me, who is expert in erotic mellows, although staying in the grama ('transcendental qualities' or 'strings') and murcchana ('fainting as a manifestation of spiritual ecstasy' or 'a musical note') while singing Your glories?"

Krishna said, "Radha, it is Your vina, who defeated my murali out of envy through all her artistry, who makes Me happy with her sweetness and who has a big breast (or 'gourd of the vina') like Yours!"

Then, Sri Lalita, Visakha, Chitra and others wanted to make Krishna happy by defeating Him with another riddle, asking Him with sly gestures, "Who is known as young but also as very old, who is both bound and liberated and who is the abode of darkness, but is still very pure and crooked also?"

Krishna replied, "I am Krishna. I get entangled in all kinds of activities (lilas), but I'm also the bestower of liberation. I loosen the braids of all the girls that become attracted to Me. Although I'm the abode of all darkness (Shyama) I'm still very pure. I'm very crooked in My dealings, also. I worship the parted hair of the gopis that is loosened when we make love!"

Visakha said, "O Dear One, if You know which yogini ('girl united with her man' or 'mystic girl') is wandering on the road, wearing her vibhuti ('ashes' or 'eyeliner') as an artha tattva vistara pundit ('knower of the 24 material elements' or 'knower of one's intention') and a vishva bhava darshini ('knower of the mood of the world' or 'knower of Krishna's mind') I know that you are blessed."

Krishna said, "I praise that Priya drik ('seer' or 'fair eyed Radhika') who is ujjwalatma vedana kripardraya ('compassionate upon the living beings' or 'who is being softened by erotic feelings') attains perfection in ananga sukha ('incorporal liberation' or 'the pinnacle of erotic bliss') and on whose order I gave up all other happiness to go into the forest ('to perform penances' or 'to meet Her') to attain all bliss, which made Me become very dear to Her."

Chitra made the following riddle, saying "O Acyuta, make Yourself known to the knower of spiritual mellows by telling us what beautifies this world through a great fortune of passion, sadapavarga sadhana ('who always strives for liberation' or 'the lips') nitanta danta vighraha ('one who always controls himself' or 'one who combats Krishna with the teeth') suchipriya ('who is keen on cleanliness' or 'erotic enjoyment') and ruchiprada (who gives the taste for spiritual bliss or erotic bliss)?"

Krishna said, "How can I explain this riddle without using my tongue? So, dear sakhis, you must unite My tongue with the lips of your girlfriend, who is very eager to unite with him."

In loving anger, Sri Radhika told Her girlfriends, "O crooked friends, you can play dirty games with this debaucher yourselves. I'm leaving! Let this clown be pleased with you and sing your glories!", and chastised them with the fierce movements of Her eyebrows and index finger.

Krishna pacified Her, saying, "O chaste girl, Don't be angry or hot tempered. I will pacify You with another riddle. If You can demonstrate Your cleverness by solving

it, then we'll know for sure that You are very intelligent and are able to defeat Me."

Give Me one word whose first syllable expresses beauty, the first two the demigods, the first three something that You like very much, the first four a desire tree, and the whole five syllable word, something which pleases the ears of the sakhis!" (su = beauty, sura = demigods, surata=lovemaking, surataru=desire tree, surataruta='the sound of lovemaking')

Hearing this, Sri Radhika lowered Her lotus-like face, unable to control Her laughter, and then cleverly replied with moving eyebrows and a suppressed smile, "First, You must give Me a nice answer to My counter question, then You will find the syllables You asked for, one by one. Then You may go to Padma's girlfriend Chandravali for Your answer. First, what does a householder want (suka - happiness), what does a youngster want (rata - enjoyment), what is a beautiful musical instrument (tata), what is knowable to the ears (ruta - sound) and what do My girlfriends want to hear when they hide out in the vines (surata ruta - the sound of lovemaking)?"

Mukunda immediately said, "Surataruta!", and the sakhis glorified the victory of the jewel of young girls, Sri Radhika, relishing the nectar of Her cleverness.

Vrinda said to Radhika, "Aho! You tricked Krishna into saying the same word that You had to give to Him. How wonderful! You are unconquerable in all respects. Even Krishna cannot approach the limits of Your cleverness." Saing this, she served Radha and Krishna many kinds of garlands, betel leaves and divine ornaments. Then, seeing Krishna was eager to perform the Rasa festival, she proposed, "O Rasika, look at how incomparably expert the wind makes nice cotton-like waves of soft sand on the banks of the Yamuna. Look at the very fine ripples in the Yamuna water. The only way one can distinguish between the beach and the water are by their white and blue colors. Look! The Yamuna looks like a river of musk flowing within a river of camphor. Rather, the beach embraces Yamuna, singing, dancing and playing musical instruments, glorifying Your unlimitedly famous Rasa Lila to all the three worlds.

Sri Krishna then took Sri Radhika's sprout-like hand and said, "Come, come, My beloved One! Let Us begin Our festival on this beach, dancing the Hallisaka (a women's circular folk dance). Radha, look! Someone who is eager to witness Our many Rasa Lila's has nicely cleaned this splendid beach with silvery water. It is as if the Creator has sprinkled the whole world with white strings of powder of sweet mellows, spreading it out with a cloth to make it shine brightly. Being afraid that the thick remainder of this powder would pollute the beach, the Creator tossed it up into the sky and it became the silver moon. The spots that scattered around after this tossing became the hundreds of thousands of stars that surround the moon.

After Krishna made this poetic description, the devoted gopis enclosed Him in their circle for a while, holding each other's vine-like arms. Thus, they looked like

a wonderful, blooming golden lotus flower with innumerable gopi-leaves and a sweet blue whorl in a lake that was filled up with the nectar of Cupid's glories. Seeing this, the swarm of bee-like eyes of the demigoddesses in the sky offered prayers. Krishna and the gopis also resembled a beautiful leaf of a tamala tree of musk inside a vermilion circle on the sandalwood and camphor smeared forehead of Mother Earth. The gopis were like golden bananas growing on a field of camphor, covered by a tamal tree with a peacock feather, or like a smooth cloud that fled over the scorching rays of the autumn sun, leaving the sky to look for a cool place where it is now surrounded by lightning strikes.

Then the best of rasikas, Sri Krishna, sang 'tena tena' in the kedara tune which was touched by four marginal notes (shrutis), ornamented with ascending and descending notes and modulations like the sadja. Hearing these sweet songs, the demigoddesses and their husbands became stunned by Cupid's attacks while sitting in their vimana (flying vehicles). Even Cupid and Rati themselves became greatly deluded by the arrow strikes of the transcendental cupid, Krishna, and His boundlessly sweet songs. When Krishna stood in between each two gopis, placing His arms on their shoulders, His voice joined the voices of Lalita and the others as they danced and sang many songs. They were like an ocean of amazing artists. Then, in an unseen way, the demigods came there, performing their own activities, carefully embodying all the tunes, voices, murcchanas, marginal notes, lyrics, rhythms and claps by playing their musical instruments. Newer and newer sounds came from the vinas and mridungas, following which Aghamanthana began to dance as never seen or heard before. The mridangas played waves of rhythms - thaitatha thaiya tatatha thaiya drimiki drimiki triki triki triki triki tha - after which sweet songs emanated from the lotus-like mouths of Krishna and the gopis. While they danced, their anklebells and waistbells jingled sweetly 'jhanad jhanad' and the minds of the golden vine-like gopis were all softened by spiritual erotic mellows.

Were the gopis like goddesses of fortune churned from the ocean of supreme beauty by Cupid, engaged by the Creator in spreading his glories all over the world by showing their cleverness in dancing? Armed in a circle, Krishna and the gopis looked like Cupids japa mala (string of beads used to count the repetitions of a mantra), not with blue cloud and golden lightning beads, nor with champaka flower and blue lotus flower beads, but with erotic spiritual mellows smeared with vermilion and musk. The Rasa Lila is non-different from Radha and Krishna's love play, since the dancing with clapping hands, charming gaits and rhythms are just like erotic acts like holding the breasts, kissing and embracing.

Then Krishna sang a song describing Sri Radhika's face, "O beautiful One, Your face is the abode of natural beauty, where Your eyes are playing. My passionate mind is enchanted by its boundless beauty and erotic artistry. O dearest One, the rising of Your face takes away the joy of the moon, showing the ill fame of his pock marks. Out of fear of being ridiculed by the people, the moon considers committing suicide by drinking poison, although he is twice born. Thus his face becomes black." Hearing this, Sri Radhika also sang the glories of Sri Krishna's face, singing in the sa, ri, ga, ma, pa and dha notes and other very clever, sweet

tunes.

Krishna cleverly broke out of the gopi circle and said, "O girls, now you make wonderful dances, one after the other!" Laita agreed and began to dance wonderfully while the mridunga played 'dhiddhi dram dram dram ktut triki tha'. Then Visakha and the other sakhis all showed their skill in dancing, one after the other. Krishna relished this while swinging His head constantly along with Radhika's. He was very satisfied with the performances. Then all the sakhis gathered and encouraged Radha and Krishna to dance while they accompanied them with sweet songs. They played 'tatta dhidhi tati kata ghrighi tat tat tadhiddi tati kata ghrighit' on mridangas. These sounds came to Radha and Krishna's lotus-like faces like sweet nectar for the ears.

Then Radha and Krishna held each other's lotus-like hands and began to dance, Their jewelled bangles trembling along with their arms, shining brightly. Their moon-like faces were bathing in the luster of their swinging earrings. Radha and Krishna held each other's hands and then fell away from each other, keeping Their feet against each other and quickly rotating like that. It was as if the two golden and blue jewel wheels of the potter Cupid turned around so fast that They became one. Their braids flew around far from Their backs, looking like two beautiful circumferences. Then, when the rhythms of the dance changed, Radha and Krishna let go of each other's hands and began to dance various difficult dances separately. Hari tried to place His right lotus hand on Radhika's bosom, but She stopped Him with Her own lotus hand, as if She wanted to change the rhythm of the dance.

When Radha and Krishna stopped dancing some of their maidservants began to fan Them, some began to replace Their scattered ornaments, some smeared Their bodies with sandalwood paste and camphor while others served Them betel leaves.

How can neophytes relish this Rasa Lila with their tongues? Those people whose eyes were blessed to witness it because they were born here are also unable to describe this sweetness. Even if Prema, sacred love herself, would be the Lord and engaged some clever people to describe it, they would also be unable to do so. But if anyone would cast a glance at the place of the Rasa festival, that is illuminated by the rays coming from Sri Sukadeva's moon-like face, that lights up the whole world, he could see it on the strength of Radha and Krishna's boundless grace...

Thus ends chapter nineteen of Srila Visvanatha Cakravrti's "Krishna Bhavanamrita Mahakavya," called 'Radha and Krishna Engage in Nocturnal Pastimes.'

## Chapter 20 End of the Day (10:48 p.m. - 3:36 a.m.)

After singing all these songs and playing different nice tunes with Their amazing musical instruments, Krishna and the gopis changed Their clothes for playing in

the Yamuna river and entered a kunja where Vrinda brought Them dates, bananas, jack fruit, rose apples, mangoes and other kinds of juicy fruit. Radha and Krishna were enchanted by the nice forms and smells of the fruit, and praised them. The sakhis had brought Karpura Keli, Piyusa Parva, Amrita Keli, Sidhu Vilasa and Ananga Gutika cakes from home that Radha and Krishna jokingly relished with shining, smiling faces. Mukunda, whose teeth are as white as kunda flowers, relished the golden betel leaves given to Him by the maidservants. While chewing them, He looked like a sapphire topped by a moon that was washed with sweet mellows by the Creator, and in which stars were shining that were reddish inside.

When the moon of Krishna's glance rose, the darkness of Radhika's patience was vanquished and the lotus of Her bashfulness dried up and shriveled. But, Her erotic feelings began to bloom up like a field of ecstatic tears, just as the moon stones start dripping when the moon rises.

Krishna told Sri Radhika, "O restless eyed One, people become intoxicated with erotic feelings when they see the spots of moonlight coming through the small slits between the thick leaves of the trees that are trembling in the wind. It seems that the moon has engaged the moonlight in attending to Us here in Vrindavana. Therefore, Our friend, the wind, has caught the leaves, to swing them for Us." Sri Hari got up, held Radhika's hand, and said, "Let's rest on this very nice flower bed in this kunja of desire trees for a while." Kalanidhi held His left arm on Radhika's shoulder and brought Her to the bed where They both lay down. Then the kinkaris had their desires to massage Radha and Krishna's lotus feet fulfilled.

Two maidservants held the lotus feet of Radha and Krishna on their thighs, that were like golden seats, and worshipped these feet, offering padya (footwear) with their teardrops and arghya (hand water) with their hairs, that were standing up in ecstasy. But, this frightened them with the thought that Their tender lotus feet might be hurt by these erect hairs. They worshipped these lotus feet with their lotus-like hands, offered scents with the musk and camphor from their breasts, incense with their breath, lamps with their shining jewel-like nails, garlands with their glances, foodstuffs with their pomegranate-like breasts and a camphor lamp with their very lives, that are full of love and are mixed with the moonlight of their faces. Krishna's feet were like sprouts on the golden banana-like thighs of the maidservants, whose red lotus-like hands massaged them. Their bangles buzzed like bumblebees as they went up and down with the movements of their massaging hands. Other maidservants fanned Radha and Krishna with flower fans, as if they wanted to gladden the poets by having their descriptions of their Master's glories dancing before them in personified forms. One maidservant stood on each of Radha and Krishna's sides, serving golden betel leaves filled with camphor, nutmeg and cloves. Radha and Krishna looked like spotless, rising full moons, sprinkled with two golden vines that constantly worshipped Them with their sprouts, with Their ambrosial moon beams.

Krishna said, "Dear Radha, look! Your maidservants are very tired. They perspire and their eyes are rolling. Let them take some rest. If Your feet are still tired, then I will massage them Myself." As soon as the maidservants heard this they left the



kunja, like worshippers leaving the temple with the priests after having had their desires fulfilled. Then Krishna bathed in Cupid's holy lake, horripilating of cold (or 'erotic bliss'). His body was made shining by being washed, after which He joyfully engaged in worship, being expert in all particular religious functions of the smriti scriptures (or 'Cupid').

After bathing, Aghabid performed achaman (washing the mouth) thrice with nectar, after which He performed the regulated activities to get a body without hindrance, although He is ananga ('incorporal' or 'Cupid'). At the beginning of His sacrifice, Krishna had fixed all the directions with different paraphernalia, then He worshipped the demigods by placing His hand on a golden jewelled pitcher. He painted a moon on this pitcher and gave clothes in charity to the brahmanas. Then He became one with the demigods, smiling and riding on a wave of bliss.

[Note: The previous paragraph has a second meaning: When Aghabid stepped into Cupid's pond, His body horripilated from lustful agitation and was brightened up by it. He became eager for all the different aspects of erotic play. In the beginning of the union, He drank the nectar of contrary, unwilling Priyaji three times, and then He removed the obstacle of Her contrariness by embracing Her by force, etc. He was assured of His Priyaji's desires, that She expressed with the movements of Her hands. He made full moon shaped nail marks on Radhika's golden pitcher-like breasts, placing His hands on them, bit Her lips with His teeth, that are called dwija, like the brahmins. Then He united with His beloved, smiling and riding on a wave of bliss.]

Sri Radhika thought to Herself, "How can I make My sakhis share this happiness?" Krishna, understanding Her loving purpose, expanded Himself into as many forms as there were sakhis and enjoyed with them, too. The maidservants, who cannot live without seeing Radha and Krishna's pastimes, beheld Their play through the windows of the nikhunja. One of them suddenly said, "Sakhis, just look at Radha and Krishna's amazing condition! They bind each other's bodies up with Their arms, lying there motionlessly for a while, then again They shiver and say "Ha ha!" with faltering voices, sprinkling each other with Their warm tears. Even if They give up Their embrace and sit facing each other, They strike Their own foreheads and become thin out of distress, unable to see each other through Their innumerable tears. (They were experiencing Prema Vaicittya or 'seperation even in union'.) The high waves of Radha and Krishna's prema vaicittya obstructed Cupid's rasa from flowing through, because those that are rich in passion are easily moved by the crooked waves of joy and sorrow.

After some time, one maidservant said, "O sakhis, don't be sad anymore. Look! Now They embrace each other again and blissfully sprinkle each other with cool tears of union. Listen, Krishna tells Radhika, 'O proud, angry girl, where have You gone, leaving Me behind?' and Radhika said, 'O Dear One, why have You hidden Yourself to joke with Me?'" The dasis and sakhis giggled while they relished these utterances of loving delusion.

One maidservant said, "Why do these Two feel separation from each other? And

why do They still meet, although no one arranged for it?"

Another maidservant, speaking on the conclusions of the science of rasa, said "These clever maidservants know Their moods. When They are separate, They constantly meditate on each other and even when They see each other They think that that vision is false. When They stretch out Their arms to embrace each other, Their touch mitigates the pangs of Their separation. O sakis, this separation caused Their eagerness to meet each other to increase a million fold, and in this way, remaining stationary for a long time, it also increases the pleasure of Their union. Look! The Loving Couple, fearing separation from each other, tightly embrace each other and remove each other's clothes as if They make each other enter into each other's hearts, softly telling each other, 'I'm entering into that mind, where You are always keeping Me, to play there.'

"It is certainly proper for this enjoying couple to become one in Their embrace, since They are already one soul and one mind, but not yet in body. Is this why the wise men have quickly united Them in erotic oneness?"

"Seeing the vastness of Sri Radhika's bosom, Sri Krishna proudly thought, 'Only I am huge in this world, do these breasts want to defeat Me? I will smash their pride.' Is this why He is massaging them like that? Screams and lotus flowers, two friends of Cupid, are both abja ('born from the mouth' and 'born from the water'), so they should be friends, but instead they are enemies. Is Cupid therefor forcing them to embrace each other when Radha and Krishna are kissing? Or are Radha and Krishna's faces lotus flowers that grow in the lakes of Their bodies that are deep and filled with erotic rasa? The honeybees scream when they get stuck in between these two lotus flowers when They are united by the blowing of Cupid's gale.

"The moon that Lord Brahma created is single, not always full and has spots, but Cupid made two ever full spotless moons in the form of Radha and Krishna's beautiful faces. Have Their dark, curly locks now boldly surrounded these moonlike faces, wanting to combat them? O beautiful friend, after Krishna kissed the collyrium from Radhika's eyes, Her bimba fruit-like lips anxiously thought, 'Ahaha! Who has put ink on Krishna's lotus-like lips like a spot on the moon? Let Me take it away and put the red color of My chewed betel leaves there.' Sakhi, when I see how They bite each other's lips, I think that four bandhujiva flowers are fighting over each other's honey and that the kunda flower shafts of king Cupid have pierced these bandhujiva lips.

When I see how Krishna scratched Sri Radhika's breasts with His nails and how the pearls from Her necklace are falling on the ground one by one after Krishna broke the string. I think that Cupid has pierced his enemy, Shiva, with the half moon marks of his arrows, after binding them up with two sprout-like ropes. Seeing this, the Ganga, who falls on Shiva's head, became afraid and began to cry, her white pearl-like tear drops falling on the ground one by one. Look! The lightning is empowered by Cupid and topples the cloud after attacking him."

Seeing this, the sakhis and manjaris cried tears of loving ecstasy that showered the windows of the nikonja. The maidservants that stood outside of the kunja pulled the strings of the ceiling fan. They were angry at their tears of loving ecstasy, feeling sorry that they stopped them from witnessing Radha and Krishna's loveplays. Did the honeybees get angry at the moon, unable to tolerate his drinking the nectar of their blue lotus flowers, that they now forcibly drink the nectar of the moon? A string of pearls dances on the sunglobe that rose above the clouds to attain liberation and the golden swans on earth blissfully began to play music with the avadhuts (asocial mendicants). Others could not come on that golden ground and when Madhusudana came there, He sang sweet songs that made the vinelike bodies of all the rasika devotees melt from ecstasy. Many Madhusudana honeybees came there, being attracted to Radha and Krishna's nice fragrance, and began to sing sweet songs that made the vine-like bodies of the rasika kinkaris melt.

Crooked and foolish people wander around restlessly, attached to the fruitive activities prescribed in the Vedas that will grant them residence on the moon (or Crooked locks of hair swing here and there and become fit for decoration as they are bound behind the ears.) The Divine, ever youthful Couple who were intoxicated from drinking an unlimited amount of nectar, whose shields of sandalwood paste were smashed and that had bound each other in Their snake-like arms, were ever more eager to defeat each other through Their ever fresh desires for union. Radha and Krishna competed with each other in erotic cleverness, but Their fight ended with fatigue that brought Nidradevi, the goddess of sleep, to promptly stop the fight.

I worship Srila Rupa and Srila Sanatana goswami who brought Radha and Krishna, the King and Queen of Vrindavana, out of their hearts into this world, who revealed Their pastimes from the Vedic scriptures, and who are followed by all the anuragi (divinely passionate) devotees of the world.

I take shelter of the Sri Krishna Chaitanya cloud, who showers the whole world, making it drink the stream of His luster, that is like billions of Cupids so fair, and who destroys the darkness of the material world.

Thus ends chapter twenty of Srila Visvanatha Cakravrti's "Krishna Bhavanamrita Mahakavya," called 'End of the Day.'

Thus ends Srila Visvanatha Cakravrti's "Krishna Bhavanamrita Mahakavya," which describes the transcendental eight fold daily pastimes of Sri Radha and Sri Krishna.