

The Gopi Gita
The Song of the Dairymaids

Translated by Shyamdas
Edited by Bholi Gopi

It is those eyes

that have not looked at us.

You become guilty of murder

as we die in separation.

Preface
by Bholi Gopi

This work is an excerpt from Shri Vallabhacharya's Subodhini, his commentary on the Shrimad Bhagavatam, the portion that elaborates on the Gopi Gita (SB: Canto 10, Ch. 31). The Gopi Gita is a highly renowned song, delivered collectively by who are considered to be the gurus of devotion in Bhakti traditions, the Braja dairymaids, for they, as valiantly expressed in this song, expose various heightened personalities and temperaments that permeate perfected ways of relating to God. It is through this song of separation that frustrations, desires and humble attempts at crying out for divine presence manifest. The song unveils sacred teachings in esoteric language, including ingredients to bring forth an ultimate reunion.

It is important to note that this portion of the Shrimad Bhagavatam is considered to be the most precious, the heart of the text, holding some of the most concealed truths in Bhakti literature, if these truths can be encoded accurately into one's being. That may be difficult with a text like this, on a planet such as this, in times such as these, with a human body and brain such as these. The characters and words are seemingly describing a group of young girls with their lust-filled desires for a man. That couldn't be further from what is intentionally being unveiled here.

Could the Gopi Gita be anything that an embodied being living in the current time relate to on any level? Is this song simply an utterance from the spiritual realm, an ongoing sound, a soulful yearning, a source from which friction or conflict arise, the origin of any strong desire for any flavor of truth? Could this song be the personified energy of unconditional love manifest as embodied souls, as words, as melody, as a collective effort? Could we be on to a better track when putting it that way?

(Shyamdas would always tell me to stop with the abstract questions and just stick to the story)

So these gurus of devotion, believed to be actual spiritual beings, as well as capable of moving the forces of nature, not to mention containing the power to put God under their sway, provide a divine drama of occurrences, from dancing with God to unintentionally encouraging His absence, sparing no expense for pride, jealousy, anger, torment, frustration, longing, wisdom, talent, praise, ecstasy, and limitless hunger for what is true love.

Introduction by Shyamdas

This song is steeped in vipralamba, the state of being separated from an object of desire, a powerful scenario that fuels devotion when refined to a certain standard (ie. wanting God's presence). The Gopis' rift arose while dancing in Vrindavan with Bhagavan Shri Krishna. They became prideful and started to feel that they were the best of all women, Hari's most favored. That haughty lila fault in their natures made their Beloved disappear into their hearts.

Everything in Vrindavan

is part of a divine play.

It is all Hari's lila.

Now the swaminis attempt to find Him again, this time through a song. They have already gone through profound spiritual practices and sadhanas in previous births, thus they understand that their Beloved cannot be attained through any means. They know that when Hari is pleased, He appears. The only way to win His favor, they believe, is through devotional song. So to rectify their lila sin of pride as well as to remove any remaining ignorance, the Blessed swaminis, the Gopis of Vrindavan, begin to sing a series of lila songs. It becomes a group of 19 praises that forms the Song of the dairymaids.

In the Gopi Gita, there are 19 different groups of Gopis. They are all separated from Hari and sing a wide variety of praise. Their song cascades to their Beloved all according to their eligibility. Nineteen

different lila constitutions and songs in nineteen slokas, each passage reveals a different type of nature, a unique entrance and relationship. Equipped with different combinations of divine attributes, the blessed dairy bhaktas of Vrindavan sing their amazing tale to their absent Lord. Here in the Gopi Gita, we find two main groups of singers. Some blessed swaminis have worldly husbands yet still make love to Krishna secretly in their world. There are also other young swaminis who are unmarried to anyone. Both achieve Krishna's grace and proximity.

Those Parkiya Gopis, those who have worldly husbands yet see Krishna "on the side," have four primary types of disposition; tamasic, rajasic, sattvic, or nirguna. These attributes are further modified by secondary attributes of tamasic, rajasic, or sattvic. To understand the nature of the lila virtues of tamas, rajas, sattva and nirguna (which can be loosely translated to mean ignorance, passion, purity, and beyond material attributes) we must look to their songs and see how these gunas display themselves in lila form.

For instance, in the first sloka of this song, the swaminis pour their hearts out to Krishna. They are predominately rajasic because their song is filled with passion and intensity. They demand Krishna to appear on threat of death! But they are also colored with the virtue of sattva, for in their song their devotional purity shines through as they show full respect for Krishna's appearance in Braja.

In the next sloka, we come across a swamini who predominates in the attribute of tamas. She calls Krishna a murderer! To call God an assassin arises from the mode of ignorance, for one of the primary attributes of tamas is ignorance. Although tamasic, we can still decipher in her song the light of pure devotion. Hence, her secondary attribute is sattva.

In the third sloka we hear from bhaktas who have nothing but praise for their Beloved. They humbly pray for God's appearance and use a strategy of recounting His glories in the hopes of gaining His favor. This pure-minded approach reveals a sattvic disposition that is mixed with only sattva. Neither excessive passion nor ignorance rule in her song.

In the fourth sloka of the Gopi Gita, we encounter swamini singers who are nirguna, for they have transcended all of the attributes of tamas, rajas, and sattva. Their nirguna virtue is shown when they praise Krishna as free of all material effects. For them, God is not the son of Nanda and Yashoda; He is the timeless, inner witness of all souls.

In Lila,

there is absolutely no hierarchy

amidst tamas, rajas, sattva and nirguna.

They are equal

and all lila worthy.

Now hear about the Gopis who did not marry anyone in the world. They are beside Krishna, “without another.” They too, like the other married Gopis, sing His exalted praises. They also have varied lila natures that embody the four primary virtues or tamas, rajas, sattva, and nirguna.

In the fifth sloka, an unmarried swamini who is sattvic mixed with sattva expresses her pure devotion to Hari by calling Him the best of the clan, the fulfiller of desires, and the granter of fearlessness to those who take His shelter. No other attributes taint her prayer.

In the sixth sloka, another unmarried swamini who is mostly tamasic, yet has sattva as a secondary virtue, expresses her mood by being obstinate and demands that Krishna appear and worship them! Her prayer is tempered a bit by the sattvic virtue when she extols Krishna by addressing Him as the One who removes the anguish of His Braja bhaktas.

In the seventh sloka we find an unmarried Braja swamini who is mostly rajasic, yet also contains some sattvic nature. Her passion, a rajasic attribute, shines forth when she demands that His lotus feet be

placed upon her breasts. Her secondary sattvic virtue is displayed when she praises Krishna as the cleanser of those who are humble as well as the abode of the goddess of wealth.

In the eighth sloka, we find another unmarried swamini who is nirguna, beyond all qualities. She has, in her song to Shri Krishna, transcended the three-fold virtues of tamas, rajas, and sattva. Her pristine prayer to the Beloved praises His sweet speech as able to give supreme bliss to the wisest of seers.

Shri Sukadeva, who is reciting the Gopi Gita to the attentive King Parikshit, in the next three slokas, goes on to reveal the lilas of three other different types of unmarried swaminis. They have attained perfection through their loving devotional mood to Krishna. They all share the attribute of rajas and sing very blissfully.

In the ninth sloka, an unmarried swamini who is mostly sattvic and then rajasic, expresses the greatness of Krishna, a sattvic attribute, by saying that the stories of Krishna's lila are nectar, sung by the enlightened poets and are very purifying. Her underlying rajasic view is contained in the fact that she is not satisfied with merely Hari's tale but needs Him to appear before them!

In the tenth sloka we hear the voice of a tamasic Gopi who is mixed with rajas. She is tamasic because she calls Krishna a "swindler." To call out to God using objectionable names is at best, tamasic. Her passion for His laugh and loving looks embodies her rajasic mood.

The eleventh sloka is sung by swaminis who are rajasic-rajasic. They experience anguish, a rajasic attribute, because they are concerned with their Beloved's welfare as He wanders through the forest of Vrindavan.

The twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth slokas are sung by swaminis who have worldly husbands. They are all influenced by the mood of rajas while the Gopis who sing in the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventieth slokas are all under the influence of tamas.

In the twelfth sloka, the Gopis who sing are influenced by the attributes of tamas and then rajas. Seeing Krishna appear at the end of the day brings intense emotion to their hearts. Their mood contains both elements of the passion-filled rajasic mood as well as of the infatuation of the tamasic element.

In the thirteenth sloka, the Gopi singers are purely rajasic mixed with rajas. Their rajasic appetite for love has fully arisen in them and again they request Krishna to put His feet upon their breasts.

In the fourteenth sloka, sattvic Gopis who are mixed with rajas call out to their hero Krishna. In their sattvic mood they call Hari the “remover of affliction” and comment that the sound of His divine flute makes men forget all other worldly things. On the rajasic side, they request for the nectar of His lips.

In the fifteenth sloka, the Gopis who sing are sattvic mixed with tamas. Their pure sattvic separation makes a moment appear like an age while their tamasic nature is shown when they call Brahma, the creator, a fool for giving them eyelashes, “Doesn’t he know that they obstruct our view of Krishna?”

The sixteenth sloka is sung by pure tamasic Gopis who curse Krishna and call Him a deceiver for leaving them in the forest at night. The seventeenth sloka is sung by rajasic Gopis mixed with tamas. Their intimate talks with Krishna give rise to rajasic passion while their tamasic influence is shown in their enchantment with Him.

The Gopis who sing the eighteenth and nineteenth slokas are not like the tamasic-tamasic married Gopis who sang in the sixteenth sloka. These two groups have not married in the world and are sattvic with tamas and then rajasic mixed with tamas.

The Gopi who sings in the eighteenth sloka shows her sattvic nature by saying that Krishna’s appearance is promising for the whole world and destroys the transgressions of the citizens of the Vrindavan forest. Her tamasic bhava is shown when she refers to the sickness of their love-torn souls, now only curable with Krishna’s magic.

Finally, in the nineteenth sloka a rajasic Gopi requests for Krishna's feet to be placed upon her breasts. Her passion for Hari has confused her mind.

From these descriptions, it is seen that the Gopis who were married to another sang ten slokas while the Gopis who were unmarried carried their prayers to Krishna in nine slokas. Actually, both groups of swaminis sang in the fourth sloka, thus bringing the total of ten slokas to both groups.

Each of the songs that the swaminis sing in the Gopi Gita reveals their own unique bhava and devotion for God. If they did not have their own distinctive way of relating to Hari this song would have never arisen. Regardless of how they call out to Krishna, if they call Him a "swindler" or "the inner witness of all hearts," everything in their song is filled with love and therefore pleasing.

Next we will hear from the first group of Gopis. They are rajasic as well as sattvic, and while searching for their Beloved, they sing.

SLOKA ONE

Bhagavata:

*jayati te 'dhikam janmanā vrajaḥ śrayata indirā śaśvad atra hi
dayita drśyatām dikṣu tāvakās tvayi dhṛtāsavas tvām vicinvate*

Krishna, victorious is

Your appearance in Braja,

where even Goddess Lakshmi

forever takes Your refuge.

Beloved!

We are holding our breath

and search for You in every direction.

Subodhini:

To begin with “victory” is auspicious. It removes obstructions and grants the lila reward. This is why we begin our tribute with triumph.

Govinda, Your appearance in Braja

accomplishes everything.

Your appearance,

Your descent,

Your avatar,

Your birth in Braja

perfect everything,

except one thing:

us.

You have forgotten us! You have not perfected us, nor have You completed our relationship. To do so, You must appear before us, right now! It is Your duty, now make the effort! Remember, Your presence here has made this place better than any other.

Superior to heaven,

better than even the

eternal Vaikuntha.

Where Your play is not

so intimate.

Many believe You appeared in Mathura, but the full glory of Your appearance is not known there. The true excellence of Your manifestation is known to Braja, the land where Your cows graze. In Braja, You reign supreme; not in Mathura!

If you say, “Just because the Blessed Lord appears somewhere does not necessarily make the place special or world famous.”

This is not true for Krishna’s appearance in Braja. It is the remarkable place where even Lakshmi constantly takes refuge, and she does so with great humility. She reflects,

When will I have the fortune

of the swaminis of Braja?

Then I could also participate

in Krishna’s Braja Lila.

In Vaikuntha, Lakshmi is the Lord’s undisputed queen. There, she does not need to take anyone’s shelter. Yet in Braja, there are thousands of Lakshmis. She reflects on her insecure position in Braja,

When will I be able to play in Braja?

When will I receive Krishna’s seva,

His constant loving service?

Lakshmi, the goddess of fortune, who is so honored in the world, now takes the refuge of this land of cows. She prays to be able to enter into our hamlet of Gokul, so she can share in the bounty of Krishna. In Vaikuntha, she is Vishnu’s wife, but here it is another story. You know that Krishna falls under only the sway of His bhaktas. He demonstrated this when He allowed Himself, the boundless One, to be tied up by His

mother after He stole butter; He was captured by the spell of her affection. Krishna showers grace in such amazing ways.

There is nothing odd about Lakshmi seeking refuge in the abode of devotion, the land of Braja. Every bhakta knows the superiority of Braja. It is Krishna's land.

Your Braja love play is

never deficient.

Nor is Lakshmi really upset—

she just wants to get here.

Lakshmi accepts Braja

because Krishna has.

Beloved, now understand the reason why You must come here now and see us just this once! It is with the hope of seeing You that we hold onto our breath, our prana. We search the quarters looking for You. It is not fair. For Brahma, that creator, who lives in another realm, You came. You arrived in Braja just after he asked You once. Yet for us, who live here,

and have dedicated everything to You;

for us, Your beloveds, Your lovers

You don't arrive—

most improper!

Krishna, You may fabricate all sorts of reasons for not appearing before us by saying that if we were true bhaktas, we would die in Your separation. Absurd! Can't You see the only reason we remain here, embodied, is so the search may continue. The moment we feel we are no longer of any use to You, we will leave these dairymaid bodies.

It is with the hopes of finding You

that we sustain these cords of life.

If You delay Your appearance any longer

we will depart from these forms.

We cannot resign ourselves and return home with the hopes that You will return to Braja in the morning and we would see You then. We cannot wait until the morning. We need to see You now!

See us, we are very humble,

and pray just this once;

grant us Your darshan!

Beloved, understand if a husband does not look at his wife, her life falls useless. See our selfless motives. If You see us, we attain neither worldly gain nor pursuit. Weigh our humility; understand that our prayer is simply for You to come now and see us. Appear before us!

SLOKA TWO

The Gopi who sang the first song while retaining humility also found displeasure with Hari for not appearing to her. Her humility arose from her sattvic bhava, her virtuous devotional mood. Her dissatisfaction with Krishna came from her rajasic bhava, her excessive and intense devotion.

In the next song, a swamini embraces the bhava of tamas. It is expressed in her obstinate and contrary mood towards Krishna. She complains bitterly how the Blessed Lord refuses to even look at her and all of the swaminis. This is killing them. There is also a sattvic bhava hidden within this short song and it reflects in her pure praise of Krishna.

Bhagavata:

*śarad-udāśaye sādhu-jāta-sat- sarasijodara-śrī-muṣā dṛśā
surata-nātha te śulka-dāsikā vara-da nighnato neha kim vadhaḥ*

Lord of love,

Your eyes pillage

the inner brilliance of Shri,

the goddess of splendor.

She resides within a blooming lotus-

in the middle of an autumn lake.

O Bestower of favors,

You are killing us,

Your priceless supporters.

Isn't this murder?!

Subodhini:

We have concluded; this is murder. Beloved Krishna, You are able to give anything. Your powerful glance can in an instant strip Shri, the goddess of beauty, of all of her splendor.

Krishna, You have stolen her away from her abode. She was residing within a blooming lotus in the middle of an autumn lake. You did it with those eyes, with that glance of Yours. Now they have struck us.

O Krishna, it hurts so much-

You are killing us

and are guilty of massacre.

You are guilty when you swindle the life of another. It is due to Your look; it is the murder weapon, it is killing us. Others have also spoken of your devastating glance and have said,

Your glance takes away

survival, mind and strength.

What's amazing is that in the midst of this, we know that Your form is full of ecstasy. We can see that wherever You glance, You also breathe life—You create it. And so Your glance not only kills us, it also allows us to live.

The problem only arises when You do not look at us. Then we begin to die. Your disregard kills us. This intolerable separation makes the glance of Your eyes seem so incredibly cruel.

When You look at us, our cords of life become encumbered.

Why do You want to kill us? We are your faithful dasis, Your servants, lovers and supporters. You will gain nothing in the act. There is absolutely no cause why You should kill women, especially us!

We are Your paid maidens and You

are the Lord of the act of love.

Through You, all exalted human endeavors are attained. That is why people in the world call out to You and have done so with many different names. They recognize You according to their development. The name they call You is forged from their eligibility, from their spiritual inclination.

You are "Dharmapalaka"

when seen as the protector of dharma.

You are "Brahman"

when recognized as the Supreme.

You are “Jagneshwar”

when seen as the Lord of Sacrifice.

You are the “Beloved of Lakshmi”

for those anxious to attain wealth.

You are “Mukunda,” the grantor of all powers,

for those who desire liberation.

You are “Jannidhe”

for those who see You as a treasure of wisdom

People address You in so many ways in their attempts to attain various pursuits of dharma, wealth, desire, and liberation. We swaminis address You in the most particular way; for us You are:

“Surat Nath”

the Lord of the Act of Love

You are the Master

of conjugal matters.

In this world, without Your sanction, sexual union cannot occur. We were brought here by Brahma. We acted in conjunction with the love-god, for us to be Your loving associates. We have come here to help You spread and develop the amorous mood. It arises through us. We were hired, in the divine sense, for this job. Our presence here is to remove obstructions that might come in the way of the conjugal mood.

If the flow of that love becomes obstructed in You; then impediments in conjugal love will also arise in the world.

We have come to Braja to help You spread that intimate love throughout the world. But You have taken an opposite stance, and now it appears to us that You would rather kill us than love us!

Now the book of lovemaking,

the Kama Shastra,

falls by the wayside,

useless.

The third pursuit of life is desire. It is never truly attained unless it is through You—through Your divine person. For this reason, please do what is needed! Fulfill our desires with Your sacred dalliance. That is why we were sent here. You must be thinking that when You feel the time is right, You will fulfill the amorous duty.

Don't delay—

appear, revive us now!

We know all about the dangers of Your glance. It terminates and can ever swindle away the beauty of Shri. The person who can steal also can kill. The clever thief is also a talented murderer. Our song has told of Your ability to steal Shri from the insides of a lotus. You are so clever, such a good thief that You have figured out how to even rob a protected fort.

That Shri lotus You swindled is surrounded by a fortress of water. She is blooming, splendid, so brilliant in the sun, not troubled by anything, not even by cold. The position of that lotus, its form as well as time, everything is on her side and that makes it impossible for anyone

to steal anything from her. Yet, when Krishna can steal the beauty of the Shri Goddess who lives within that unattainable lotus:

Then, there can be no surprise

that Krishna can steal the life breath

of us, simple ordinary Gopis.

Hari, do You really reason that by quietly stealing as opposed to forcibly taking, that You will be able to remain free from dishonor? Have You concluded that people will not suspect You of any wrong doing? Do you think in this sly manner You can avoid the guilt of murder? How do You expect to be clear of the deed when the weapon for the appalling act is apparent? It is on You!

It is those eyes

that have not looked at us.

You become guilty of murder

as we die in separation.

We have come here for the festival of love, but the master love-maker has gone away. Now in His place, death has arrived. Krishna, we warn You! If You do not appear before us, You will no longer be the Lord of Love.

Even if a yogi has the ability through his yogic power to manifest a horse, he will never be called a true yogi, a "horse creator," until he performs the act. What is so surprising, O Lord of Love, is that instead of manifesting so that You can meet up with Your name, you have chose to slay us!

Not even Your consort Lakshmi could remain without Your sight. We know, because You have also swindled her. Don't You understand anything? When You usurp the splendor from the blooming lotus it dies, it perishes like the unnourished embryo.

Even if the Lakshmi lotus has vitality, time, wealth, place and substance on her side, without Your darshan, without Your sight, she can't survive.

We are like that lotus.

The Goddess Shri lives within us.

We are the bestowers of boons and so we find it odd that You, the greatest benefactor, have chosen to kill us. Can't You see:

We are Your dasis

Your priceless workers

who serve without wage.

Now don't kill us!

In this way, several of the swaminis of Braja spoke with bhavas of reproach to their Beloved Krishna who refused to appear before them.

Ras that is experienced inwardly,

ras that is well nourished,

if that ras does not manifest

outwardly, into the world,

that ras will never be called accomplished.

And this is the reason why
the swaminis brought their
inward experience of God
out into the world,
through their song.

SLOKA THREE

Another swamini, soft and pure, sings about how...

You protected us before,

so many times;

how about now?!

Bhagavata:

*viṣa-jalāpyayād vyāla-rākṣasād varṣa-mārutād vaidyutānalāt
vṛṣa-mayātmajād viśvato bhayād ṛṣabha te vayaṁ rakṣitā muhuḥ*

Most worthy one!

You have saved us from

poison water,

the Kaliya snake,

from wind, rain, lightening, fire and

from the demon Vyomasura.

In many ways,

so many times

You have come to our aid.

Now, Krishna, appear again!

Subodhini:

Your cows and cowlads who drank the waters poisoned by that terrible snake Kaliya all died. You appeared then and brought them back to life; now bring us back to life!

Not only did you save us from the Kaliya snake, but also from the whirlwind demon and from so many calamities. Now save us again!

Also from Indra's winds and rains, from lightening, from a forest blaze, as well as from Vyomasura; You have saved us before, now do it again!

The swaminis at this point are not relating events in any true chronological order; they have become omniscient and in the process have become oblivious to such trivial matters. They are mindless to past and future and in that great bhava, a swamini continues:

What else can we say to You who have protected us in so many ways?

O Rishaha, the lordly husband

always protects.

You have protected before,

now do it again.

O Krishna, protect us

before all of these disasters

appear in the world again.

They have all manifested outside of us, within our world. Now the divine calamity is within us. And it is Your duty to protect us, always, from all sides,

now from within.

SLOKA FOUR

Now another swamini who has profound experience sings of Krishna. She is nirguna, she has transcended all qualities and has become very pure. She argues with her Blessed Lord, “As You give the wise one the gift of liberation, so it is only proper that You grant us the appropriate emancipation.” With this bhava she sings:

Bhagavata:

*na khalu gopīkā-nandano bhavān akhila-dehinām antarātma-dr̥k
vikhanasārthito viśva-guptaye sakha udeyivān sātvatām kule*

O friend,

 Krishna

 is not the son of Yashoda.

He is the inner witness

 of all sentient beings.

 He appeared in the Yadava clan

because of Brahma’s request

 for world protection.

Subodhini:

To consider Krishna as simply the son of Nanda is without a doubt incorrect. This is all very clear. The Blessed Lord has no father or mother. He is unborn yet appears and can even fall under the sway of His mother Yashoda and the Gopis. Shri Krishna cannot be limited in a worldly way as solely the son of either Yashoda or Nanda.

Yashoda has the feelings that she is Krishna's mother while the swaminis know Krishna as their swami.

He is their lover and Lord of Braja; Krishna is their Gokul groom.

This can all occur because there is a perfect balance between knowledge and form.

You are not only the Lord of Vaikuntha,

the Supreme Blessed Lord,

You are also the inner witness

of all sentient beings.

You are the silent observer of the

Mind, intelligence, reason and psyche.

But, when You can see all, then how can You bear to see the affliction within our hearts? You even seem to be happy to observe our distress. On this matter, we have absolutely nothing to say to You! Yet, we know for sure that You have come to this earthly place to protect us. Our advice to You, Krishna, is that instead of killing us, protect us!

We know that You decided to manifest here because of Brahma's prayer and not from Your own desire. He wanted You to rescue and protect the world. Brahma contemplates the meaning of the Vedas and Hari accepts the worship in the paths that Brahma promotes for His worship. For this reason, Brahma created the path of Vaikhanasa in which Venkat, Adri and other main deities are worshiped. Brahma requested Hari to appear to accept all of these worships. His primary issue was world protection.

We on the other hand see You, Krishna, as the inner witness, the inner soul of all beings. You appear in this world as a member of the virtuous Yadava clan and are the true friend to the entire world.

Inner Atma,

beloved soul companion from before:

You sport in this world

according to Your own desire.

You have appeared to us, Your eternal lovers, and that is why we summon You now.

When God appears, it should be for some special reason.

Our total dedication is the unusual ground—

our refuge in You is why You should appear.

Krishna, there is truly nothing else that we can ask from You. We understand that in the end, You will do whatever You think is proper.

SLOKA FIVE

Now a swamini who predominates with rajas yet is exalted and has some sattvic guna considers that without requesting Krishna, He will not provide anything. With this reason, she requests Him to place His hand upon her head and sings:

Bhagavata:

*viracitābhayaṁ vṛṣṇi-dhūrya te caraṇam īyuṣāṁ saṁsṛter bhayāt
kara-saroruhāṁ kānta kāma-daṁ śirasi dhehi naḥ śrī-kara-graham*

O best of the Yadavas

O Beloved!

Your lotus hand

removes the fear of samsara

for those who have taken Your shelter.

It fulfills all desires

and was given to Lakshmi.

Now place it upon our heads.

Subodhini:

O Swami, Master of our souls, our hearts are torn apart. To relieve and cool the distress felt throughout our bodies, You must place Your lotus hand upon our heads!

The lotus arises from water

and is cooling.

Your hand is the lake from where the lotus arises. But unlike the lotus in the lake that dries up when pulled from the water...

Your lotus hand is a constant source

from where the lotus can never wither.

From there it can never lose its ras.

Beloved, that is why we call out to You; for You to place Your blessed hand, the lotus one, upon our worthy heads. Make us Your own, put us under Your spell. Your lotus hand has so much to offer. It delights and is filled with ras. It not only releases our divine afflictions and quells our burning desire for You; it also grants desires. Your hand has the power to fulfill our lofty ambitions. Now don't argue with us and say,

“But I am Krishna, Bhagavan, Purushottam, the supreme God. I am too great to touch the likes of women like you.”

Remember Krishna, You have already taken the hand of Lakshmi. You are the householder, a family man! You have accepted Lakshmi's hand in marriage; now when will You take hold of ours?!

If you grumble, “My union with Lakshmi was consummated with an actual ceremony. It has the blessings of the holy book, that matrimony is valid. My relationship with you lacks the sanction of the scripture so how could I possibly even consider taking hold of your hands?”

O Krishna, don't You remember?

You always accept those who take Your shelter.

Their fear of samsara swept away,

You make them fearless.

Krishna, this is the authentic doctrine. It is engraved like the law of marriage, except for one important distinction. The laws that bind people in marriage are in comparison pale to the devotional contract between God and the soul.

Truly, those who take Your protective shelter are superior to any woman who only has your common law marriage!

Such unions are ordinary, bound as they are by the rules of the world, while connection with You, constitutes the greatest dharma, God dharma, the Ishvar Dharma.

Even if You try to get out of this one by reason, “How can I support such improper engagements?” We reply...

O Krishna, just look at Yourself! See what Your own family is like. You Yadava men are known to have many women and create many offspring. Among that clan, You are the best, the mightiest of them all. Also remember we are:

Helpless women who have come to You,
terrified of samsara.

It is your duty to protect us!

Understand us. We are not saying that there is anything wrong with samsara, that the world is an evil place. Our distress is not due to any fault of this world but arises because we are:

Unable to withstand the intensity
of Your divine separation.

You are able to soothe us spiritually. It can be accomplished whether or not we even see You. You have made so many others fearless. Now afford us the same privilege. And so we cry out to You:

Love of our life

O husband!

Remember the oaths of Your women,
the devotional souls.

Act upon them now
and fulfill Your side of the deal!

Our false identification will only remain for as long as we have not beheld with our own eyes that grin of Yours. Your slight laugh is the

only way. After seeing that face, how could anyone sustain a sense of false pride?

Let them try to doubt, “This practice of having pride removed from a smirk has never been heard of in this world. How can it be known, practiced or comprehended?”

It is all known by having the sight of Your beautiful lotus-like face. From Your lotus face flows nectar and surely there is no fault in drinking elixir.

If You have any doubt about whether Your laugh can remove our haughtiness, then we beg You to try it, at least once. But to do so, You must show us Your face.

Pride is a condition of the mind.

Your beautiful face enchants the mind

out of thinking of anything else.

Krishna, You are “Dharmi,” the holder of all virtues, and You have stolen our hearts. Our pride is just a single lost virtue and can never remain before Your Dharmi.

Understand, You are our true friend and we are Your true girl friends.

That is the reason why You need

to reciprocate with us now!!

SLOKA SIX

Now we will hear from a swamini who possesses both sattvic and tamasic attributes. Her prayer to Krishna is both bold and unique:

Bhagavata:

*vraja-janārti-han vīra yoṣitām nija-jana-smaya-dhvaṁsana-smita
bhaja sakhe bhavat-kiṅkarīḥ sma no jalaruhānanaṁ cāru darśaya*

O friend!

Remover of the Braja swamini's distress.

O Hero of women!

You remove the pride

of Your intimate associates

with just a faint smile.

Now worship us,

reciprocate.

Allow us, Your humble supporters

Your darshan,

the blessed sight
of Your lovely lotus face.

Subodhini:

Hari, these other swaminis do not know what they are saying. Now I will tell You the definitive conclusion. I assure You, I am not trying to deceive You. What I will tell is for Your own benefit.

Respond, admire us,
we both stand to prosper.

Now don't argue with us and say, "Such audacity, asking Me do to something that is forbidden!"

Krishna, remember:

We are Your servants.

And You have promised,

"However I am worshipped

I will love and adore in return.

I pledge to reciprocate."

It is very simple. You need to honor us in a fashion that is befitting to the way we worship You. We are Your bhaktas and Your oath to reciprocate worship is well known. There are other reasons why You should reciprocate our adoration and devotion: the first of them is found within the very purpose of Your descent.

Your Avatar into this world is to remove
the anguish of Your lovers who live
right here in Braja.

No one suffers from Your separation more than we do and Your appearance here is to relieve this despair. This is just the common grounds for Your avatar. Now we will explain to You Your special purpose for appearing here. It is for us women of Braja.

Krishna, You are the "Vira,"
the Hero of women.
You are virile.

You are our main hero and defeat mighty enemy warriors. The main foe for us is Kama. Kama, the god of passion, appears in so many forms. The true hero not only defeats great opponents like Kama but is also able to fulfill desires. It is for this reason that we call out to You Krishna. You are our Bhagavan, our blessed Lord. You fulfill the desires of Your lovers.

When all desires are fulfilled
inwardly, outwardly,
in every conceivable way,
so there is no room for anything else.

Whoever can accomplish such a deed

is the greatest hero.

He alone attains great distinction in the world.

Krishna, You are the supreme hero, You bestow the bliss of Your own inner form. You can fulfill the desires of those who are so exceedingly poor that even Brahma, who contains all powers of creation, cannot fulfill. You remove the poverty of our souls and are well known to be the ultimate hero. You are the potent one, the greatest giver of gifts. And that is why we call out to You,

Krishna, hero of women

the devotional one!

How can we call out to any other beside you, Krishna? How to call out to someone when they do not have their own desires fulfilled? How could anyone else possibly satisfy us?

Your appearance, Your avatar seen from either the common or unique angle, anyway you look at it, You have appeared to remove our affliction, to grant us the bliss of Your being.

Now recognize us-

worship us.

Krishna, I can just hear You complaining, "O Gopis, this is all true, yet, how can I worship You? It will not be possible to remunerate your devotion until you become free from the fault of pride?"

Krishna, You can remove the pride of Your intimate associates with just a slight smile. Those who are Your own, who follow You and live for Your pleasure, You can relieve their vanity and arrogance in this

amazing fashion. There is no need to renounce us in order to remove our pride. The enlightened solution lies in Your smita:

That delightful almost undetectable

smirk of Yours, that slight smile.

Your laugh has been seen by others as, “Maddening, infatuating and mayic”. But this is not the case for those who are Your bhaktas. Your laugh does not entangle us in maya, not at all. It is a practice that is very subtle and gentle. It is most beneficial to us.

Your grin is the process

to remove our pride.

We may be virtuous or prideful, but that is only an attribute. That fault is not at the base of our constitution. If it was, then we would not be considered to be Your intimate associates, Your bhaktas.

The slight laugh lila is our divine remedy. It is the only one that will remove our faults of pride. If You were to laugh in a worldly way with us, we would again become prideful and feel that we are equal to You. It is Your slight laugh that works, it removes our arrogance.

We know that even a fragment of false pride

creates obstructions in the flow of ras.

SLOKA SEVEN

Now a swamini who is a mixture of sattva and rajas, better than the ones before, who were sattvic mixed with tamas, states her case to Krishna. She sings:

Bhagavata:

*praṇata-dehinām pāpa-karṣaṇām tṛṇa-carānugam śrī-niketanam
phaṇi-phaṇārpitaṁ te padāmbujaṁ kṛṇu kuceṣu naḥ kṛndhi hṛc-chayam*

Your lotus feet are

the abode of Lakshmi.

They follow after cows and remove the sins

of embodied beings

who bow humbly before them.

They have danced upon the hoods

of the snake Kaliya.

Now place those lotus feet

upon our breasts.

Remove the fiery desires

within our hearts.

Subodhini:

O Hari, place Your lotus feet upon our breasts, it is the only way our hearts can be freed from kama, the burning desire.

Kama has appeared like a thief
deep within our hearts.

Remove him!

That is why we need You to place Your lotus feet upon all of the breasts of the swaminis congregated here. Without Your touch, they do not even appear to belong to us!

We have asked You before to put Your hand upon our heads and bring us near to You. Reciprocate our loving devotion with conjugal worship! Now we request from You the nectar union.

Let us ride above You

with special positions

and angles.

Krishna, Your single lotus foot can do it all. As we surround You, resting in lila love play, place Your lotus foot on each of our breasts. Its mere touch removes our overwhelming desires!

If someone questions, "How can Shri Krishna's soft lotus feet be placed upon your hard breasts?" Let us remind you:

We desire the same lotus feet that have already been placed upon the hard hooves of the snake Kaliya. Surely, those hoods are much harder than our breasts. Also, it is well known that wherever Your lotus feet are placed becomes free from all impurity and cleansed from within.

Here in this situation, it is Your duty! Your feet are lotus feet and lotuses appear from water. It is well known that lotuses are cooling and are able to remove afflictions.

Even if You object, "It is most improper for a man to place his feet upon a women's breasts." We assure You:

Your lotus feet

are the abode of Lakshmi;

she resides there.

Everyone knows that the goddess Lakshmi touches Your feet. When she can caress them, then how can You have any doubt in our contact with them? O Krishna, we embody her!

Even if You proudly argue, "Well, you are just simple minded, deluded village women. How can you even consider yourselves eligible for My feet by imagining yourselves equal to Lakshmi? Under these circumstances how can you expect Me to be of any benefit to you?"

O Beloved! How can you think like that when You avail Yourself to even cows? You follow behind them and they graze on grass!

For their benefit,

You walk after them,

from forest to forest.

Krishna, what do You think, that those cows are inspired by You to leave their grass and start drinking nectar? Never! Understand our point:

As cows taste nectar in grass,

we taste nectar in Kama,

desire divine.

Hari, You are supremely compassionate and have nothing to lose by loving us. Even if You question our spiritual abilities and argue, "You Gopis have not conquered your senses. This makes your desires sinful."

O Krishna, we can only remind You that it is You who removes the sins of those who bow humbly before You. We are very humble. Our impurities and shortcomings can only be overcome through the grace of Your lotus feet. You remove the sins of the unpretentious.

We are embodied and we are humble. What else can we do? Where else can we turn? For You we have even left the path of dharma, the roads of prescribed action and practice. Because we are engaged in bodies, our prideful sense of "I" does not allow us entrance into the Path of Knowledge.

We know for sure that those who bow humbly before You will never fall to the lower regions. Your lotus feet are our only salvation. They will remove all of our sins and therefore they should be:

Meditated upon

seen, touched,

and embraced.

SLOKA EIGHT

Now we will hear from a nirguna Gopi who is even superior to the other Gopis who have sung before. This swamini presents her case in her own individual way before her absent Lord. She begins:

Bhagavata:

*madhurayā girā valgu-vākyayā budha-manojñayā puṣkarekṣaṇa
vidhi-karīr imā vīra muhyatīr adhara-sīdhunāpyāyayasva naḥ*

O Lotus-Eyed Hari!

O Conqueror!

O Hero!

O Speech Enchanter!

Hari, Your words afford pleasure to the wise.

Now for us, for Your women

who follow Your command,

allow us to live

with the nectar of Your lips!

Subodhini:

The Gopis have prayed before for the touch of His hand. They have prayed for the presence of His form. Now they are requesting a divine favor. It must come from His mouth. He should please them with His sweet delightful speech. When Krishna does not speak clearly and openly with the swaminis, until that time, everything that has transpired:

Is devoid of the delightful mood.

Dalliance that is silent does not contain ras. It is for this reason that Krishna's sweet words are required.

A swamini explains, "O Swami! O Krishna! Speak to us; allow us, Your infatuated Gopis, to hear Your nectar speech. Your words fulfill us, they allow us to live, they relieve our agony."

Our bewitchment,

is due to You.

It has brought us to just

one step away from death.

Now fulfill us. Allow us, who follow Your commands and perform Your seva, the gift of life. If You complain that You are not powerful enough to rescue us, not strong enough to let us live, then we reply:

O Vira!

O Hero!

You are capable.

The true hero is able to remove the afflictions of those who come before him. We advise You that if You do not appear to us and grant us Your darshan, even if You are one second late, we will die.

Krishna, from some unseen quarter, replies, "O Gopis, how do you expect your delusions to be expelled through simply My speech?"

The swaminis reply, "Your speech is as sweet as nectar."

What is enchanting deludes—

it is the form of maya.

But Your embodied speech is replete with perfect truth, consciousness and bliss. It arises from Your God form and removes maya, and that is why we call it sweet.

It is honey—

unique, unrivaled ras.

We have spoken of it as sweet. Your speech is filled with delicious and lovely phrases. Your speech is alluring. It enchants and steals our hearts. Your sweet speech establishes what is true and pleasing. It reveals truth and to the wise and intelligent, it is a source of supreme bliss.

Your speech is endowed with knowledge.

It is the form of wisdom.

It allows the soul

to attain love of God

through wisdom.

We call out to You Krishna, “O lotus-eyed one”. Those eyes are a part of Your lovely face. We think that they should also be engaged; they should also speak to us. Your eyes are like the lotus. They remove our affliction, the agony of our separation.

Now about Your lips. They are nectar and are filled with elixir. Allow us to imbibe them, and let us taste Your:

Nectar speech

nectar sight

nectar drink.

Those who have fallen under a great spell become senseless. In that situation the great mantra, the maha mantra, must be employed. Also, cool things like lotuses should be placed beside the patient or applied to them. When all else fails, then the immortal elixir must be imbibed. The most secret potion must then be administered.

We are in a state. We have fallen under Your unconscious spell and cannot be cured through any ordinary means. That is why we call out You:

O Vira!

O Hero!

When the Gopis remember all of the things they have prayed for, they are transported and display to Krishna the final stage. This condition of separation arrives just before death. The remembrance of all of their previous prayers for Krishna’s appearance now intensifies their devotional trance; they are totally spellbound.

SLOKA NINE

The Gopis implored Shri Krishna for four things; His hands, feet, face and form. When they did not receive the divine gift, they concluded that they themselves were the reason. Now they refute their suspicion in the following song:

Bhagavata:

*tava kathāmṛtaṁ tapta-jīvanam kavibhir īḍitaṁ kalmaṣāpaham
śravaṇa-maṅgalaṁ śrīmad ātataṁ bhuvi gṛṇanti ye bhūri-dā janāḥ*

The nectar of Your narration,

Your katha amrita,

is the very life of those

who experience divine affliction.

It is the song

of the enlightened poets—

it destroys demerits

and is auspicious to hear.

It is replete with splendor,

envelops the world,

it is the great benefactor,
and unborn.

Subodhini:

A hidden Krishna challenges the Gopis:

“All of your prayers would be answered if you were truly bhaktas. I don’t consider you to be true bhaktas because the mere fact that you are separated from Me proves that you are not real bhaktas!”

Another voice continues the controversy:

Women of Braja, Krishna does not need anything. He is free of desire and certainly needs nothing from you! He has millions of women followers, superior to you. They are all like Lakshmi herself. Before when you claimed that:

We hold onto our bated breath,

onto our life force for You.

Such prayers are useless, they don’t touch Him. To this unsympathetic reasoning a Gopi replies:

The fact that we are still alive has nothing to do with any of our doings. It is due to the accounts of Your nectar lilas, Your katha amrita. It keeps our pran, our cords of life, from leaving. The narrations of Your virtues keep us alive.

The power of Your divine tale contains Your potency. Your katha amrita holds, like You, the six divine virtues of lordship, potency, fame, beauty, knowledge, and renunciation. Your katha amrita can grant, just as You can, liberation.

It is the form of unsurpassed joy,

like an immortal elixir.

It contains the bliss of Krishna Himself.

and is replete with perfect ras.

Amrita, the divine nectar, affords immortality. It is the substance that can discharge death. Whoever comes in contact with it, becomes fearless and eternal. We are referring to this aspect when we praise Your nectar tale as katha amrita.

For the soul

it is the granter of liberation.

It ends the cycle

of life and death.

Your katha amrita is the

perfect form of joy.

Now Krishna, let us tell You how this katha amrita of Yours contains, just as You do, the six divine qualities. These six virtues reside perfectly in You. Both You and Your katha amrita operate with the help of these six aspects. Now listen:

Renunciation and knowledge are two of Hari's virtues. They are revealed when we sing that:

The nectar of Your narration

Your katha amrita
is the very life of those
who experience divine affliction.

It is a well-known fact that to hear of Your nectar form, lila and attributes restores life to those who are tormented by the world.

As nectar removes affliction,
so does knowledge and renunciation
that is connected to Hari.

Subtle impressions that create binding karmic residues are removed through knowledge. Situations and people that are improper can only be removed by renouncing them. There are other sorrowful people who perform sacred actions as prescribed in the scriptures but do not relate those activities to Hari. They are spiritually weak and hanker after mundane rewards. Their sufferings are also removed by renouncing those actions or by joining them with knowledge and devotion to Hari.

The virtues of knowledge and renunciation
are present in Your narrations.

They remove the soul's afflictions.

If You try to argue with us Krishna, that when the tortures of fire are removed by simply pouring water or some other substance on it, then why should we go to the great extent of using Your nectar stories for the expulsion of our afflictions? To this unripe logic we reply:

Your nectar tale is resorted to

and sung by even the enlightened sages.

Sagious souls understand how knowledge and renunciation are contained in Your katha amrita. They have inner comprehension of the meanings of the words.

They are lovers of words that describe You.

They praised You with both knowledge and renunciation.

Their songs remove the sufferings of mankind.

You may claim that even a woman can quickly remove the sufferings of a man, so then why relate to a song? We know that even womanly skills cannot be compared to Your nectar tale. Your katha amrita quenches not only the fires of suffering but also destroys the sins of the soul.

When some say that You contain perfect lordship and dharma, the word dharma here means:

Your divine skill,

Your great potency.

Your great potency is the third virtue found in our song. It is beneficial to divine matters and also eradicates impurities. This is Your special skill, Your unusual aspect that has already been mentioned. The greatness of Your katha amrita is well known everywhere.

If you say that by acts of atonement, sins can also be quickly removed, we remind You that:

Your katha amrita

is auspicious to listen to.

Acts of atonement like smearing oneself with cow dung and undertaking other fasts when compared to listening to Your nectar tale seem very unappealing. We are disgusted by even the thought. Even to hear of such a task does not sound good to our ears, while:

To hear of Your generous lila

brings forth the experience of joy.

It is self-evident. To even hear of You and Your lila is very favorable. Your katha amrita contains great fame and this is the fourth virtue in our song.

You may claim that it is also auspicious to hear about the birth of a son, so what is so special about hearing Your story?

Your katha amrita is endowed with Shri-

it contains great spiritual wealth.

The birth of a son can cost money and does not generate wealth. While even Shri herself, the supreme goddess of wealth, is every anxious to hear the wealth of Your nectar story.

In this way, the fifth virtue of Shri—beauty, prosperity and fortune— is perfected in Your katha amrita. Both listener and speaker attain Shri from listening to Your accounts.

Even if someone questions that fame and wealth are also attained when someone hears that they have become a king. Here please find one very important distinction between the fame and fortune of a king and the riches of the katha amrita.

The fame of the katha amrita

is spread throughout all lands—

the king's kingdom is limited to his domain.

It is here that we find the sixth virtue of Your katha amrita, its aspect of lordship. The omnipotent glory of the katha amrita is the banner of Your narration's perfect lordship. It is not found in any other kingly domain. Your katha amrita penetrates:

Within,

without,

in all people,

omnipresent.

The form of the katha amrita, the story of Hari, in all aspects, is similar to Hari Himself. The fact that we are alive has nothing to do with our efforts. Your katha amrita has kept us breathing. For this reason we speak of its greatness. Even if You kill us, at that moment, if we are administered the nectar of Your accounts, we immediately come back to life. The only difference between You and Your nectar story is that:

You are independent.

You appear whenever You want,

while Your katha amrita appears
whenever we want it to.

This is what makes it so great. You decided to appear upon the Earth when Brahma, the creator, requested You. Then, whenever You wanted, You simply disappeared. This does not happen in Your katha amrita. You appear to us in the nectar of Your narrations. In that form, we have You where You cannot run away. Your amazing tale has appeared to us upon the Earth where it is also praised by Your great bhaktas. They are the true benefactors to mankind. They provide the world with great wealth. Among them are great speakers like the avatar Shri Vyasa.

Great benefactors,

they are the unborn ones,

embodiments of Hari,

free from the cycles of birth and death,

unhampered by sin and impurity.

The ras of Your katha amrita is liquid. It is rare nectar. It is only administered when death is imminent; then it brings forth life. In this sense it is not like You Hari, who is consolidated elixir and can appear with a nectar form within the world.

We have to admit that in the end, Your nectar form of katha amrita does not excel Your solid bliss form. Your story is useful in Your separation and keeps us alive; it removes death. But if Your katha amrita was equal to Your solid bliss form, then we would be totally satisfied with Your story and would no longer need You. The fact is we need You Hari.

And this is why we praise You. The tellers of Your lilas have given a lot to us. Due to them, we can continue to live in a state of separation.

This is a song of a Gopi who is rajas tinged with sattva.

SLOKA 10

Now a rajasic-tamasic Gopi continues the song...

Bhagavata:

*prahasitam priya-prema-vikṣaṇam viharāṇam ca te dhyāna-maṅgalam
rahasi samvido yā hr̥di spr̥śaḥ kuhaka no manaḥ kṣobhayanti hi*

O Beloved!

Your loving glance,

Your abounding smile,

Your lila dalliance,

the auspicious contemplation,

Your secret words

pinch our hearts.

O Swindler!

All of this is very disturbing.

Subodhini:

Your divine tale could keep us going if Your personal traits did not get in the way and irritate us so much! O Hari, You are filled with the six virtues of lordship, potency, fame, beauty, wisdom, and renunciation. That same Hari must also possess us with the six virtues of mayic infatuation. Otherwise, from just listening to lilas, we would be fulfilled. You produce all of this enchantment with the aid of your mayic lila trickery!

Finding fault in Krishna arises in the swaminis,

from the shortcoming

in themselves.

It is like someone who is feverish and has a dislike for food. As he finds it bitter, in a similar way everything the swaminis express is colored with a lila sorrow and they reflect:

Your abounding smile

pinches our hearts.

Your chivalrous grin

wounds us.

We feel that You have left us for another. And then, when You come from her, with a big smile on Your face, we become even more agitated. It is then that we call out to You, "O Beloved! What have You done?!"

The remembrance of Your contact is a cause of our agony. Only those who have had Your proximity and contact can be free from such misery. We are distressed when Your love-filled glance falls upon us. We are saddened by remembrance in Your separation.

When You are engaged with another, Your love-filled glance upon her, brings distress to our hearts. There is also the issue that when you glance at us full of love, You created in us a trust.

But it is Your inner, knavish trickery form

that really bothers us!

Otherwise we would find no contradiction

between what You do

and its effect upon us!

Your love-saturated glance tests our affection

and this examination pains us.

Your love-filled glance arises our expectations

and these emerging desires are burdensome.

Your dalliance, Your lila play,

Your flute sounding and other antics,

all accentuate our misery!

Then there is Your enchanting form, bent at three places; it makes the ras of the bhakta, the ras of belonging to You, arise. It does so from our depths then pours forth into this world. It is all so especially captivating.

The meditation we had upon You before, that contemplation was auspicious. Then Your form, Your various attributes and virtues, all

awarded us so favorably. Now, Your meditation just brings gloom. You have disappeared from us everywhere!

For others, Hari must infatuate with ordinary maya. For us, the main enchanter is Krishna Himself; the meditation upon the auspicious dalliance.

Misery arises from Hari's form in four ways,

From His bountiful laugh,

from His loving glance,

from contemplating His dalliance

and from calling out to Him, "Beloved."

From his nam or name, two things have occurred. First there is our private communication with Him and then there is the result; the way it bruises our hearts. The secret talks we had alone with You, in very private places.

The words of God are

the molds of wisdom.

The knowledge of love, the making of love, and the positions: all of these related words have pinched our hearts. They have penetrated our souls.

Also there is the understanding that love positions with the hero Hari should be not only congenial to Him, but for us as well. This all constitutes wisdom. Even though You are the cause of pleasure, when you deceive us, we feel only torment.

All of this, unquestionably known to us,
through the direct experience
of You.

SLOKA 11

Now a rajasic swamini, whose secondary attribute is also rajas,
begins her song.

Bhagavata:

*calasi yad vrajāc cārayan paśūn nalina-sundaram nātha te padam
śila-tṛṇāṅkuraiḥ sīdatīti naḥ kalilatām manaḥ kānta gacchati*

O Nath!

O Lord!

When You go out from Braja
to herd Your cows,
O Love, Your feet,
delicate as lotus flowers,
are pinched by stones, grass and sharp shoots—
this darkens our hearts with gloom.

Subodhini:

We are under love's sway and it creates in our minds a true experience of sorrow. Yet for our sorrow, You do not feel even a bit of remorse! This contradicts the laws of justice.

O Love, when You go out to the forests of Vrindavan, Your lotus feet, softer and more delicate than a lotus flower, Beloved, when they tread the forest paths, they are pricked:

By small stones—

they imbibe tamas.

By sharp grass—

they are sattvic.

And by hard shoots—

they contain rajās.

The grass is as hard as stones and those shoots are very stiff and sharp. They all afflict You, but then we reconsider, "Maybe You do not feel any pain at all."

O Love, O Husband, our hearts are troubled. When we sing out, "When You go out from Braja," we are referring to that terrible time when You leave us in the morning. It is all that painful. The moment You leave to herd the cows, from that second, our hearts darken with gloom. And so, from the beginning of this song, we mention that sad departure.

Actually, those lotus feet of Yours never leave us.

They just seem to follow You

when You herd those cows.

You lead those cows to Braja through the Vrindavan forests. You tread areas where no paths are to be found. You do so to please the earth and others who come into contact with Your lotus feet.

O Hari, You never wear wooden sandals or leather shoes made from the hides of any animals You protect. That is why Your feet, softer than a beautiful lotus flower, are pained by those stones, grass and shoots.

Your feet are like the lotus and should really reside in water. Those feet are even more becoming than a blooming lotus resting in a reservoir of water. They are worthy of being established upon Lakshmi; or how about on us?!

We cry out to You, “O Nath, O Lord,” because even though You have many cowlads to assist, You opt to roam that forest Yourself. In the forest, there are three types of ground: the hills, the glades and the marshes.

Stones are from mountains,

grass is from glades,

and shoots are from the swamps.

All three obstructions can also be found in any single place. O Krishna, when Your feet become sore, You can't go on and must sit down and rest. At that moment we are concerned and feel like we should go to where You are and place Your sore feet to our hearts. Krishna, You are the most beloved to our hearts.

Although You appear there,

You simply don't stay!

SLOKA 12

The first four slokas of the Gopi Gita described the conditions of the swaminis who were married to someone in the world. They are the Srutirupas, the incarnated forms of the Srutis, the revealed wisdom texts. They are sattvic-rajasic, sattvic-tamasic, sattvic-sattvic and nirguna respectively.

Then comes the seven unmarried Kumarika Gopis. They are the singers in slokas 5-11. Their individual virtues are sattva-sattva, sattva-tamas, sattva-rajasic, nirguna, rajasic-sattva, rajasic-tamas, and rajasic-rajasic respectively.

Now there are six remaining swamini singers in the Gopi Gita. The next Gopi who sings in sloka 12 is a married Srutirupa swamini. She is rajasic-tamasic. Because she is married to someone in the world, she is not able to go out and see her beloved Shri Krishna in the forest when He herds the cows. She must remain confined in her home.

In this current passage, it is revealed how in the late afternoon, when Hari returns from the forest, a great spiritual desire arises in her heart when she beholds Hari.

This is followed in sloka 13 by another swamini who prays for Hari's enjoyment in various love positions. She is a rajasic-rajasic Gopi. Then in sloka 14, another Gopi who is rajasic-sattvic prays for the nectar of Krishna's lips.

The Gopis who are the Kumarikas, the young swaminis who live with mother Yashoda as maidservants, are not married to anyone in the world. This allows them constant enjoyment with Shri Krishna. Because they are not restricted to the boundaries of their homes by any worldly

husband, they have continual enjoyment with Hari. Their pleasures with God are unlimited and eternal.

Bhagavata:

*dina-parikṣaye nīla-kuntalair vanaruhānanaṁ bibhrad āvṛtam
ghana-rajāsvalaṁ darśayan muhur manasi naḥ smaraṁ vīra yacchasi*

Hari, when You return

at then end of the day,

bearing a face

like a forest lotus,

Your curly dark locks

dangle over Your face,

covered with the dust

raised by Your cows.

O Hero! By showing us Yourself

over and again,

You place deep within our hearts,

a desire of love.

Subodhini:

This swamini shows animosity towards the end of the day. It is sunset and Shri Krishna is returning from the forest with His cows.

It is a rajasic time,

a period of passion

a moment when desire arises.

Krishna's dark curly locks appear like lines of black bees. They awaken within the swaminis an awareness of ras and they begin to crave for the sweet nectar drink of Krishna's lotus face. It all accentuates ras in the swaminis who behold Him and one sings:

Your dark locks hang over Your face

that hold the beauty of the Vrindavan forest lotus.

O Hero, You place within our hearts

an appetite for love.

Here Shri Gusainji adds...

During the late afternoon, when Shri Krishna's dark hair hangs over His face, the hue of His face matches that of a forest lotus, the blue night lotus. For this reason, the swaminis have mentioned that their beloved's face appears as a forest lotus.

When the blue lotus gazes upon

the face of its beloved, the moon—

it keeps blossoming

more and more.

When the forest lotus is not able to gaze upon its beloved moon, its flowering petals remain totally closed. In all of this, it is revealed the nature of the swaminis' attachment to their beloved Krishna.

For this specific reason, when the swamini mentions the lotus, she does not refer to it as residing in water, but as a forest lotus. What she reflects in the words "forest lotus," she refers to the condition within that forest glade where Krishna and His amorous lilas reside.

When Krishna shows them His face

that appears like a blooming night lotus,

He indicates to them

His nighttime forest lila.

Shri Mahaprabhuji continues...

The dust that has been raised by the hooves of Shri Krishna's grazing cows has coated Hari's face. The Gopis gaze upon that face over and over again. As He walks down the center of the path, the Gopis stand on both sides as Krishna turns to each of them and repeatedly grants them His darshan.

When Hari moves ahead, He turns His head and repeatedly looks back at them. In this lila manner, He allows them not only His darshan but also divulges His desire for them. This makes divine passion arise in the swaminis' hearts.

If Shri Krishna allowed them His continual darshan, they would fully imbibe His ras. Although it would satisfy them...

There would be no further opportunity,
for loving divine passion
to arise within their hearts.

When Shri Krishna allows them to see Him again and again, with a break between each darshan, it inflames their fire passion. Now an unavoidable battle of love between the swaminis and Shri Krishna is going to arise.

It will occur regardless of whether Krishna is going to fulfill the swaminis or simply remove their burning desires. This is all revealed by the word “Vir,” which refers to Krishna as the “love battle hero.” When the swaminis call Krishna “Vir,” it discloses to us the impending lila love battle.

Meanwhile, the cow dust that has covered Krishna’s face reveals to the swaminis His fatigue. They consider, “We are the ones who can remove His exhaustion.”

They behold Krishna’s face that is like a forest lotus.

It reflects that the forest
is the place of joyful dalliance
with the Lotus Faced One.

The Vrindavan forest is the definitive place for Krishna’s union and love. Also, by bearing a forest lotus face, Shri Krishna removes any

doubt of the possibility that He will give them His gift of love in their worldly homes.

When the swaminis say that Krishna bears a face like a forest lotus, covered with the dust of the cows, it shows that He has purposefully brought about the situation. If Hari had washed His face before coming back from the forest and gave them His darshan with a clean face, then knowledge would arise in the Gopis' minds and hearts. Any such knowledge would disrupt their divine experience of Krishna passion.

The dust that is raised by the cows

is the divine form of desire.

It is a passion that will never

turn to anger.

Like cooked grain in a pot is there for the enjoyment of others, similarly, the cow dust upon Krishna's face is there for our enjoyment. It needs to be enjoyed. This gift of divine passion is an unexpected arrival in our lives and no one else besides Krishna is able to fulfill us.

SLOKA 13

Now a married rajasic-rajasic swamini sings. She is superior to that other one. Like the other unmarried Gopis who have already prayed to have Krishna's lotus feet placed upon their chests, this married swamini also prays for Krishna's feet to be placed upon her breasts.

Bhagavata:

*praṇata-kāma-dam padmajārcitaṁ dharaṇi-maṇḍanaṁ dhyeyam āpadi
caraṇa-paṅkajam śantamaṁ ca te ramaṇa naḥ staneṣv arpayādhi-han*

O Love!

Remover of distress—

place Your lotus feet

upon our breasts!

They fulfill the desires of those

who take their humble refuge.

They adorn the earth and are

worshipped by the lotus-born Brahma and Lakshmi.

In times of adversity they are

worthy of contemplation—

they are the perfect abode of peace.

Subodhini:

The previous Gopi who prayed that Krishna's lotus feet be placed upon her breasts was unmarried. Although this current swamini prays for the same thing, because she is married and has a different nature, there can be no fault of repetition.

The other Gopi emphasized the purifying effect of Hari's lotus feet. This current swamini praises the greatness of Shri Krishna's virtues and sings out:

Hari, lila player,

love maker,

place Your lotus feet

upon our breasts!

The reason for the prayer is to request Krishna to remove her affliction or as some texts read, "to remove the fire of her divine affliction".

O Love, You must remove

the fire in our hearts.

Relieve our apprehension!

Your benevolent glance can erase this torture. Although You have fixed Your lotus feet within our hearts, You have not come and placed them upon our breasts here in the world. It is essential for You to appoint them here!

Hari's lotus feet are spoken of by the Gopis as having, just like God, six divine virtues. The first is their power of lordship. They can fulfill the ambitions of those who have humbly taken their refuge. Those who are truly humble have a singular refuge and for them, Hari's lotus feet grant whatever they desire. He fulfills their divine yearnings and only God can do that.

Krishna does not grant the desire of those who are haughty. That is why the virtue of being truly humble has been spoken of here by the Gopis.

Because Hari's feet have been worshipped by Brahma, it shows they exemplify the body of dharma. It was from Brahma's prayer that Krishna agreed to appear upon the earth.

The form of fame is disclosed when it is said that His lotus feet "adorn the earth." Krishna's lotus feet beautify the earth; they are the earth's ornament, its embellishment. In this, it is also shown that they are the form of splendor.

They are also worthy of contemplation during times of strife. This aspect shows that they not only contain perfect splendor but total fame as well.

Shri Krishna's feet are spoken of as being like lotus flowers. This comparison shows that they are exalted. Because they are peaceful and the supreme forms of liberation, they imbibe the virtues of perfect wisdom.

When the swamini, remembering those lotus feet, calls out, "O remover of affliction," her description reveals that Hari's lotus feet embody perfect renunciation, an attitude that removes suffering.

When she calls out, “O Lover,” this shows that what is desired is provided by the Lover.

When the swamini sings that Krishna’s lotus feet destroy affliction, she reflects that they remove what is not worthwhile.

O Krishna, in this world, Your lotus feet benefit beings in five different ways. We appeal to You; help us in at least one! Those lotus feet grant the desires of those who bow before them with humility. Previous when we said:

O Hero, place in our hearts

a desire of love.

Now know that we are in a state of extreme humility, Your lotus feet can also destroy that desire of love. Your lotus feet are also worshipped by Brahma and Lakshmi. Brahma worships them for lordship while Lakshmi adorns them because of an intimate yearning.

The toenails that adorn Krishna’s feet are equal in every way to His lotus feet. Both are eternal, otherwise how could they have appeared upon Hari’s feet?

The world, when she appears as a woman devoid of adornments is never enjoyed. For this reason, Shri Krishna has placed His feet upon her. Krishna’s lotus feet are even greater than Krishna Himself. In times of strife, by simply meditating upon them, all misfortune is removed.

O Hari, as You have acted as favorable

to so many,

in so many ways.

Now we pray that You

act positively with us.

The swaminis desire from Krishna all of the different positions of love. They do so by referring to His lotus feet in these various ways.

SLOKA 14

Now an even more impressive swamini, who is rajasic-sattvic in nature, prays...

Bhagavata:

*surata-varadhanam śoka-nāśanam svarita-veṇunā suṣṭhu cumbitam
itara-rāga-vismāraṇam nṛṇām vitara vīra nas te 'dharāmṛtam*

O Hero!

Increaser of delight!

O destroyer of suffering!

Your melodious flute

that kisses Your lips so well

makes one forget

all other affections.

Gift us, Your qualified people,

the nectar of Your lips.

Subodhini:

Give us the supreme gift: the nectar of Your lips. The elixir of Your lips provides great virtue.

In this sloka, the swamini sings about four of Hari's six divine virtues. They are lordship, potency, fame and splendor. Here, there is no need for the virtues of knowledge and renunciation.

Krishna's power of lordship is expressed when the Gopi says:

“Increaser of delight!”

When the limited passion in the Gopis

meets the unlimited passions of God,

that union is demanding.

Like a nectar herb can increase appetite, similarly, Krishna's ras increases our passion. The ras that pours from Krishna's lips not only increases our divine desires, but also removes the impurities of our minds and hearts. Hari expands delight and removes suffering. This virtue not only imbibes the dharma of excellence, but also the attributes of knowledge and renunciation.

Now the form of fame:

That flute has an excellent tone and kisses very appropriately the lips of God. Fame is sung by those who have knowledge of sound. That flute is a great bhakta and that is why, although it cannot totally imbibe Krishna, it is able to kiss His lips.

Now the form of Shri, or splendor:

The sound of Shri Krishna's flute makes one forget everything else. When you forget everything except Hari, all human pursuits are automatically attained through the dominance of grace, through the power of Shri Krishna's form.

"Your melodious flute that kisses Your lips so well," shows us that Krishna's flute embodies the power of valid spiritual knowledge; it is the form of the Veda.

"O destroyer of suffering!" exemplifies the power of the reward.

"Increaser of delight!" displays the divine power of the spiritual vehicle.

The nectar of Krishna's lips embodies and bestows the four pursuits of life. They are:

Dharma, it is found in Your melodious flute.

Wealth, revealed when one forgets all other affections.

Desire is Krishna Himself, the increaser of delight.

Liberation is also Hari, the destroyer of suffering.

When we say "people," we refer to those who have eligibility for Krishna's nectar. This is a most challenging pursuit of life to attain. Although it is not really given, because it is Your nature to bestow divine gifts, You can endow it to us. That is why we say, "give us." Only the heroic can truly provide. That is why we have called out to You, "O Hero."

SLOKA 15

In the last three slokas, we have heard from three different swaminis. They are all rajasic, married Gopis mixed with the secondary qualities of tamas, rajas, and sattva. In the next three slokas we encounter three more married swaminis and their associates. Among them, the tamasic attribute prevails. The swamini in this passage slanders the creating god Brahma. She is mixed with sattva. She is followed by another swamini who is tamasic-tamasic who berates the Lord Himself. Then comes a swamini of tamasic-rajasic disposition and she slanders herself.

Bhagavata:

*aṭati yad bhavān ahni kānanam truṭi yugāyate tvām apaśyatām
kuṭila-kuntalam śrī-mukham ca te jaḍa udīkṣatām pakṣma-kṛd dṛśām*

During the day,

when You wander the forests—

we cannot see You.

At that time,

a single moment

passes like an age.

Then, when we see Your splendid face

covered with dark curly locks,

we curse the creator Brahma—

O dullard,

maker of eyelids—

they obstruct Hari's darshan!

Subodhini:

When You go out to the forest during the day, during that spell, a second passes like an eon. It is because we cannot see You. Then, when we see You and behold Your excellent face, graced with curly dark hair, we feel that Brahma is a fool. He has put eyelids on us that cause interruptions in Your darshan!

Brahma does not endow the gods with eyelids because they have divine vision. Now, our vision is even more spiritual than theirs, yet he puts eyelids on us. How inappropriate! Because Brahma botched it and gave us these useless eyelids, we call that creator of eyelids "stupid".

Gods live for a long time, yet so do we. Although the word "second" means the time it takes to blink an eye, for us a second passes like an age.

O Hari, if Your wandering was in some way useful, then we would not mind; but You roam a forest where not a single pursuit of life can be attained. We cannot even go out there!

Hari has established within us a quality of a god, yet Brahma does not have any common sense. He created upon us god-like swaminis useless eyelids.

SLOKA 16

Now, a lesser swamini of tamasic-tamasic disposition begins...

Bhagavata:

*pati-sutānvaya-bhrāṭṛ-bāndhavān ativilaṅghya te 'nty acyutāgatāḥ
gati-vidas tavodgīta-mohitāḥ kitava yoṣitaḥ kas tyajen niśi*

O Achyuta,

steadfast and unbending.

we have left our husbands,

children, brothers and relations,

and come close to You,

knower of all engagement.

We are entranced with the song

of Your flute.

O Deceiver! Is there anyone besides You

who would abandon women

in the middle of the night?

Subhodini

Achyuta, O Krishna, You are devoid of desire and free of fear. One should never transgress relations with one's husbands, sons, lineage members, brothers, friends, and relatives, yet for You, we have left them all and have come near to You.

Krishna, You know the inner movements of all.

You fathom all engagements.

It is You alone who correlates within all beings
their every action.

We are also knowers of movements and understand the difference between the worship of husbands and other relationships and Your adoration. From Your song, we were enchanted. Now, You have deluded us with that flute call and beckoned us to this forest in the middle of the night. You have ruined us in two ways!

You have destroyed our relationship with our husbands—

and by leaving us in the forest alone,

You have ruined our relationship with You!

Under these circumstances, who would ever even consider abandoning a woman at night in such a forest?! You should never forsake a lady, especially in a jungle, and even more so at night!

You have summoned us

and have not given us anything,
and that is why we call You
a real cheat!

We are falsely wed to worldly cowmen; it is all deception. Only You are the true husband. For this reason, we do not truly enter into married life with them.

SLOKA 17

Superior to the previous tamasic-tamasic Gopis, now we will hear from a group of tamasic-rajasic Gopis who blame themselves.

Bhagavata:

*rahasi samvidam hr̥c-chayodayam prahasitananam prema-vikṣanam
br̥had-urah̥ śriyo vikṣya dhāma te muhur ati-spr̥hā muhyate manah̥*

Your secret love talks

make our passions rise.

Seeing Your smiling face,

Your love-filled glance,

Your broad chest, the abode of Lakshmi,

all creates in our hearts

intense longings,

and infatuates us repeatedly.

Subodhini:

Our hearts are filled with great passion for You; we are totally obsessed. The reason for the infatuation is threefold: and there are also three distinct virtues in our obsession.

Your speech, that secret one,

brings forth our passion.

Your laugh, it allots us

Your bliss.

Your chest, the abode of Lakshmi,

grants us Your eligibility.

Your secret secluded talks

give the innermost hidden knowledge of love.

And now, as before, this all creates an intense obsession for You within our hearts.

It is the way Your face holds that grin, it is in the way You look at us with total love, and it occurs when we see Your broad chest, the abode of the goddess Lakshmi.

The form of Hari is perfect and fully endowed with the six divine attributes. In that form Hari, You are truly who You are.

We perceive

Your secret talks.

We see

our arising heart passions.

We perceive

Your smiling face.

We feel Your loving gaze.

We see Your broad chest as

the abode of Lakshmi.

Your secret words contain the power to unleash the proper means of knowledge. Our arising passions, directed towards You, are the object of our worship. Your grinning face has become our spiritual means, while Your love-filled glance is for us the final reward.

Subhodini:

It is to firmly establish themselves there in Shri Krishna that the swaminis describe His broad chest. It expresses both His fame and fortune.

The sight of Krishna's grinning face removes all of the swaminis' previous annoyances with Hari.

Hari's love-filled glance makes their obsession firm and it also makes the swaminis feel that they are worthy.

From secret, secluded intimate talks with Krishna, we have become brilliant in the arts of lovemaking. This makes us confident that everything will be accomplished.

It brings forth in our hearts

intense longings

that are followed by repeated infatuations.

All of this has arisen

because our beloved object,

Shri Krishna,

has not been attained.

Now the Gopis faint constantly. They have arrived at the point where they are not alive nor are they dead and they claim that their lives with Krishna are “ill-fated.”

SLOKA 18

Now a tamasic unmarried swamini, who is mixed with the virtue of sattva, has had a desire all of this time and now expresses it in the following prayer:

Bhagavata:

*vraja-vanaukasām vyaktir aṅga te vṛjina-hantry alaṁ viśva-maṅgalam
tyaja manāk ca nas tvat-sprhātmanām sva-jana-hṛd-rujām yan niṣūdanam*

O Precious!

Your appearance here

is promising for the whole world;

it destroys the transgressions

of the citizens of the Vrindavan forest.

Concede a bit of Your remedy

to us, whose hearts pour out to You!

Relieve us, Your own souls

of the spiritual illness

that plague the heart.

Subodhini:

Krishna, Your appearance here is for the expulsion of sin as well as to purify the people who live in the forest areas of Vrindavan. You are auspicious for the entire world.

Primarily, You are here to

banish our blemishes

and provide virtues to all.

Now relent a bit, it is necessary to concede because our souls, minds, intellects, hearts and very self are sweltering with desire for You. If You should ask, "What should I relent?" I'll explain!

We are your own people! In the Gopis' hearts rest the illness of spiritual passion. Cleanse it!

For some You remove sin.

For others You give rewards.

For us, remove this plague
from our souls.

SLOKA 19

A tamasic swamini mixed with rajas says, with some apprehension:

Bhagavata:

*yat te sujāta-caraṇāmburuhaṁ staneṣu bhītāḥ śanaiḥ priya dadhīmahi karkaṣeṣu
tenātavīm aṭasi tad vyathate na kiṁ svit kūrpadibhir bhramati dhīr bhavad-
āyusām naḥ*

O Beloved!

With some trepidation,

slowly place

on our hard breasts

Your feet

that are like lotuses in full bloom.

We, who are Yours and live for You,

are bewildered and wond

those forest roaming lotus feet of Yours,

are they not pained by stones

and other sharp objects?

Subodhini:

We place Your lotus feet that are like flourishing lotuses timidly on our breasts. The reason we do so slowly is that our breasts are very firm.

We call out to You, "O Love,"

because we hold within our breasts

great affection for You.

Your foot is like the mature lotus in full bloom, cool and fragrant. It can remove our pain. Now place that lotus foot on our breasts! We take it and put it there boldly because Krishna is our true love. But now, those very soft feet of Yours, they have abandoned us. They left us because of our own faults and now wander the forests.

Whoever is free of pain,

is able to give pain and will—

but not the one who has

truly endured agony.

And that is why we wonder,

are You really hurt?

The Gopis reflect, "Are You really hurt by those stones and pebbles, or not?" From the mention of stones we know that they are pain-giving sharp pebbles.

If someone were to question, “If He is hurt, how can you have any questions about the situation?” To this the Gopis reply, “It is because our minds are bewildered.”

It is only our minds that are confused. If only we could just verify that Krishna is hurt then our minds could rest peaceful. We also don’t know when You will return from the forest. The reason for all of this agitation is that we live our lives for You, for Hari’s lila.

Before we have revealed our own distress and how our hearts were in agony. Now our condition has accelerated to the point that now we swoon before You and display the final living state of devotion. We have all reached this intense devotional state.

To reenter Krishna’s lila, the Gopis lament and wail. They have sung all of these songs in hopes of becoming firmly established in His form.

The divine affliction that has come to the Gopis

has all arisen because of an examination,

a test of their practice of love.

Chapter 29

Bhagavata:

In the 29th chapter

Krishna showers grace—

He became pleased

with the Gopis' crying.

In the passages to follow, the Gopis receive

answers to their questions.

It is not from the wealth

of any spiritual practice

that the Supreme Hari

can ever be satisfied.

For the bhakta, only humility

is the way to please Hari.

When Hari is pleased,

pain ceases everywhere.

In this chapter,

stanzas of decision are revealed.

They are for “Hari’s bhajan”—

for the blessed worship.

Two chapters ago, the Gopis honored Krishna. They did so by asking the Braja foliage the whereabouts of their beloved Hari.

In the previous chapter, within the Gopi Gita, the swaminis lamented for Krishna and finally realized that:

Not by song or lamentation

will Krishna be attained.

This made them very humble, and then the Gopis started to cry. The sage Sukadeva now explains the situation to the attentive king:

Bhagavata:

SLOKA ONE

O king!

And so it happened:

that those blessed Gopis of Braja

all began to wail

in many different remarkable ways.

They craved “Krishna’s darshan,”

His blessed sight,

and they all started to cry

in a high and beautiful tone.

Subodhini:

It has already been explained how the Gopis sang loudly and lamented for the sight of their Beloved Krishna. The Gopis explained:

Our calling out to Hari

is in perfect unity.

The Gopis’ cry out to Krishna is manifold and amazing. It was only when they realized that neither their song nor lamentation had sufficient resources to attain their Beloved that they started to cry very loudly. The reason for the spiritual wail is that “they wanted to have Krishna’s darshan.” In this, they had no program to protect their material bodies in any way.

And then Krishna became

Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva

before again becoming Krishna.

Krishna became Brahma when the Gopis became haughty, a rajasic aspect also seen in their subsequent singing. Brahma is the deity of rajas.

Krishna became Vishnu when the Gopis realized that He had left them because of their pride. This made them humble and humility is a virtuous pure state, a condition of sattva. Vishnu is the deity of sattva and so that lila phase is Vishnu.

When the Gopis started to cry, the lila turns into Rudra who is also called Shiva. Rudra also refers to crying. When the Gopis started to cry, they had left all other means of spiritual attainment.

It was after the swaminis of Braja cried their hearts out for Hari that Krishna again became Krishna and appeared before them.

Glossary – by Bholi Gopi

Every Sanskrit word utilized in the translated portion of the text or in a definition has been concisely defined below. Note that there are numerous ways to translate Sanskrit words, names and concepts within the various yogic schools. For the purpose of this text, I have decided to use the following English translations to nourish content comprehension and to fuel curiosity into the boundlessness of Sanskrit.

Achyuta- a name of God, meaning undefeatable

Adri- the peak of a hill

Bhagavan- name of God, describing the One who is seen as compassionate, caring, and concerned for the welfare of all beings

Bhagavatam, Shrimad- the most recently compiled text with the school of Vedanta; containing Shri Krishna's pastimes upon this Earth, by Shri Veda Vyasa

Bhakta- a lover of God

Brahma- the aspect of the divine who creates, associated with rajasic energy

Braja- a region, 168 miles in circumference, in north central India, known as the place where Shri Krishna herded His cows and created His childhood plays

Dasa/Dasi- a servant of God (masculine/feminine)

Dharma- duty, purpose, reason for incarnating

Dharmi- the granter and creator of all dharmas

Darshana- a divine vision

Gopi- literal meaning: go- cow or senses, pi- controller, yet well-known as the dairymaids, the gurus of devotion, Shri Krishna's love manifest.

Guna- a trait, attribute, nature (literal meaning is fault or disturbance, referring to the imbalances the trait can cause as a participant in the material world)

Hari- a name of God, meaning yellowish, golden hues

Ishvara- a name of God, meaning supreme Lord, reigning over all gods

Kaliya- the snake who tried to eat all of Shri Krishna's gopas in a lila revealed in the Shrimad Bhagavatam

Kama- lord of desire

Kama Shastra- a sacred text revealing the methods on how to transcend inferior uses of one's energy

Katha amrita- spiritual texts revealing the nature of God and how one can come to understand God here on this Earth; can be any spiritually acclaimed text from any tradition across the globe and beyond

Kumarika- the group of Gopis who are unmarried to anyone in the world

Lakshmi- Goddess of opulence, fortune, prosperity; Vishnu's counterpart

Lila- divine play or drama arising here on Earth and everywhere, all of the time

Maha Mantra- considered to be the great mantra for connecting with God : Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare, Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare

Maya- illusory energy, considered to be a devi, a servant of God

Nama - translates as name.

Nirguna - nature said to be beyond all material modes, associated with carrying divine characteristics: God-intoxication, divine sweetness, softness, one-pointed concentration, love

Parikiya- married (dairymaids)

Parikshit- aspiring yogi who wants to become liberated before he dies, so he asks his teacher, Shri Sukadeva, to teach him the Vedanta

Prana- life force, the animating force, as well as one of the five winds contained in the body

Pushti Margiya- a path of Bhakti renowned for its household worshipping practices, literature, musical compositions, and blood lineage directly linked back to Vallabhacharya.

Rajas- a guna or nature of material energy, expressed as movement, yet the spiritual counterpart associated with rajas is passion

Rasa- immortal nectar

Rishaha- name of God, meaning lordly husband (*)

Subodhini- Shri Vallabhacharya's commentary on the Shrimad Bhagavatam

Sattva- a guna or nature of material energy, expressed as light and balanced, yet the counterpart associated with sattva is humble

Srutirupa- sageous forms; forms of truth

Swamini- a delicate and not-often utilized term to describe Shri Krishna's love manifest as a female lover of God, goddess

Samsara- the cycle of birth and death

Shiva- the aspect of the divine who transforms; associated with tamasic energy

Smita- smirk, smile

Sukadeva- the sage who teaches the King Parikshit yoga and the sacred texts to enlighten him before he dies

Tamas- a guna or nature of material energy, expressed as dull, lethargic, ignorant, yet the spiritual counterpart associated with tamas is obstinacy

Vaikhanasa- originally the name of a sage, now a Vaisnava tradition of worship

Vaikuntha- the eternal abode of Vishnu and Lakshmi, where they rest

Vaishnava- worshipper of Bhagavan

Vallabhacharya, Shri- 16th century saint, South Indian native, founder of Pushti Margiya, wrote 16 works on devotion to God

Veda Vyasa- Bhakti saint who compiled the Vedanta, the most recent school of thought blossoming out of India.

Venkat- the name of a sacred hill in southern India

Vira- king

Vishnu- the aspect of the divine who sustains, associated with sattvic energy

Vyomasura- a flying, giant demon who could transform, whom Krishna destroyed

Yadava- the clan of warriors from whom Shri Krishna was born

Yashoda- Krishna's mother, the one who raised him in Braja

Shri Vallabhacharya's 16 works:

1. *Shri Yamunashtakam (In Praise of Shri Yamunaji)*
2. *Baala Bodhah (Instructions for Spiritual Children)*

3. *Siddhanta Muktavali (The Pearl Necklace Teachings)*
4. *Pushti Pravaha Maryadabhedah (The Paths of Grace, Mundane Flow and Lawful Limitations)*
5. *Siddhanta Rahasyam (The Secret Doctrine)*
6. *Navatratnam (The Nine Jewels)*
7. *Antah Karana Prabodhah (An Appeal to My Heart)*
8. *Viveka Dhairya Aashraya (Wisdom, Perserverence and Refuge)*
9. *Krishna Aashrayam (Refuge in Krishna)*
10. *Chatuhshloki (Four Verses)*
11. *Bhakti Vardhini (How to Increase Devotion)*
12. *Jala Bhed (Differences in Waters)*
13. *Pancha Padyaani (Five Lines and Five Listeners)*
14. *Sanyasa Nirnaya (My Conclusions on Renunciation)*
15. *Nirodha Lakshanam (Nirodha, Bound by Hari)*
16. *Seva Phalam (The Rewards of Seva)*

Texts translated by Shyamdas:

1. *Inner Goddess*
2. *The Path of Grace*
3. *In Praise of Vallabh*
4. *Eighty-four Vaishnavas*
5. *252 Vaishnavas, Parts 1-3*
6. *Eighty-four Seats: Chaurasi Baithak*
7. *Ocean of Jewels: The Prameyaratnarnava of Lallu Bhatta*
8. *Ocean of Grace: The Teachings of H.H. Goswami Prathameshji*
9. *Krishna's Inner Circle: The Ashta Chaap Poets*
10. *The Amazing Story of Shri Nathji*
11. *Venu Gita: The Song of the Flute*
12. *Loving Wisdom*
13. *Shiksha Patra: Shri Harirayaji's 41 Letters*