

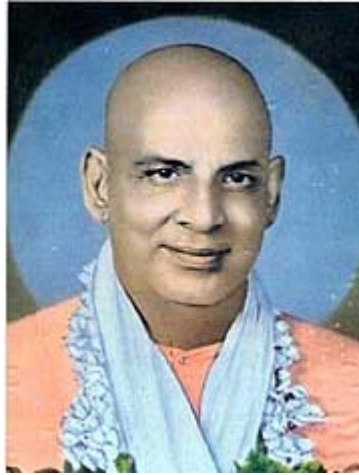
RADHA'S PREM

(A DRAMA)

**Heart is the symbol of Love.
Love is Truth. Love is Power.
Love is God. To love God is to love man
and to love man is to worship God.**

By

SRI SWAMI SIVANANDA



**Sri Swami Sivananda
Founder of
The Divine Life Society**



**SERVE, LOVE, GIVE,
PURIFY, MEDITATE,
REALIZE
So Says
Sri Swami Sivananda**

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**DEDICATED TO RADHA—THE WORLD-MOTHER
AND
HER LORD MURLI MANOHAR**

LOVE IS GOD

Pandit Chamanlal Ji,
Chandausi

1st January, 1950.

Beloved of God!

Salutations. Heartiest greetings for a spiritually Glorious, prosperous, happy New Year.

To you, who are leading the Divine Life, the New Year brings a really new year, something very different from the old year! It marks another milestone on the road to God. Feel, realise that on this New Year's Day you have had a rebirth into the Divine.

You are the Beloved of God. For, you love God. This Love of God is the fruit of many, many lives of Tapasya that you have lived. Kindly guard it zealously through Japa, Kirtan, Swadhyaya, Dhyana, Charity, and Introspection.

The Lord is ever with you. He is everywhere. He surrounds you and fills your being. See God and God alone in all faces. Feel that He is the Indweller of all beings. Love all. Serve all. Then, He, through everyone, will make you happy.

May Lord bless you and your family with health, long life, prosperity and devotion.

Thy own Self,

Swami Sivananda

This Letter was written by Sri Gurudev to Sri Swami Arpanananda ji Maharaj.

PUBLISHER'S PREFACE

This publication titled "Radha's Prem" by Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj is a dramatic presentation of the various stages and phases of Supreme Divine Love, as illustrated in the life of the exemplary symbol of devotion, Shri Radha Ji of Brindavan, in Her love for Lord Krishna. The conversational depiction of the dramatis personae is eminently suited to present a histrionic effect on the minds of the readers. The intention of the work is to highlight the Supremacy of Divine Love or devotion as a pre-eminent way to God-realisation.

Usually, love, in common parlance, is construed as the medium employed by feeling by which the lover and the beloved are brought in contact with each other in an experience of communion, though normally two individuals cannot commune with each other by any amount of mutual affection on account of the fact that individualities maintain their formal self-identity and the one does not lose oneself in the other. Thus, mortal love, human affection, is an artificial mechanism which promises a union of the lover and the loved one but never does really fulfil the promise. Earthly love thus ends in sorrow, bereavement and death, since the principle of separation is permanently at the back of even the attempted union through sensory and mental acts of mutual contact.

Divine Love is of a different nature altogether. Persons who are enmeshed in thinking through their physical body and the senses cannot arise to the level of a state of love which does not require an object outside itself and therefore obviates the necessity for any endeavour for external contact. Divine Love is the soul pouring itself on soul, the Infinite colliding with the Infinite in the forms of perception and objects of cognition.

The life of Sri Krishna and the love of Sri Radha are a famous, lofty tradition come down to us as beckoners to a superhuman form of spiritual longing quite unknown to the mind lodged in physical matter or the bodily encasement. Through the pages of this book will be revealed eminently the forms of Godly love and its ways which are an eludingly multifarious variety. The Rasa Panchadhyayee of the Srimad Bhagavata is supposed to be the quintessential narration of the dramatic enactment through which Divine Love manifests itself in action and ecstasy. The author, a great saint and sage, caters through these pages an excellent treat for the benefit of all devotees throughout the World.

—THE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY

Shivanandanagar,
25th February, 1987.

FOREWORD

Civilised society is afflicted with a number of diseases. Some of them are disreputable and some fashionable. Amongst the latter, scepticism and irreligion are two widely prevalent afflictions. The modern man takes pride in his fashionable maladies. In their negative aspect, the complaint remains in the form of a general disbelief. In this stage it is not so dangerous. In a more virulent stage it assumes the form of criticising and attacking religion, traditional belief, long-cherished ideas and time-honoured truths. In this form it is a serious and complicated combination of Asuric blasphemy, obstinate egoism and aggressive agnosticism. The purblind vision of the patient then perceives defects in divinity, dark carbon in the dazzling diamond and base passions in the very perfection of spiritual purity and divine love. To counteract these dire maladies, a new technique of divine ray-therapy is necessary. There is no other method. Treat him with divine rays of spiritual knowledge and let him absorb the light emanating from the Jnana Surya of the spiritual realm and the patient will be affected and the jaundiced vision of disbelief will give place to a true insight and understanding of the real nature of the divine frame, the Radha-Krishna Tattva and the glory of the divine nature, the devotee's love and potency of the Divine Name.

This brilliant little play forms such a course of spiritual treatment. This revealing light ray will surely penetrate into the diseased system of those that fail to see the glory of divine love in its proper light and open their inner vision, bestowing devotion and faith unto them.

The absolute purity of the Gopi's hearts by far surpasses the Himalayan snow. Become pure. Then you may understand just a little of the grandeur of divine love.

INTRODUCTION

Salutations to Sri Radha, the World-Mother, who took her birth at Barshana, near Vrindavan, who is an embodiment of Sri Krishna Prem!

The supreme emotion, Mahabhava, is the quintessence of Prem. Radha is the personification of this Supreme Emotion. The play of Radha with Sri Krishna is extremely deep; it cannot be learnt from the Dasya, Vatsalya and other Bhavas. The Sakhis alone are qualified for it. They alone relish this Leela in full. Sakhis, or those who worship Sri Krishna in the spirit of His Sakhis, have a right to this Leela.

A Sakhi does not yearn to play with Krishna all by herself. She feels a keener delight in contriving Krishna's dalliance with Radha, Radha is indeed the Wish-yielding Creeper, Kalpalata, of the love of Krishna. The Sakhis are the leaves, flowers, and shoots of the creeper. If the nectar of dalliance with Krishna waters the creeper, the leaves, etc., take delight in it million times more than if they themselves had been watered.

The Sakhis do not long for Sri Krishna's embrace, but they exert themselves to make Sri Krishna embrace Radha. They send Krishna to her for this purpose under various pretexts. They attain thereby a bliss million times sweeter than that of selfish enjoyment. The unselfish devotion of these towards each other strengthens the deliciousness, Rasa. The sight of such unselfish, pure Prem pleases Lord Krishna. The love felt by the Gopis, is not really earthly lust. Earthly lust seeks sensual gratification for one's own self. The Gopis abandon all idea of self and seek Krishna's enjoyment. They did not yearn for their own pleasure. They embrace Krishna only to please Him.

You cannot attain Krishna, however much you worship Him, if you only meditate on Him as a Divinity and not serve Him as a Gopi. See how Lakshmi adored Him, but could not attain Him in Vraja.

Radha is Devi. She is the queen of lustrous beauties and the abode of Sri Krishna's love-sports and worship. She beholds Lord Krishna in anything and everything she sets Her love-lit eyes upon. Lord Krishna is the supreme matchless Lover and Sri Radha is identical with Krishna. She is part and parcel of Krishna and His love-energy. Her sole object of existence and devout prayers, is to fulfil the wishes of Sri Krishna. Hence She is named Krishnamayi by the Puranas. She is full of Krishna inside and outside. Krishna is the charmer of all. Radha is Krishna's charmer and therefore the Supreme Goddess.

She is the worshipped of all the worshipped deities. She is the fosterer and mother of the worlds. She is the presiding deity of the Lakshmis of Vaikuntha or of the six divine attributes of Lord Krishna. She is the chief of Krishna's divine energies. She is the seat of concentrated beauties or the source and centre from which the Lakshmis draw their beauties.

Lord Krishna is the embodiment of bliss. He is the source and centre of real happiness. Bliss is divine elixir that bestows immortality. Sensual pleasure is a poison which causes diseases and death. Lord Krishna has a certain energy called Antaranga or Svarup Shakti. This Shakti which has the power of giving delight to Krishna and His Devotees, is called Hladini Shakti or delight-giving

energy. The essence of Hladini is Prem or selfless Krishna's Prem. This selfless love is called Ananda-Chinmaya-Rasa. The quintessence of this Rasa or Mahabhava is Radha.

Radha is the embodiment of Mahabhava. The word Radha etymologically means a devotee. Radha is the chief of Krishna's sweethearts. All the Lakshmis of Vaikuntha are Her Vilasa-Murtis. The queens of Dwaraka are Her reflections. Lalita and other Gopis of Vrindavan are Her manifold forms. She pervades the Gopis in Her subtle form in order to contribute to Krishna's enjoyment. Radha is Krishna's delighter, charmer and life's all. She is the queen of all the lovely maidens of Vraja. She is the Crest-Gem of all celestial beauties. Radha and Krishna are inseparable as fire and its heat, ice and its coolness, the flowers and its fragrance.

The body of Radha is made up of sweet tenderness and loveliness for Sri Krishna. The substance of her subtle form as Mahabhava is Krishna Prem. Ardent passion for Sri Krishna is her dress. Her sweet radiant smile is the camphor. All good qualities are her garlands. All the Bhavas form the ornaments, her limbs. Lord Krishna's name, qualities form the ornaments of Her ears. Krishna's name and qualities flow out in a stream from Her tongue. She serves Krishna with the drink of Premarasa or Shyama-rasa.

The culmination of Bhakti is reached in Madhurya-Bhava. The lover and the Beloved become one through the intensity of love. Radha had this type of love. In Madhurya-bhava there is the closest relationship between the devotee and the Lord. There is no sensuality in Madhurya-Bhava. There is no tinge of carnality in it. Passionate people cannot understand this Bhava as their minds are saturated with passion and lower sexual appetite. In the secular sphere the only "love" which approaches this Bhava to an appreciable nearness is the love, a grown-up son has to his mother. Here, there is not even a semblance of the sex-element prevalent. Is there the least carnality in the love, a son has for his mother? Sufistis saints also have the Bhava of lover and the beloved (Madhurya-Bhava). Gita Govinda written by Jaya Deva is full of Madhurya-Rasa. The language of love which the mystic uses cannot be comprehended by worldly persons. Only Gopis, Radha, Mira, Tukaram, Narada, Hafiz, can understand the language.

Glory to Radha, the consort of Lord Krishna! Glory, glory to Lord Krishna, the Joy of Devaki, the goal of Yogis, the refuge of devotees, and the delight of Yasoda and Nanda. May their blessings be upon you all!

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RADHA'S PREM

(A One Act play in five scenes to bring out the supreme position of Bhakti in Yoga Sadhana.)

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Jnana Dev .. A Brahma-Jnani and votary of the Yoga of Synthesis.

Atmanandaji .. A Bhakti-Jnana Yogi.

Prem Das .. A student of Bhakti Yoga.

Murkharaj .. A disbeliever in Name and Form.

Dayalchand .. A friend of Murkharaj.

A few companions of Murkharaj.

Lord Krishna.

Sri Rukmini
:.. Sri Krishna's consorts.

Sri Satyabhama.....:

Sri Radha .. Sri Krishna's Beloved.

Some Ranis.

Lalita.....

:

Bishaka.....:.. Gopis

:

Nirmala.....:

Nrityaranjini .. Sri Krishna's court-dancer.

SYNOPSIS

The drama that is now presented before you purports to bring out clearly the sublimity of the Path of Devotion to the Lord and also the essential unity underlying the three main-Paths. Truth is one; sages call it variously. By whichever route you ascend, you reach the same peak. This truth is brought out in the five scenes of this drama. Jnana Dev, a votary of the Yoga of Synthesis, is the principal character. To him is allotted the task of propounding the great ideas lying hidden under the surface of apparently commonplace-acts of the Divine Avatars. The Leelas of Krishna who incarnated on this earth to bring home to humanity the greatness of Bhakti Yoga and who through his actions, taught humanity for all time the technique of devotion, are taken up by Jnana Dev and analysed. In the first two scenes, Prem Das's doubts and difficulties regarding the Leelas are cleared. Murkharaj, a man steeped in worldliness, plays a leading role in the next two scenes. Jnana Dev, by his scholarly expositions and practical illustrations is able to convert him into a Bhakta. In the last scene Atmanandaji, another Bhakti-Yogi, joins hands with Jnana Dev and in the end Murkharaj becomes a completely changed man, as it were, and even undertakes to preach the Yoga of Synthesis to the world at large.

Scene I

The one seemingly paradoxical feature in Sri Krishna's Avatara which has heckled the innocent and semi-wise Bhakta and which has provided formidable and poisonous ammunition to the crooked disbeliever in devotion for use against such a Bhakta, has been Sri Krishna's Rasa Leela with the Gopis. The first scene brings out clearly the most appropriate answer to the quixotic questions of this type of perverted intellect which cannot conceive of human relationship between man and woman other than through the medium of the flesh, the nobler spiritual love which permeated—nay was part and parcel of the Gopis. The Adwaitic Bhav of Para Bhakti is vividly put before you by Sri Jnana Dev.

Scene II

This scene is illustrative of the qualities of Para Bhakti—absolute effacement of the ego and complete self-surrender. A Supreme Bhakta never for a moment stops to think about himself, but has the joy of his beloved Lord—and that alone—before him. He loses himself in the service of his Lord—an ideal Karma Yogin. There is complete oneness between him and his Lord—the peak of Adwaita. Sri Radha's attitude towards Krishna is taken to illustrate this; and an incident in their life is narrated. To remove the jealousy which the other Ranis entertain towards Radha, Sri Krishna pretends that he has intense pain in the stomach and wants the Charanamrita of a Bhakta, the only medicine. None except Radha (who forms the ideal for a Bhakta to emulate) is willing to give this medicine to Krishna. Every one thinks of his or her own happiness, in this world or in the other; but Radha has the only aim of removing the Lord's pain and so, unmindful of her friends' remonstrances, gives the "medicine"!

Scene III

The third scene brings the Sakara and Nirakara Dhyani nearer each other—in fact they merge into each other. The wide gulf of superstitious belief against Sakara or Nirakara Upasana is

SYNOPSIS

bridged. It is shown, again by means of intelligent reasoning, how one is as essential as the other in the different stages of the evolution of man and how one smoothly leads to the other.

Scene IV

Scene IV gives a convincing scientific simile to show the effect of repeating the Name. It also brings down those who live in the Fool's Paradise, like Murkharaj, thinking they will do Kirtan and Japa when they are old and dying. By means of simple illustrations it brings home the necessity of repeating the Lord's Name incessantly till the Goal is reached.

Scene V

Again, in the fifth scene there is a happy fusion of the different paths. Another incident in Sri Krishnavatara is taken up as a main theme. The jealous gopis steal Sri Krishna's flute and break it. Sri Krishna explains the significance of his flute and also the philosophical truth behind it. The flute is the ideal of a Yogi. It empties itself so that it may be filled with more and more of the Lord's Divine music, thus qualifying itself to the privilege of ever remaining nearest and dearest to Him. In Divine ecstatic music the flute and the Lord become one and all duality disappears. So, can a Yogi become a Bhakta through selfless service and then even the duality of being nearest and dearest to the Lord disappears when he attains Para Bhakti and identifies himself with the Beloved.

RADHA'S PREM

ACT 1

SCENE I

1. Secret of Rasa Leela

[Place:—Ashram of Swami Jnana Dev. Time—8 o'clock in the evening]

(Enter Prem Das and his Party of Sankirtanists) (All Sing in Chorus)

Narayanam Bhaje, Narayanam Bhaje, Narayanam Bhaje, Narayanam.
Ram Ram Ram Ram Ram; Ram Ram Ram Ram
Ram Ram Ram Ram Ram Ram; Ram Ram Ram
Rama Krishna Hari, Rama Krishna Hari Krishna Hari Ram Ram Ram
Radha Krishna Hari, Radha Krishna Hari, Radha Krishna Hari, Shyam Shyam Shyam.

[Sri Jnana Dev gives an absorbing discourse on Skandha X (Chapter 29—33) of the Bhagavata describing the sublime Rasa Leela. At the end of the lecture, after the others have left the Ashram, Prem Das approaches Jnana Dev, prostrates before him]

Prem Das: May I crave the indulgence of Your Holiness to clear a doubt which afflicts my mind, Swamiji Maharaj?

Jnana Dev: Yes, my child. I am always at the service of sincere aspirants. Go ahead. You need not stand on any formality with me.

Prem Das: Swamiji, the people nowadays make contemptuous references to Lord Krishna's Rasa Leela. Though I feel that there must be a sublime truth behind His Leela, I am not able to offer satisfactory explanation to those vile critics, whom I have to face very often during the course of my Sankirtan tours. I shall be eternally grateful to you if you will kindly throw some light on this Mystery.

Jnana Dev: What exactly is your difficulty?

Prem Das: According to the Code of Dharma, it is adultery to remain in the company of wives of other persons, to entice them and to sport and dance with them secretly. Is Lord Krishna to be condemned for His conduct in this respect during Rasa Leela?

Jnana Dev: Ah! A really pardonable doubt. Just listen to this marvellous incident I am going to narrate to you and reflect on its deep import. The women of Vraja once asked Lord Krishna to name some Brahmin to whom they could offer food. Lord Krishna named "Durvasa". The Gopis asked: "How can we approach him? There is the Yamuna which is in floods. How are we to cross it? Name some other Mahatma, please". The Lord said "Request Yamuna in the name of Nitya

SCENE I

Brahmachari Krishna to give way and it will instantly do so. The Gopis were amused, and though sceptic, did as requested and lo! the river at once gave way for the perplexed Gopis to cross it; Yamuna indeed knew the real Svarupa of Krishna, the spotless divine purity that He was! He was a Nitya Brahmacharin.

Prem Das: That is a story I have often heard. But how can that be? He spent a whole night with the Gopis and is said to have married 16,008 wives!

Jnana Dev:—It all sounds curious to you, doesn't it? Lord Krishna's Rasa Leela is a mystery of mysteries. "Go" means a Jiva or Ego. Gopala means the protector of Jivas. "Go" means also Prithivi or this earth or in other words the Prakriti as distinguished from the Purusha Supreme. All Jivakotis are Prakriti-sambhava. Gopala means the Lord and the protector of the entire Jiva-rashis. Krishna means a kishora, i.e., a person between 7 and 12 years of age. At the centre of Vrindawan, is the octagonal Yoga-seat of Sri Krishna. He is the Lord of it. Brahma, Vishnu and Siva are His parts. His primal Prakriti (life element by which He upholds the whole Universe) is Radhika. Govinda with Radha is seated on the golden throne, on the seat of Yoga with his favourites, Chandravati, Chitrarekha, Chandra, Madana Sundari, Sri Madhumati, Chandrarekha, Hari-priya. The latter were His chief Sakhis (Pat Ranis).

Prem Das: You are puzzling me further. But how does all this excuse the actions of Krishna?

Jnana Dev:—Yes, I will tell you. But it seems preposterous to me. I should attempt to explain this transcendental mystery to you. Who can presume to explain the Rasa Leela? What mortal mind can approach, even in its wildest flights of imagination, the divinity, the sublimity of Rasa Leela of the Lord? Words are of no avail. The tongue fails. The poor mind or the intellect cannot reach the heights of Truth. No one can really *explain* the Truth, this Mystery, to any one else. Nor can any one grasp this sublime Leela from another's lips. Haven't you read in the Gita:

आश्चर्यवत् पश्यति कश्चिदेनं आश्चर्यवद्ब्रुवति तथैव चान्यः ।

आश्चर्यवच्चैनमन्यः शृणोति श्रुत्वाप्येनं वेद न चैव कश्चित् ॥ २.२९ ॥

āścaryavata paśyati kaścidenam āścaryavadvadati tathaiva cānyaḥ |
āścaryavaccainamanyaḥ śṛṇoti śrutvāpyenam veda na caiva kaścit ||2.29||

One sees This (the Self) as a wonder; another speaks of It as a wonder;
another hears of It as a wonder; yet, having heard, none understands It at all. (2.29)

God and His Leelas are not matters for discussion. They are for direct perception and realisation. Ah, the Bliss that you get out of this realisation, that itself is indescribable!

Now, I was saying something about Radhika and the pat-Ranis. Next to these in importance comes the group of Gopis. The Gopis were the medium for the Lord to express the infinite variety of His Bliss aspect. They were, in their previous birth, the sages of Dandaka forest, who wanted to

embrace Rama. As Rama had taken the vow of "Ekapatnee-vrata" in that Avatar, he could not accede to their request, but promised to fulfil their desire in His next Avatar as Krishna. The sages were born as Gopis in their next birth for eventual merging into the Lord. They had their husbands, their parents and sons, they had their worldly duties to perform, some of them arduous enough to require constant attention. But the Gopis' mind was always fixed on the Lord. When the time came for the union with the Purusha of the Heart, when the signal music was heard, every Gopi shook off all the bonds and offered herself up completely to the Lord. Nothing in the world could stop them. This is the highest form of Bhakti. They present an ideal for us to keep always before us. How can their glory be described?

Prem Das:—Excuse me, Maharaj. I am a bit dull-headed. Were not the Gopis guilty of deserting their husbands and Krishna of seducing them with His music?

Jnana Dev:—No, Sri Krishna performed the Rasa Leela to destroy carnality by means of pure love or Prema. When the Gopis approached their Lord, there was no human passion in them, no love of human flesh, no idea of material gratification. It was the attraction of the soul for the Oversoul. They placed themselves entirely at the service of the Lord. They were permeated with Madhurya Bhav. The Lord only cared for their yearning to unite with Him and not for their external status the worldly surroundings created by their Prarabdha Karma. The Vrindavana Leela is Nitya or constant. The Rasa Leela is for all time for the true Bhaktas. It was meant to build up faith, to strengthen spirituality, holiness, to improve the minds of the Gopis in particular and humanity in general.

Prem Das:—May be. But how does it help us in our spiritual path? To a lay mind it all looks as one of the things which happen in a man's life which had better be forgotten.

Jnana Dev:—No. It was not merely a historical incident, but an eternal fact. The night is the time of rest when spiritual activity sets in. There is complete absence of Loka Vasanas. Man gets spiritual teachings and advancement during that period unconsciously. But it is only for a few who have a conscious union with the Lord who manifests Himself in the heart of man. Many will have dreamless and peaceful sleep but only few will enter the Turiya. Purusha is one Jiva Prakritis or Para Prakritis are many. To Purusha the Jiva must always be negative, however positive it may be towards the forms of Aparā Prakriti. The Chaitanya is the Purushottama who generates bliss all round the Purusha. There is no sex here. Purushottama is always the male and to Him Jiva Prakriti is always a female. In devotional practice one should consider oneself a female, the male being the Lord of the Universe, as reflected in the heart of the Bhakta. The Gopis were not of the world. They had become purified by Tapas in their previous birth. In this birth they should merge in the Lord. For the sake of the blind man who will not learn anything from the Sastras, they took the bodies of gopis to show man how to love the Lord.

Prem Das:—You make my head reel by your explanation!

Jnana Dev: Truth is, as I said, strange, wonderful, deep in its import. Listen! They had every right to the union with the Lord and Sri Krishna could not deny them his companionship. Nay, it was a great thing to the Lord Himself, that the Jivas should return to Him with all their spiritual experiences. The concession was natural and the joy was mutual.

SCENE I

Let not the dullness of perception or the mean lust of passion in man sit in judgment over this final beatitude of human aspirations. But in the midst of the Union itself, there is a danger, a most subtle one at that, that of the Egoism “I am in union with the Lord”. The Gopis thought of themselves and there was an instant break in the union. Krishna could not be seen anywhere. They imitated His actions in the world. They followed His footsteps wherever found. Tears rained down their cheeks. They now realised that the Lord they wanted was not only the son of Yasoda but the Lord of the Universe and they forgot their egoism in their wonderful realisation and lo! the Lord appeared again. The best way to get rid of egoism is to forget it completely or to deny its existence whole-heartedly. This time there was union but not individual union. Hand in hand, the Gopis formed a circle with their Lord—not the individual Lord but the Universal Lord making Himself many in their hearts as well as outside—and went on dancing with Him. The people of Vraja, however, never missed their wives (Gopis) from their sides, through the Lord’s Yoga Maya! The Devas looked with wonder and envied the lot of the Gopis. Let us catch a glimpse of that divine love and dance—that Rasa Leela—so that men may become gods on earth. Study the Bhagawata with faith and devotion. Though even that has its own good results by way of creating good Samskaras, mere reading is not all. You should understand the meaning. Meditate on the sublime ideas underlying each Leela of the Lord. The doors of the Great Secret will slowly, one by one, open to reveal to your powerful, concentrated gaze, the immortal Truth that is apparently closed to human vision through man’s ignorance. Once you tear this veil, you will realise you are the Lord Himself—the state experienced by Radha.

Prem Das: Swamiji, our doubts about Rasa Leela have been melted away by the fiery discourse you have given. We are immensely grateful to you.

(Prostrates).

Jnana Dev: (Sings).

Love is divine, Love is Prem, Love is nectar Love purifies, Love redeems, Love transmutes.
Cultivate pure Love in the garden of your heart. God is Love.
A life without love, faith, devotion is a dreary waste and *real death*.
Develop burning Vairagya, shed tears of Prem, you will meet now your beloved.

God bless you all. It is time for your food. By the way, are you going to stay here? (*Prem Das nods assent.*) Oh! That is good. Saswat Swamiji, please attend to his comforts, give him food, and take him to the room near the temple. Om Namo Narayanaya.

(Saswat Swamiji leads Prem Das—Exeunt).

SCENE II

(Next day evening at 8 p.m. all the devotees assemble in the verandah of Sri Jnana Dev's cottage. The Swami has specially illumined the hermitage as it was Radha Jayanti day. A large picture of Sri Krishna playing the flute for Sri Radha to dance, is placed on a specially decorated altar. Puja is performed by the Swamiji himself. Prayers are said in a melodious and resounding chorus by the inmates led by Swamiji. All the time the Swami is engrossed in the Divine music and Radha's dance. Slowly he passes into a trance. A bright smile lights up his face. The gathering looks on amazed at the sight and in a self-forgetting mood, begins to sing Kirtans. Slowly the Swami comes back to consciousness. Prem Das who has all the time been watching what was going on is visibly moved.)

Jnana Dev: Sings:(all others follow in chorus)

Mana Mohan Murli Vale Tumko Lakhon Pranam.
Gokul Mathura Vale Tumko Lakhon Pranam.
Raas Rachane Vale Tumko Lakhon Pranam.
Gaiya Charane Vale Tumko Lakhon Pranam.
Makhan Chorane Vale Tumko Lakhon Pranam.
Ananda Dene Vale Tumko Lakhon Pranam.
Bansi Bajane Vale Tumko Lakhon Pranam.
Gita Jnana Sunane Vale Tumko Lakhon Pranam.
Giridhar Uthane Vale Tumko Lakhon Pranam.
Kannaya Kahane Vale Tumko Lakhon Pranam.

On the most auspicious day of Radha Jayanti let us pray to Her to give us all intense devotion to the Lord and lead us on to the light of Truth, Sri Krishna. Verily the Lord is more easily moved when we approach Him through our Divine Mother; and it is a well-known fact that women have an abundance of sympathy and affection overflowing in their heart. Lord Narayana is more easily propitiated through Sri Lakshmi; Siva through Parvati. Sri Krishna through Radha. May you all attain Para Bhakti and through Her Grace reach the sublimest heights of Vedanta where you feel your oneness with the Lord!

Prem Das: Swamiji Maharaj! Your discourse yesterday provided much food for our thought. The more we think of the Rasa Leela the more vividly does the Truth present itself before us. Yesterday you made a passing remark to Radhika as the primal Prakriti of the Lord. Again you said that all the thousands of Gopis had intense love for the Lord. Why then should there have been partiality on the part of the Lord towards Radha? No doubt myself and my party of Sankirtanists have always associated Radha with Sri Krishna in our Bhajan. But I must confess that I have never bestowed any thought on the "why" of it. Yesterday it occurred to me after listening to your most illuminating and simple discourse on Rasa Leela that you are the fittest soul to have this mystery revealed to our eye.

Jnana Dev: You are really a divine child to have this inquiring mind. The general state in which we find humanity today is that some have absolute blind faith in His Leelas and would not question; others will not believe—the perverted intellectuals—and would go on vilifying His

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Leelas without caring to enquire. Don't you know the famous adage: For those who believe, no explanation is necessary; for those who do not, no explanation is possible! On the one hand we have to encounter overcredulousness, on the other, disbelief, scepticism, perversion. Meditate daily on one of His Leelas; great truths will dance before you.

Radha is the Ananda aspect of the Sat-Chit-Ananda Brahman. Can a piece of sugar-candy taste its own sweetness? This Lord in His inscrutable ways wanted to taste the Ananda of His own Svarupa. And so, He projected Radha and Himself was born as Sri Krishna.

Now, then, listen to a small story. Once Sri Rukmini, Satyabhama and the six other Pat Ranis referred to by me yesterday, had a discussion: "We all love and serve our Lord with great devotion and sincerity but He does not bestow any attention on any of us. He always repeats Radha's name alone. We must ascertain from our Lord why she is so dear to Him".

(Lord Krishna comes and He is garlanded by all of them. They sing and welcome Him.)

Radha Krishna Bhajo Kunjabihari.
Muralidhara Govardhanadhari.
Sankha-Chakra Pitambaradhari.
Karunasagara Krishna Murari.

(Repeat first line four times.)

(Sri Krishna is extremely pleased at the very mention of Radha's name; repeats "Radhe, Radhe" and is immersed in the bliss of the name "Radha". The Ranis all stand at a respectable distance watching this. Then pent-up emotion bursts out and tears rain down their cheeks. Sri Krishna, still lost in his trance sits down. Rukmini gains control over herself after a little while, signals to Nrityaranjini to dance and bring the Lord back to consciousness.)

(Enter Nrityaranjini)

Sunaja Sunaja Sunaja Krishna
Tu Giatwala Jnana Sunaja Krishna.
Pilathe Pilathe Pilathe Krishna
O Prem bhar Pyala Pilathe Krishna.
Laghaja Laghaja Laghaja Krishna
Meri Nayyaku Para Laghaja Krishna.

Sri Krishna slowly regains consciousness.

(Exit Nrityaranjini)

Lord Krishna: My dear Ranis! Your faces indicate that you are worried over something. I see traces of tears left on your smooth flowery cheeks. May I know what it is that stands in the way of my enjoying the sight of the sweet and blissful faces of all of you, my dear ones?

Rukmini: My Lord. We all serve you, sincerely and devoutly. We love you; we adore you. Yet you always repeat Radha's name and show great reverence to it. This pains us greatly. Are we not superior to Radha in our devotion to you? This thought greatly torments us.

Lord Krishna: Rukmini, you—every one of you—no doubt, serve me with all sincerity, but as you yourself said just now, you feel you are superior to others on account of your relationship towards me. When you nourish your ego with such ideas, where is the necessity for me to think of any of you? But Radha has no such thoughts of herself or her superiority to others. She is completely merged in me; she has burnt up all her ego. Therefore, I should bring her particularly into my sphere of protection by always remembering her and attending to her welfare.

Rukmini: My Lord, we can't follow you. You are rather puzzling us. What do you mean by saying that Radha has completely merged herself in you and that we have not? Have we not surrendered ourselves to you completely? Why, we are even prepared to give up our life in your service!

Lord Krishna: My dear Rukmini, don't be so impatient. Wait for some time and you will yourself know.

(After a week Lord Krishna pretended that he had intense pain in His stomach. All His Ranis and servants were busy procuring medicines and administering them to the Lord. But they found that the "pain" did not abate. Therefore they begged of Krishna to tell them what they should do.

Lord Krishna: O! The pain is unbearable. What am I to do? (Keeps silent for a few minutes.) There is only one medicine. I can't think of any other. It is easy to get; but I don't know if you will get it.

Rukmini: Why do you say so, my Lord. We are all ready to sacrifice our lives if you should need it. Name the medicine and it shall be brought before you have said it.

Lord Krishna: The only cure for stomach-ache is to drink a spoonful of the "Charanamrita" of any of my true devotees. My pain will vanish immediately I drink it. Will any of you oblige me by giving me this medicine? You are all my Bhaktas and you can produce this medicine in the winking of an eye. O Rukmini! Help me, help me. I can't bear the pain. I shall lose my life if I am not relieved of it immediately. O! please Rukmini, get a vessel and let me have a little "Charanamrita".

(Rukmini is shocked to hear these words. She closes her ears with her hands, looks greatly perturbed and worried, looks hither and thither like a mad woman.)

Rukmini: My Lord. You are the Lord of three Worlds. I respect you more than I respect any one else in the world. How can I commit this heinous crime of offering you my Charanamrita? What a horrible sin would it be, that you want me to commit? Oh, please ask anything else. My life is yours. (Falls at his feet.)

(Krishna looks at the others.)

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All: We are ready to serve our Lord in any respect; but how can we give the Lord our Charanamrita? We will go to Naraka and suffer there for ever.

(All prostrate before the Lord.)

Lord Krishna: O! My pain is increasing every moment. O! Lord, is there not any one here who would help me. O! Rukmini, if you are not willing, please ask any one of my Bhaktas to give me the Charanamrita. O! won't any one take pity on me? Ah! *(Krishna swoons.)*

Confused as to what they should do, they all disperse willy-nilly.

(After sometime they return one by one.)

Sri Krishna is in the meantime ministered to by one of the Ranis. He slowly opens his eyes.

Rukmini: I tried all the Bhaktas of the palace. None is willing to give Charanamrita for fear of falling into Naraka.

Satyabhama: I tried all the Bhaktas in the town. They have the same feeling. Oh! Lord. Suggest some way out of this dilemma.

Lord Krishna: Send a man to Barsana and try there.

(All disperse again except an attendant. Messengers are dispatched to Barsana. One of them returns after a couple of hours, with a cup of Charanamrita. All are pleased, overjoyed, Rukmini and the Ranis are astonished. The Charanamrita is offered to Krishna. He drinks and is relieved of the "pain". He heaves a sigh of relief.)

Lord Krishna (Smiling): Who is that Bhakta who gave me this medicine?

Kaladas: My Lord, I went to Barsana and asked everybody to give "Charanamrita" for the Lord. They all took me for a mad man. Some of them shed tears but they could not bring themselves up to offering Charanamrita to the Lord for fear of falling into hell. I had not passed through two streets before a lady came running up to me, made me halt and gave me this cup. She was gasping. In spite of this, she wouldn't even stop for a breath, but said, "Hurry up to the Lord with this". People around us were scolding her "You fool of a Radha! Do you think you are great enough to offer your Charanamrita to Lord Krishna? Take care, you are committing the greatest sin and you are sure to suffer in this life and go to hell afterwards". But she would not pay any heed.

Lord Krishna: Did you not ask her if she was not afraid of Naraka?

Kaladas: Yes, my Lord. But she was impatient, abused me for entering into such arguments with her and urged me again to go to you first and give this. She asked me to return to her if necessary, and put her any questions then. I was afraid that she would even beat me; and so took to my heels.

(Rukmini listens to this narration, speechless.)

Lord Krishna (to Rukmini): Look, Rukmini! Radha is not afraid of Naraka like all of you here, nor does she revere me so much more than herself (as you do) as to deny me my requirements or to refuse to carry out my wishes. She feels one with me and acts in a way that would be to my good. She has no thought for herself and she does not care if she goes to Naraka. Nor is she desirous of joy in heaven apart from me. When she has no thought for herself, and always thinks of me, is it not my duty to remember her always and take care of her interests? When each one of you thinks of your fortune and your sufferings in Naraka, you imagine you can take care of yourselves; why should I then trouble myself about you?

Rukmini: Good Lord! This is why you made all this fuss about your stomach-ache! But I am your Jnana Shakti. Why did I not know this answer at first?

Lord Krishna: Because you felt that you were separate from me. This feeling of separation emanating from egoism should be expunged if you want to develop Parabhakti and merge in me.

All Rukinis: Oh! Is this the secret of love? How ignorant were we? And how nicely does our Lord remove that veil of ignorance!

All sing in chorus.

*Krishna Krishna Namostute, jaya Vishnu Nama Namostute
Kesavaya namostute, jaya Madhavaya namostute
Lokabandhu namostute, jaya Chakrapani Namostute
Raja, raja namostute, jaya Deenapala namostute.
Vasudeva namostute, jaya Varijaksha namostute.
Venulola namostute, jaya Gopibala namostute.
Vamanaya namostute, jaya Putanari namostute.
Sarvashakta namostute, jaya Sasvataya namostute.
Muktidaya namostute, jaya Shaktipala namostute.
Narasimha namostute, jaya Panduranga namostute.*

Jnana Dev: My dear Premdas! Do you now understand Radha's love for Krishna? How pure, sublime, selfless and dear it is to the Lord! Now that Radha is one with Him; will any of you try and succeed loving the Lord as selflessly as Radha did, and surrender yourself so completely to Him that you will be prepared to offer him without question even such a thing as your Charanamrita? Para-bhakti is not different from Supreme knowledge. In parabhakti the devotee and Lord are one. The devotee identifies himself with the Lord. The main obstacles to the revelation of Atman or Truth in us is Egoism. Till we annihilate this, there is not the least chance of the Effulgent Light of Truth shining in all its splendour. In Parabhakti egoism takes to flight and the devotee no longer perceives any difference between himself and the Lord. The Parabhakta is thus a great Jnani also.

Prem Das: Swamiji Maharaj! You have dispelled my life-long doubt and have poured joy and light into my heart. But how can we practise this Parabhakti to Krishna when He is not living on

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this earth in our midst? I envy Radha who had the peculiar good fortune to live when the Lord incarnated on earth!

Jnana Dev: Yes, but where there is a will, there is a way! I will explain this in great detail tomorrow. By the way, can't you stay here for a few days more?

Prem Das: Surely, Swamiji. Should you ask us to stay for few more days in this earthly paradise? We have to attend a Sankirtan Sammelan presided over by Sri Swami Sivanandaji at Banares next week. So, we shall leave this place after two days. This Sankirtan tour will last for another four months. After that, if you permit, we will come and stay here for some considerable time. We find that you are a Jnani and Bhakta rolled into one.

(All sing in chorus, Jnana Dev leading)

*Ram Ram Ram Ram Ram, Ram Ram Ram Ram Ram, Ram Ram Ram Ram Ram.
Om Om Om Om Om, Om Om Om Om Om, Om Om Om Om Om.
Practise Japa, Namasmarana, meditation (and) Sankirtan.
Serve the Bhaktas, have Satsanga, do surrender (and) be humble.
Have full faith in God's Name and His Mercy and His Grace.
Just as fire burns the cotton, so does the Name burns all sins.
Just as the goldsmith burns the impurities, so you blow up mind's impurities.
Develop burning Viraha, shed tears of Prem, you will meet now your Beloved.
A life without love, faith, devotion (is a) dreary waste and real death.
Ram Ram Ram Ram Ram, Ram Ram Ram Ram Ram, Ram Ram Ram Ram Ram.
Om Om Om Om Om, Om Om Om Om Om, Om Om Om Om Om.*

(One of the disciples of Swamiji performs Arati. The Santi Patha brings the day's function to a close. All prostrate the Swami and disperse.)

SCENE III

(Jnana Dev and Prem Das, with his party, assemble under the banyan tree, alter bath, meditation, Japa, etc. In a corner are seated Murkharaj and his party of friends. Time at about 8 A.M.)

Jnana Dev: Now Prem Dasji, last evening you enquired about the method of developing pure selfless love for God Sri Krishna in this Yuga when he is not apparently present amongst us. For a real Bhakta, the Lord is always present—within his heart. He sees him as he sees you, he plays with him. Haven't you heard of instances in this Yuga itself to prove this statement?

Prem Das: Yes, Swamiji, I have heard some stories. But how is it possible. At best, I have seen Bhaktas doing Kirtan before some image. I too am an idolator, but I don't have any such experience. I have faith, but I lack Shraddha because.....

Murkha Raj: Exactly, how can you expect a piece of stone to talk to you?

Jnana Dev: Oh, what a shame! I did not notice our new friends earlier. Prem Dasji, pardon me for a few minutes while I make Sri

Murkha Raj: Mr. Murkharaj.

Jnana Dev: Sri Murkharaj's acquaintance. *(Turns to Murkharaj)* We are indeed blessed today by your holy visit to this humble abode of the poor. Don't you feel uncomfortable sitting on the floor. *(To a Brahmachari)* Please bring four chairs for these Murtis.

Murkha Raj: Never mind; we are O.K. as we are. *(The Brahmachari brings the chairs and Murkharaj and party seat themselves.)* We were just going about sight-seeing and when we saw a group of huts here we thought we could get some tea here and so dropped in. I now see I was deceived by a mirage. Thanks for the kind words all the same. Good-bye!

Jnana Dev: Maharaj, please be seated! I shall get some tea prepared for you. *(Signals to the Brahmachari to get tea.)*

Tea is brought and Murkharaj and party enjoy a couple of cups each. (In the meantime)

Have you had a pleasant time at Haridwar, Lakshmanjhula, Rishikesh and the other places you have so far visited? How do you like this part of the country?

Murkha Raj: *(Between sips of tea)* Yes. The Himalayan scenery is extremely beautiful and enchanting. We have actually taken some snaps. A whole night we spent absorbed in the natural beauty of the mountains in moonlight, with this river flowing majestically on..... I must say, minus these temples and mutts which we have to encounter off and on, our visit has been a most fruitful one. These really mar the very beauty of the spot....In the temples idols are our gods to be worshipped and revered! We are certainly living in the Stone Age while the rest of the world has advanced by leaps and bounds; why shan't we be, if we are still going to cling to the images! No

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wonder the West ridicules our stupidity! (*Hands back the cup:*) It is very kind of you, thanks. (*Producing a ten-rupee note*) what do I pay for the tea?

Jnana Dev: What! Maharaj, you took tea and you are producing a piece of paper in return!

Murkha Raj: (*Excited*) What do you mean? Do you want me to believe that you are so innocent and saintly that you don't know the difference between a scrap of paper and a ten-rupee currency note? Don't you see His Majesty's head printed on it? If I had brought a couple of policemen with me, I would have had you arrested for undignified remarks against the king. (*Looks at his friends and laughs contemptuously.*)

Jnana Dev: Don't get offended, Maharaj. How could I insult your king. I only said that what you produced was a piece of paper which in fact it is! That made you lose your temper. You say, the figure printed on this particular piece of paper, is that of the king and so it is considered valuable. This is the worst form of idolatry, isn't it?

(*There is loud laughter among those gathered.*)

Murkha Raj: (*Aside to his friends—feeling insulted.*) This is a cunning man. I will tackle him nicely (*To Jnana Dev*). The analogy is absurd. You certainly are not trying to compare a king, who is alive, in flesh and blood, and some imaginary form which you carve out of a piece of stone. Back to the Stone Age, ha, ha!

Jnana Dev: True, what you say is correct. Pray! Tell me what God is and how you would like to worship Him.

Murkha Raj: Don't you know? It is a pity! God is Omnipresent, Omniscient, Omnipotent, Almighty, Parity and Wisdom, and I am sure He is not in need of any worship from you, poor man! Further where are you going to worship the Omnipresent? It is funny you are able to confine the Omnipresent, Omnipotent God to a small dungeon which you call your temple!

Jnana Dev: Yes, it seems so. But was God present with you during the whole period of your wandering?

Murkha Raj: Oh, yes. Certainly.

Jnana Dev: Did you think of that God all the time you were touring?

Murkha Raj: No, why should I? I thought of him only when I had leisure and sometimes when I was in troubles or difficulties, as this morning when we were almost perishing in this wretched place without a cup of tea!

Jnana Dev: If you were able to think of God always you could be free from all troubles, as in this instance, you got your tea in a short time after thinking of Him. If, as you say, He is Omnipresent, why can't you think of Him always and everywhere and thus teach a practical way of worshipping Him to your countrymen?

Murkha Raj: Our minds are not equal to that job. We have even otherwise so much to worry about that we can't run after this God always!

Jnana Dev: Well, when you did think of God at times of trouble, as you say, how did you conceive of His Omnipotence?

Murkha Raj: I thought of Him in the form of Sri Krishna decorated with sweet-smelling flowers, flute in hand. That is just my artistic conception of beauty. After all, the human mind wants to perceive something beautiful, loathes the very sight of the ugly, terrible. As a painter and photographer I have always admired beauty. I have often had to paint for so many customers this particular form; Krishna, decorated with flowers and flute in one hand.....

Jnana Dev: And a cup of tea for you in the other! (*Laughter.*) Now, tell me was this Form of Krishna that you thought of when you couldn't get your tea, an image or abstract quality of Omnipotence which could bestow on you the desired object?

Murkha Raj: It was certainly an image.

Jnana Dev: Why did you worship an image ? Is an image different from the idol?

Murkha Raj: (*Aside to his friends*) Heavens, the man is obviously trying to corner me! Anyway! (*To Jnana Dev*) An image is not, in its essentials, different from an idol.

Jnana Dev: Do you like to think of God in the coffee-hotel?

Murkha Raj: No, there are other things to think about there—the coffee and the cakes. Why for that matter, I can't even think of the new designs I wish to introduce in my paintings inside a coffee-house. I shut myself up in a room and work late into the night at the canvas; only then can I hope to concentrate my mind on the work on hand. You see, modern psychology will tell you that you can concentrate your mind only in a peaceful atmosphere, when you are free from distractions. Naturally, we can think of God, Nature or Beauty only when we retire to a peaceful place.

Jnana Dev: I too really think like that; but I wonder why we should do so. After all God is Omnipresent; he is everywhere. Why can't we think of Him everywhere at all times?

Murkha Raj: I told you; coffee goes with Coffee House, meditation on God with a peaceful atmosphere. Our minds cannot feel His presence everywhere; only in certain places are we in a mood to meditate.

Jnana Dev: Then you admit that the human mind is conditioned by time and space!

Murkha Raj: (*Aside to his friends*) I think he is mad. What's he talking about—Philosophy or Utopia? (*To Jnana Dev*) Yes, it is true.

Jnana Dev: When were you born?

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Murkha Raj: Why, are you going to start fortune-telling? I was born on 15th January, 1920.

Jnana Dev: Was God existing before your birth?

Murkha Raj: Yes Swamiji, certainly.

Jnana Dev: How do you know? Are you talking of facts known to you or unknown to you?

Murkha Raj: I am talking of facts known to me.

Jnana Dev: When you were born on 15-1-1920, how do you know that God existed before you were born?

Murkha Raj: Yes, Swamiji. Were you an Advocate-General before you came here? I know I am being paradoxical. I don't help contradicting myself. But I feel certain that God existed before my birth.

Jnana Dev: Very good. It is not so paradoxical as you think. I will explain to you. When you say you were born on 15-1-1920, you refer to the appearance of your physical body on the earth. When you feel, by a necessity of thought that God existed before that date, you are voicing out your inmost soul, which is birthless and deathless like God. Now you understand the limitations of the human mind, how it is unable to grasp the full import of Omniscience, Omnipotence, Omnipresence, etc., but they are merely sound-bubbles for all of us. Therefore, you will have to get your training on an image for a sufficiently long period before you can have actual and personal experience of God's true nature and qualities such as Omnipresence, etc.

Murkha Raj: True, Swamiji. Man's constitution is such, that every thought of his contains some imagery. Without it, the word or the thought is empty and meaningless.

Jnana Dev: Therefore, you see there is no harm in worshipping an image of God, so long as man has not out-grown his idea of body and this sort of worship is present in every religion in some form or other. Isn't it now clear to you how similar this is to the "worship" of your currency note? Not only that. Take the flag. It is after all a piece of cloth. But when certain symbols are superimposed on this piece of cloth, it rises greatly in the esteem of the platoon; every soldier is prepared to give up his life for the sake of the flag! Similarly, the image is very dear to a devotee. It actually speaks to him in its own language of devotion. Just as the flag arouses martial valour in the devotee. The Lord is superimposed on the image. All worshippers, however intellectual they may be, generate a form in the mind—a mental image which is also a form of idol. Hinduism leads the aspirant gradually from material images to mental images and from the diverse mental images to the one Personal God and from the Personal God to the Impersonal Absolute or Transcendental Nirguna Brahman. When you worship an image you do not say "This image has come from Jaipur. It was brought by Prabhu Singh. Its weight is 50 lbs. It is made of white marble. It cost me Rs. 500/-" You superimpose all the attributes of the Lord on the image and pray "O Antaryamin (Inner Ruler). You are all-pervading. You are Omnipotent, Omniscient, all-merciful. You are the source of everything. You are Self-existent. You are Satchidananda. You are eternal, unchanging. You are the life of my life, soul of my soul. Give me light and knowledge. Let me dwell in Thee for ever."

When your devotion and meditation become intense and deep, you do not see the stone image. You behold the Lord only, who is Chaitanya! This is the Bhakti Marga which is but a training ground for Jnana.

Murkha Raj: Swamiji, it is getting a bit clear, but I have still some objection to the worship of God in a particular form. Why should we offer flowers, fruits, incense, etc., to the image, when we know that neither the image, nor the Nirakara God behind it is in need of it or makes use of them. This sort of worship does very little credit to the intelligence of our Hindu thinkers.

Jnana Dev: My dear friend, you are mistaken in your ideas. The Sakara worship is intended as a training ground and a very necessary one at that for man, for realising the Nirakara Brahman and not for satisfying the needs of the Sakara God or Nirakara God, as you put it. I will illustrate by examples. Please be attentive.

Murkha Raj: Carry on, I am all attention.

Jnana Dev: Now say...does not the element of water exist in the atmosphere, everywhere in the subtle form? This is physics, pure and simple.

Murkha Raj: Yes, Swamiji, it does exist.

Jnana Dev: Doesn't fire exist everywhere—in wood, stone, iron, etc., in a subtle form?

Murkha Raj: Yes.

Jnana Dev: Does the tree exist in the subtle form in the seed of, say, mango, pineapple, grapes?

Murkha Raj: Tree in a seed ? Yes Swamiji, I should say it does; otherwise where does it come from?

Jnana Dev: Very well. Now you feel the necessity for water to quench your thirst, or fire to cook your food, fruits to satisfy your hunger, the shade of a tree to rest for a while from the scorching heat of the sun. Please tell me what you will do?

Murkha Raj: I will require a cup of water to quench my thirst, an oven to cook my food, some apple, mango and grapes to satisfy my hunger and shade of a full-grown tree to take rest.

Jnana Dev: Why do you not utilise the water in the atmosphere, the heat in the wood and the shade of the tree that is in the seed? Can you do this? If you cannot use these things that certainly are in the Nirakara form for your immediate necessities, how then do you propose to realise the Nirakara God, when you want solace, peace, happiness as an immediate necessity? Therefore, you now find the necessity of the worship of the Sakara form of God. It may be Siva, Rama, or Krishna.

Murkha Raj: Thank you, Swamiji. I am very much indebted to you. Now I am satisfied of the necessity of the Sakara form of worship for men and I will do it from today. But one question

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more. Is the Nirakara Svarupa of Rama and Krishna different from the Rama and Krishna who were born in Ayodhya and Mathura?

Jnana Dev: No, certainly not. Both are the same in essence, only you will find it, say, to fix your mind on the Sakara Rama or Krishna.

Murkha Raj: How do you say that both are the same?

Jnana Dev: Why not? Rama and Krishna were not born like ordinary men.

They came into existence of their own free will to do good to men in their times and to be models of behaviour of all the future generations. Ordinary people take them to be born of necessity, but sages and Rishis alone knew their real Svarupa.

Murkha Raj: But how did they have their identity with their Nirakara Svarupa while they were Sakara forms in this earth?

Jnana Dev: To take up the thread of our analogy. You said the element of fire existed everywhere. Does not fire visibly exist in the oven, imperceptibly everywhere, perceptibly inside the oven? You know God is Sarvashaktiman, Omnipotent. The Infinite power of God is an unfathomable mystery. He can do anything. His essential nature is Intelligence, pure and simple. That is, He is Infinite Consciousness ITSELF. Through these characteristics, Rama and Krishna were able to keep their identity with their Nirakara form while acting in their human forms in this earth plane.

Sat is Ram, Chit is Ram, Anand is Ram,
Santi is Ram, Shakti is Ram, Jyoti is Ram.
Prem is Ram, Mercy is Ram, Beauty is Ram.
Bliss is Ram, Joy is Ram, Purity is Ram.
Refuge, Solace, Path, Lord, Witness is Ram.
Father, Mother, Friend, Relative, Guru is Ram.
Support, Source, Centre, Ideal, Goal is Ram.
Creator, Preserver, Destroyer, Redeemer is Ram.
Sri Ram, Jaya Ram, Jaya Jaya Ram.
Sri Ram, Jaya Ram, Jaya Jaya Ram.

Murkha Raj: Thank you, Swamiji. All my doubts have been cleared. You have, as it were, poured light and love into heart where only darkness and scepticism ruled before. I will engage myself in Sakara worship from today.

Prem Das: Swamiji, you promised to answer my question of yesterday, how, we are to practise selfless love for Lord Krishna in this Yuga and you actually began to say something. You said that to a Bhakta Lord Krishna is always present and the discussion drifted away at Sri Murkharaj's interruption.

Jnana Dev: Yes. I will explain to you.

(Sings)

Rama Hare Shiya Rama Ram
Rama Hare Shiya Rama Ram
Rama Hare Shiya Rama Ram
Rama Hare Shiya Rama Ram
Krishna Hare Radhe Shyama Shyam
Krishna Hare Radhe Shyama Shyam
Krishna Hare Radhe Shyama Shyam
Krishna Hare Radhe Shyama Shyam

There are four kinds of Bhaktas,
Arta, Jijnasu, Artharthi,
Jnani the wise of knowledge.
Of these the wise is the best.
There are nine modes of Bhakti,
Sravan, Kirtan, Smaran.
Padasevan, Archan, Vandan,
Dasya, Sakhya, Atmanivedan.

(Rama Hare Shiya Rama Ram.)

Sravan is hearing His Lilas.
Kirtan is singing His Name.
Smaran is His remembrance.
Padasevan is service of (His) feet.
Padasevan is service of country;
Padasevan is service of humanity;
Padasevan is service of sick,
Padasevan is service of poor.

(Padasevan is service of parents.)

(Rama Hare Shiya Rama Ram)

Archan is offering flowers.
Vandan is prostration.
Dasya is servant-bhava.
Sakhya is His friendship.
Atmanivedan is Saranagati.
Atmanivedan is self-surrender.
Atmanivedan is Prapatti.
Atmanivedan is highest Bhakti.

(Rama Hare Shiya Rama Ram)

There is love between servant-master.
There is love between friends and friends.
There is love between father and son.
There is love between husband and wife.
There is love between brother and sister.
Moha is infatuated love.

(Moha is finite.)

Physical love is passion.

SCENE III

It is mixed with hatred.
Divine love is Infinite.
(Rama Hare Shiya Rama Ram)
Physical love is selfish.
It is fleeting like lightning.
(It is ever changing.)
It ends in quarrel, divorce.
Divine love is everlasting.
There is difference in degree in love.
Love grows gradually.
Just as you grow a flower in garden.
You will have to develop this love.
(Rama Hare Shiya Rama Ram)
The nine modes of Bhakti
Are graded series of Divine Love.
Atmanivedan is highest love.
This is Madhurya Bhava.
(This is Para Bhakti.)
In this the Heart is the Real Flower
That is offered to the Lord
Two have become now one.
Oneness is the Reality.
(Parabhakti is Jnana;
This is Sayujya Mukti.)
(Rama Hare Shiya Rama Ram.)

Now listen. The most practical way of developing selfless love for Lord Krishna is to adorn His Image with sweet-smelling flowers, apply sandal-paste, incense and offer eatables and fruits, sing His glories, repeat His Name at all times and to do prostrations before His Image and feel love for all men and objects which remind one of Krishna. You should be regular in this practice until the sound of the Name of Lord Krishna, whether uttered by you or by any other brings out an effusion of joy as soon as you say or hear it. Repetition of His Name alone will take you to the very portals of the abode of God. This is the safest, easiest, surest, quickest, cheapest and best way for God-realisation in this Kaliyuga. The Lord will play with you, eat butter and sugar-candy from your hands and drink butter-milk from your cup. The joy that Bhaktas derive from this state is beyond description. Only Bhaktas like Namadev, Mira, Chaitanya Maha Prabhu and Radha know this, feel this and realise this. Bhaktas find satisfaction only in repeating His Name and they dance with Him in ecstasy. May the Lord grant you all, proper understanding and a pure and subtle intellect to understand these matters in their true perspective.

Murkha Raj: Swamiji, I don't see how a man can obtain Self-realisation by uttering the Name.

Jnana Dev: My dear friend. Today it is time for our evening ablutions. We are very punctual in our daily service to the Lord. Therefore, I suggest, you stay here for the day. We shall all assemble again tomorrow at 10 a.m. here. I will clear your doubt then.

(Chorus, Swamiji leading.)

Jaya Radhe, Jaya Radhe Radhe, Jaya Radhe Jaya Sri Radhe
Jaya Krishna, Jaya Krishna Krishna, Jaya Krishna Jaya Sri Krishna.

(They disperse to their quarters after prostrating before Swamiji.)

SCENE IV

(The Ashram of Jnana Dev. Open space sprinkled with river-sand, surrounded by a garden of sweet-smelling flowers and fruit trees. Jnana Dev sits on a tiger skin. Prem Das, Murkharaj, and party assemble in front of him.)

All enter, prostrate and sit down.

Jnana Dev:

Sita Ram Sita Ram Sita Ram Bol.
Radhe Shyam Radhe Shyam Radhe Shyam Bol.
Nam Prabhu ka, hai sukhakari.
Pap katenge chhin me bhari
Pap, gattari, de tu khol
 (Sita Ram, Sita Ram)
Prabhu ka Nam,
Ahalya tari.
Bhakta Bheelni, ho gai piari.
Nam ki mahima hai anmel.
 (Sita Ram, Sita Ram)
Sua padavat, Ganika tari,
Bade bade nisichar samhari.
Gin, gin, papi, tare tol.
 (Sita Ram, Sita Ram)
Jo jo sharan pade, Prabhu tare,
Bhav sagar se, par utare,
Bande tera kya lagta mol.
 (Sita Ram, Sita Ram)
Ram bhajan, bin, mukti na hove
Moti sa janam tu, vyartha khove
Rama Rasamrita, pee le, ghol.
 (Sita Ram, Sita Ram)
Chakradhari bhajo Har Govindam,
Mukti-dayak Paramanandam.
Hardam Krishna taraju tol.
 (Sita Ram, Sita Ram)

SCENE IV

Murkha Raj: Swamiji, after last evening's discussion here, I thought about the whole matter, and I feel that after all my original conception and yours of God are essentially the same; only yours is more concrete and so is more appealing to every one. But as I said yesterday at the close of the meeting I wonder what effect the mere repetition of a Name can have! Of course, science tells us that concentration of the mind is necessary to achieve any great result in any walk of life; that all the discoveries have been brought about by the inventor meditating deeply on the object he chose. Hence, it is clear that in the philosophical field also concentration and meditation are absolutely necessary. And, yesterday, I learnt that a form is essential in the initial stages before stepping on to formless meditation. Why not stop there? I thought I was seeing things clearly when you suddenly switched on to the topic of the repetition of Name. That seems to be all wrong and very unscientific. I have come across so many people who go on rolling the beads and shouting "Ram, Ram"; but I consider they are all mere humbugs. What do they achieve by it? What are your views on this point? Do you consider it.....

(There was interruption by a boy of 12 years running into their midst post-haste crying "Tiger", "Tiger" and taking shelter.)

Murkha Raj: Dayal! Get me that six-chamber revolver.

Prem Das: O! Don't kill it. Let us hide ourselves somewhere.

(Runs away hastily.)

Dayal Chand (A follower of Murkharaj): My friends. Take care of the ladies and lead them on to a safe place.

Jnana Dev: Let me see that tiger.

(The tiger comes and stands before him and quietly lies down. The skin of the tiger falls down and a large hunting dog emerges out of it) (Calls aloud)

My friends. Come on. There was much ado about nothing. This is only a big dog in tiger's skin.

(All return to the garden)

Jnana Dev: This incident forms, as it were, a fitting prelude for my answer to your question.

Murkha Raj: How? You mean the "Name" business.

Jnana Dev: Please see the electrical effect of the word "Tiger" in the ears of different persons assembled here. You wanted to attack it with a revolver; Prem Das wanted to hide himself, and your friend Dayalchand wanted to secure the safety of the weaker sex against its attack and I wanted to see what kind of tiger it was. If such is the commotion produced by the word "Tiger" what would be the effect produced by the Name of the Almighty God in every one of us, though we may possibly respond to it differently, according to our characters?

Murkha Raj: True, Swamiji. When it is a question of life and death our minds act electrically to words. But under ordinary circumstances, they are not so much alert to words.

Jnana Dev: My dear friends. Now tell me after retracing your memory to your childhood, how your knowledge was acquired and expanded. It was certainly by the words conveying ideas of objects by others—parents, friends and teachers. In higher education you get ideas of great abstract principles and laws of Nature by meditating on words embodying them. Without the use of words, no kind of knowledge was acquired by any of us. This is the law of Nature.

Murkha Raj: Quite so.

Jnana Dev: The seven planes of Nature can be described by words and the ideas about them conveyed to others only by suitable words. These are called “Sabda Lokas” meaning that the worlds can be known by the use of sound. In Western science, sound is supposed to be produced by sound-waves in the air or ether but according to the Hindu scriptures, sound is produced, retained, and dissolved by a substance called “Nada Bindu” a very subtle force of God by which He creates, sustains and involves the whole of this Universe. The vibrations of the Mantras are active while the Universe is manifested and potentially passive while the Universe is involved. A particular sound is a mass of psychic force capable of producing definite forms in the outside world. This has been verified by experiments. A “Mantra” is therefore a mass of potential knowledge, which can be released and made kinetic by a person repeating it a number of times. A person gets a clear idea of the nature and form of a person denoted by it, after repeating its name for a sufficient number of times.

Murkha Raj: What is meant by the law of association and has it anything to do with the repetition of the Name of God?

Jnana Dev: The law of association is that of the mind associating an imagery whether visual, olfactory, cutaneous, savoury or auditory with the sound of the word. When this law is fulfilled, it is for the mind to remember many things and thus get a knowledge of those objects. For every “Mantra” there is a particular Deity as its basis and ideal and it is the duty of the Sadhaka to associate this image of the Deity with the sound of the Mantra. Thus the mind of the Sadhaka is filled with the qualities of the Deity. “Think and you become that” is the law. This is especially so at the time of the departure of the soul from this embodiment. The “last impression” is very potent in its effect. It is on this principle, Lord Krishna says in Gita. “Whosoever a man remembers at the time of separation from this body, to that the man attains.” And if you remember God at the time of your death, you will certainly attain Him. But if you have any worldly desire you have to suffer the human birth once again. One good opportunity is lost. Your salvation or further prolongation of this birth-death-disease depends on what you do. But with a little precaution you could have avoided all that. So, think of Him with your last breath and be assured that this is your last birth.

Murkha Raj: This is strange and seems opposed to all reason. Do you mean to say that a man who has been leading a virtuous life throughout and who has a desire when he is at the point of death, is born again, whereas one who has been an evil doer throughout his life, if he thinks of God at the time of his death attains immortality?

SCENE IV

Jnana Dev: Quite so. It looks strange. I will explain it by means of an illustration. You said you were a photographer. Tell me, please, what do you do when you want to take a photograph of me.

Murkha Raj (Takes out his camera.): I first adjust the camera so that I get a clear image of my object. Sometimes I have to arrange the object also to get a good impression. Then I adjust the lens. It is done like this, you see. (*Demonstrates.*)

Jnana Dev: Then?

Murkha Raj: I adjust the sensitive plate. Every thing is now ready for the “shooting”.

Jnana Dev: Oh! Don’t shoot me!

Murkha Raj: No, no, I won’t kill you. Don’t be afraid! When I have put the sensitive plate in, I warn the man not to shake. Now, don’t shake! Steady please! (*He presses the button.*) Now I have taken your photograph. I will say in the customary way “Thank you”!

Jnana Dev: Supposing I moved a bit when you “clicked”?

Murkha Raj: The photo will not be well defined.

Jnana Dev: Suppose a person who was not steady before exposure, makes himself steady at the time of the exposure?

Murkha Raj: His photo will be all right.

Jnana Dev: You yourself have got an answer to the question you put!

Murkha Raj: Well.....Yes. I now understand it. But why should a man utter the Mantra always? Is it not enough to utter it once at the time of death only.

Jnana Dev: Well asked. That would make it easy, wouldn’t it? But this Divine Photographer, unlike the mundane one, does not shout “Ready please”. We don’t know when we will hear the click of the camera. So we have to be ever ready. Any moment the photo may be taken. Be always alert so that whenever you have to leave the body you will do so with His Name on your lips. The Name purifies. The Name ennobles. The Name softens the heart. The Name removes all sins. Utter His Name with full faith, devotion and feeling once and you are freed from all sins.

Murkha Raj: Excuse me, Swamiji. You are again creating some doubt in my mind. If I shall be freed by uttering His Name once, why should I go on repeating it? After I am freed from sin, even if I am to die any moment, I will only go to heaven.

Jnana Dev: I shall give you an example to illustrate the Truth behind this. Take the case of a lantern—what is its purpose?

Murkha Raj: It is there to remove darkness during night when we light the lantern.

Jnana Dev: All right. When once the lantern is lit, is not the darkness removed?

Murkha Raj: Yes.

Jnana Dev: Can we put out the lantern when once the darkness is removed?

Murkha Raj: If we put out the lantern, there will be darkness again?

Jnana Dev: That is the answer to your question then. Sins are removed by uttering the Mantra once, but they will again come to you when you stop uttering the Mantra.

(*Exclaims.*)

Murkha Raj: Good God! Where is an end to this?

Jnana Dev: When do you put out the lantern?

Murkha Raj: When day breaks and there is the light of the Sun.

Jnana Dev: Similarly, you will have to utter the Mantra till the Sun of knowledge arises in you, that is, till Self-realisation is attained. Japa of God's Name, every day of our life, is quite easy for everybody. One can mould his character in the image of God and can also determine what the state of mind should be at the time of death. Your character and conduct during your life in this body will determine the state of your mind at that time and it is therefore necessary that we should have spent our time in thoughts of God during our entire life-time.

(*Sings*)

Name of the Lord gives immense bliss,
All great sins in a moment vanish.
Untie the bundle of your sins.
Name of Prabhu liberated Ahalya.
Bheelni became dear by devotion.
Invaluable is glory of Name.
Ganika was liberated by teaching the parrot.
The great Rakshasas were slain one and all.
All sinners were freed being counted and weighed.
All who surrendered to Him were freed.
And taken across the ocean of Samsar.
It costs you nothing to repeat His Name.
Moksha cannot be had without Bhajan of Ram.
Why are you wasting this pearl-like life in vain?
Drink deep the Nectar of Ram Nam.
Always remember Hari, the disc-bearer.
Absolute bliss that gives liberation.

SCENE IV

Ever weigh the scales of Krishna's Name.

Murkha Raj:—Swamiji! We are deeply grateful to you for your kind and eloquent discourse. I think of doing Japa and meditation on the form of Lord Krishna from today. Will you tell me which Mantra I Should repeat?

Jnana Dev: You can repeat the Maha Mantra. Don't change this Mantra for some other till the end of your life. After all, there is no superior Mantra or inferior Mantra; all Mantras have the same effect and lead to the same goal. Stick to this Mantra and repeat it with devotion and full faith. Be firm in your conviction that you will soon attain your goal of Self-realisation through the repetition of this Mantra. By the way, tomorrow Swami Atmanandaji, a Yogi, will be visiting this Ashram. We will all assemble here at 7 a.m. tomorrow. If you wish you can leave for your place tomorrow afternoon.

Murkha Raj: Very well, Swamiji.

(Chorus)

Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare.
Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare.

(All disperse after prostrations, as usual.)

SCENE V

(The garden of Jnana Dev amidst flower-plants and fruit-trees. Atmananda engaged in playing the flute. Jnana Dev is by his side engrossed in the music. People gather there, one by one.)

Atmanandaji:

Bansuri Bansuri Bansuri Shyamaki.
Bansuri Bansuri Bansuri Shyamaki.
Ram Ram Ram Ram Ram Ram
Ram Ram Ram Ram Ram Ram
Ram Ram Ram Ram Ram Ram
Ram Ram Ram Ram Ram Ram
Om Om Om Om Om Om
Om Om Om Om Om Om
Om Om Om Om Om Om
Om Om Om Om Om Om
Hey Shyama Hey Shyama Hey Shyama Hey Shyama.
Hey Shyama Hey Shyama Hey Shyama Hey Shyama.
Thy Flute has charmed the core of my heart.
I have neither body nor mental consciousness.

O my Lord, Give me Darshan! Oh My Lord, give me Darshan.
O my Lord, Give me Darshan! Oh My Lord, give me Darshan.
I am thine, all is thine; I am thine, all is thine;
I am thine, all is thine; I am thine, all is thine;
This world is unreal, God alone is real.
This world is unreal, God alone is real.
Practise meditation, you will have Supreme Bliss.
Practise meditation, you will have Supreme Bliss.
Bansuri Bansuri Bansuri Shyamaki.
Bansuri Bansuri Bansuri Shyamaki.

(The heart of everybody present is overflowing with the melody of the music. Atmanandaji stops singing.)

Murkha Raj: Swamiji, your performance is very elevating. Of all the instruments, this flute has a peculiar marvellous effect and makes the listener forget himself. Is that the reason why Sri Krishna is supposed to keep this instrument always with him and play on it incessantly? Not a picture of Krishna have I seen without this magic wand.

Atmanandaji: Yes, you are correct. The flute is the instrument which is dearest to our Lord. In the divine music pouring forth from His flute, all the Gopis and even cattle used to lose their body-consciousness. But, there is a sublime philosophical truth hidden behind this apparently commonplace feature. For people who take only an ephemeral interest in the Lord's Lila, they are all nothing but mere human actions. But to a Bhakta who is always contemplating on His Lilas and takes delight in hearing about Him, His Lilas are full of spiritual significance. He dives deeper and deeper till he comes upon the Divine Pearl of Supreme Knowledge. I will tell you a story about Krishna's flute:

(Sings)

Anandoham, Anandoham, Anandam, Brahmanandam.
Vyapaka Chetana Atma Sivoham,
Vyakta-Avyakta Svarupa Sivoham.
Nitya Suddha Niramaya Soham.
Nityananda Niranjana Soham.

Lord Krishna loved to keep always His Bansuri with Him. He never parted with it. The flute is the symbol of Pranava. It is this flute that attracted the Gopis, the maidens of Vraja to meet their beloved Lord on the banks of the Yamuna. The divine melody of the flute was enchanting. It had wonderful power. When it entered the core of the heart through the cavity of the ears it made the hearer forget all his dear relations, the world and even his own self. It made the hearer dance in ecstasy and filled his heart with pure love. The sound of this flute thrilled the heart with rapturous delight and instilled new life and joy. It produced God-intoxication in all beings and infused life even in insentient objects. The sweetness of the music was unsurpassed. He who heard once the music of Krishna's flute cared not for the nectar of heaven or the bliss of Moksha. The flute and its music stirred the soul of the Gopis. They lost themselves in the music. The world was nothing for

SCENE V

them. They had neither shame nor fear to deter them from leaving their homes. Who can resist the torrent of the divine musical call of the Lord? It brought to the banks of the Yamuna, the flying birds, wandering cows, the roaming deer and made them gaze at Krishna, forgetful of themselves. The trees, plants and creepers did not rustle; so attentive were they to the music of their Lord. Complete silence prevailed except for the thrilling notes of the flute which completely filled the atmosphere with divine vibrations. No wonder, the Lord used to say that He would even part with His body but not with His flute. So dear to him was his flute. Radha and the Gopis became jealous of the flute, as it had the rare fortune of perpetually tasting the nectar of Lord Krishna's lips which was denied to them though they pined for it. They all determined to steal it and break it to pieces. What wouldn't women do out of jealousy!

One day, after "Rasa Lila", when they noticed that their beloved Krishna was tired, they asked Him to take rest for a while and prepared a bed of wild flowers with their clothes spread Over. Lord Krishna knew their innermost thoughts but pretended deep sleep. Radha with the help of other Sakhis—Lalita, Bishaka, Nirmala, took the Bansuri slowly out of the hands of Krishna and hid it under a tree. Radha then left the place. The Gopis were then engaged in their seemingly innocent plays, songs and dance. After some time, Lord Krishna woke up with a shudder, found his Bansuri missing and looked here and there like a mad man.

(HE APPROACHES EVERY GOPI AND ENQUIRES ABOUT THE FLUTE)

Krishna (to Lalita): Where is my Bansuri, Lalita?

Lalita: I don't know. Why should I tell you where it is even if I know?

(Krishna turns to Bishaka)

Bishaka: I am not your sentry, I don't know anything about the blessed Bansuri. You did not give it to me either; then what is the fun of your asking me about it?

(Krishna turns to Nirmala)

Nirmala: You are really mad, Krishna. You did not bring your Bansuri at all, today. I saw you coming empty-handed. Have you been dreaming about the Bansuri? Ah, yes, that is why you woke up with a shudder.

Lord Krishna: Nirmala! I have a full memory of what I did today. I did bring the Bansuri here. Please tell me—where it is.

Nirmala: I thought till now that you had only the bad habit of relieving others of their possessions against their will or without their knowledge. It is only now I find that you are a liar besides being a thief.

Krishna: I steal others' property because they cannot willingly throw away their burdens and enter into the Satchidananda Bliss. I speak of things as false and deceptive which others consider true and everlasting. I am a liar to a liar and a thief to a thief. This is quite true. But,

Nirmala, don't worry about all that philosophy now. Please give me my Bansuri and I will tell you all that you need know about everything. (*Sits down by her side and strokes her cheek*). You are my true and faithful companion, I know. Please give me my Bansuri.

Nirmala: Krishna, you are dearer to me than my own life. Do you think I will make fun of you?

(*Lord Krishna asks every Gopi. All deny any knowledge of the flute. Then he finds that Radha was missing and asks of the Gopis about her whereabouts.*)

Nirmala: We do not know. Perhaps she did not come today. Or, she might have returned earlier than usual. You and she are so dear to each other that you both move in close intimacy, you alone know of her whereabouts.

(*Krishna began to search for Radha, singing.*)

Jaya Radhe, Jaya Radhe Radhe Jaya Radhe Jaya Sri Radhe.

The world is a fair, a Mela for two days

(Asar, Kshanabhangur, Svapnavat)

The life is a play for two minutes.

Therefore try to realise the Self

(Jaya Radhe)

Just as logs of wood unite and separate in a river

So also sons and fathers in this world unite and separate.

Therefore give up Moha for children, wife and property.

(Jaya Radhe)

This world is a play of the Mind,

It is Sabdajala, Maya-Moha-Jala.

Therefore all connections are illusory.

(Jaya Radhe)

Brahma Satyam Jagan Mithya

Jivo Brahmaiva Kevalam (Naparah)

(Jaya Radhe)

(*He finds Radha sitting under a tree surrounded by green foliage, sweet-smelling flowers and creepers.*)

(*Looks sheepishly at her and begins plaintively*):

Krishna: Radha! What a darling you are! You lulled me to sleep because I was tired and before I could get rid of my tiresomeness you have made me ten times more weary by disappearing suddenly! What a love you have for me. See, I went round and round this forest in search of you and here you are sitting coolly all alone. Why are you so selfish, Radha?

Radha: I am the master of my own fancies. Who are you to question that?

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Krishna: What about me? You are my Controller, Radha.

Radha: Aey, don't go on flattering me. I know there is something behind these words. You won't talk in this fashion without some purpose. Now, what do you want? Haven't we danced enough for today? Then why don't you leave me alone?

Krishna: You are a thought-reader, Radha. I come to ask you about my flute. Only you know where it is. I was fast asleep and woke up to find it missing.

Radha: Hare, what is this? What do I know about it? Was it for this you wasted all your energy, hunting me out? Poor Krishna! Go, go! Leave me alone. And, all this worry for a little piece of bamboo. See, there is a forest of bamboos. Why don't you cut a piece from one of the trees and be done with it? It is this piece of bamboo that made you extol me to the skies all the time suspecting that I would have stolen it. What a love you pretend to have for me!

Krishna: Radha, do you still have any doubt that you are the life of my life? The flute is not a piece of bamboo. It is dear to me as my life and I cannot have peace of mind without it.

Radha: If it is so dear to you, you ought to have guarded it scrupulously or asked me to guard it for you. What are you doing with that blessed Bansuri, that you should get peace only from it?

Krishna: I do everything through the flute. I assemble the cows of Vraja by its clarion call, pour love and joy into the hearts of the Gopis and melt the minds of the animate and inanimate beings. Though I am one without a second, the one Nirakara Brahman, I have to pour joy and music into the hearts of the advanced Bhaktas like the Gopis through their soul and I assemble the dull Bhaktas like the cows with the music of the flute and feed them with the fruits of their Karmas under my supervision and they respond to my call by repeating my name (one amongst a thousand and eight), and instruct them into the mysteries of the Sakara and Nirakara Brahman after cleansing their intellect and making them grasp the subtle truths. The minds of the most Tamasic and hard-hearted souls are also melted to hear of me my songs and glories and Leelas. Thus I do my universal supervision only through my Bansuri. If anybody wants to taste the nectarine sweetness of my lips, he should empty himself of his egoism completely, as the Bansuri empties itself quickly so that I may fill it with my music and keep it always near my lips. Now, Radha, don't make me more miserable. Please let me have it.

Radha: O dear! What a fortunate thing, this Bansuri? I envy its position near your lips. That is by the way; but I don't know where it is.

Krishna: Radha, please. Radha don't persist in this affected ignorance. You will repent for your behaviour afterwards!

(Radha remains unmoved.)

(Krishna leaves her singing.)

Practise Ahimsa Radhaji.

Speak the truth Radhaji.

Control anger	Radhaji.
Through Kshama	Radhaji.
Be tolerant	Radhaji.
Be forgiving	Radhaji.

(When Krishna is out of sight, Radha and the Gopis assemble and break the flute. To their surprise, every piece begins to dance and sing.)

God is Truth	Govinda.
God is bliss	Govinda.
God is peace	Govinda.
God is knowledge	Govinda.
God is love	Govinda.
God is light	Govinda.

(There was a garden of Bansuris. All became astonished and frightened. They look at each other and begin to catch hold of the dancing Bansuris. They could not catch even one. Not knowing what to do, they call Krishna to their aid.)

Krishna: Why did you hide my Bansuri and break it?

All (Prostrating): We did it out of ignorance. We were jealous of it. So we broke it. Pardon us, Lord.

Krishna: Give me, Radha, that broken piece of Bansuri in your hand.

(Radha gives it. He receives it and it assumes its original size. The dancing Bansuris disappear.)

Atmanandaji: Such is the glory and secret of Lord Krishna's flute.

Murkha Raj: What a sublime idea have you put into this simple story! Most of us, Swamiji, study these Puranas with a prejudiced mind. We catch hold of some superficial aspects of these Puranas and at once begin to criticise and condemn them. I wish a few wise men like you toured the country and helped disillusioned people to get rid of such stupid notions as now cover their intelligence and mould their intellect. *(Turns to Jnana Dev)* I came here in search of a cup of tea, but got a cup of nectar. What a shame! What a crime did I commit by characterising the Mahatmas here as a set of dull-headed idlers! But I now find that they are each one of them a fountain head of supreme knowledge. I must ask you to pardon this unintentional wrong done to you. My friends and I will form the first group of propagandists of the Divine Cause.

Jnana Dev: It is through God's Grace and your own good Samskaras that you were able to come here. The work you have now undertaken to do is also His work. His ways are inscrutable. Throw the burden on Him and do what all you can to the betterment of mankind. You would then have done your duty entrusted by Him. Never fear public opinion. At first people might laugh at

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you; but he laughs best who laughs last. The worldly man sends out peels of laughter but the wise one smiles through his eyes. Come here every year to recharge your battery of spiritual strength.

(All sing in chorus—Jnana Dev leading Atmanandaji plays on his flute.)

Sri Gokulke Rahne Vala Jaya Jaya Jaya Nandalala.
Makkan Misri Khane Vale, Mohan Murali Bajanevale.

(All prostrate and disperse to their quarters.)

END OF SCENE 5

NAMO NAMO KIRTAN

SAGUNA

Sri Ganesha Namō Namō Sri Subramanya Namō Namō.
Hare Rama Hare Rama, Namō, Namō, Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Namō Namō.
Hara Hara Mahadeva Namō Namō, Siva Siva Sadasiva Namō Namō.
Dattatreya Namō Namō, Dakshinamurty Namō Namō.
Vishnu Bhagavan Namō Namō, Vyasa Bhagavan Namō Namō.
Sat Guru Natha Namō Namō, Siva Guru Natha Namō Namō.
Devaki-Nanda Namō Namō, Dasaratha Nanda Namō Namō.
Anjana Nanda Namō Namō, Asura Samhara Namō Namō.
Ganga Devi Namō Namō, Gayatri Devi Namō Namō.
Maha Lakshmi Namō Namō, Maha Sarasvati Namō Namō.
Maha Kali Namō Namō, Maha Devi Namō Namō.

NIRGUNA

Advaitavastu Namō Namō, Akhandavastu Namō, Namō.
Chidananda Namō Namō, Satchidananda Namō Namō.
Prajnanaghana Namō Namō, Vijnanaghana Namō Namō.
Om̐kara Rupa Namō Namō, Moksha Rupa Namō Namō.
Trigunatita Namō Namō, Dvandvatita Namō Namō.

SELECT SWEET KIRTANS

1. Gouri Shankar, Gouri Shankar, Gouri Shankar Pahimam.
Uma Shankar, Uma Shankar, Uma Shankar Rakshamam.
Kailasapati Kailasapati Kailasapati Pahimam.
Parvatipati Parvatipati Parvatipati Rakshamam.
Gouriramana Gouriramana Gouriramana Pahimam.
Umaramana Umaramana Umaramana Rakshamam.
2. Sitapate Rama Radhapate Krishna, Sri Rukmini Satyabhamapate.
Vanipate Brahma Gouripate Shambho, Lakshmpate Sriman Narayana.

RADHA'S PREM

3. Govinda Govinda Govinda Govinda Govinda Govinda Gopala Radhe.
Govinda Radhe, Gopala Radhe, Govinda Govinda Gopala Radhe.

4. Isvari, Mahesvari, Paramesvari Pahimam.
Kamesvari Mathesvari Sarvesvari Rakshamam.

5. Jaya Jaya Rama Hare, Ghanshyama Hare.
Nitya Bolo Govinda Gopala Hare.

Om Santih Santih Santih!