

SRI BALAKRISHNA LEELA, *the pastimes of Lord Krishna*

Padmakant Khambhati

The call of the flute -

The rainy season came to Vrinda:van to the joy of all. The sky was overcast with dark clouds resembling the color of the Lord. During the evenings, the stars and moon were not visible, but many fire flies shined up momentarily, filling the night sky with their little lights. The rivers and their tributaries that were completely dry in the summer now were flooded like a fool wasting his wealth lavishly. As time passed the farms were filled with full grown abundant crops, much to the joy of the farmers. But the loan shark richmen, knowing that everyone enjoyed their own fortune, were worried about how to get into with them. Despite the steady rains, Govardhana Mountain was not all affected, reminding all that the miseries of life do not affect those whose minds and hearts are surrendered to the Lord.

It was during this cool rainy time that Krishna and the go:pa friends spent their time playing in the caves of crevices of Govardhana Mountain. When the trees in Vrinda:van were filled with dates, berries and other fruits, Krishna, Balara:ma, and their friends took their cows into the forest in their routine of taking care of them.



Ba:lakrishna especially enjoyed the time that he could spend in the company of His friends and the cows, bulls and calves that were under their care. They were, after all, each a unique aspect of His Own Creation.

With the end of the rainy season came the month of Sarad Ruthu (Winter). At this time, there were no clouds in the sky, no thunder or wind. But the waters in the river became clean and flowed steadily with the waters from the recent rains. At places water was flowing from the mountains and some places the flowing water slowed to form small pools, like an acha:rya teaching → Brahma Vidya only to the qualified disciples. The hot daytime was at times unbearable to people in Vraj, but the fascinating moon during the night was soothing, like Sri: Krishna Himself, who ends the restlessness in the Go:pis' minds. The moon among the stars was shining like Sri: Krishna's presence with Ya:davas. The Sanyasis and others who were stationed at one place during their chaturma:sya, now moved about sharing the wisdom of the Ve:das with all. In the forest swarms of bumble bees and flocks of birds were flying around with their buzzing and chirping music near flowery trees and bushes. Hearing this, The Divine Sri: Krishna decided to accompany them with His melodious flute.

The sweetness of the music and the charm of the Handsome Boy who

was playing it was very effective in producing the love and devotion among all of the go:pis of Vrinda:van. Their minds and hearts were suddenly filled with great devotion and love, and as if they were mesmerized, they immediately put aside all other thoughts in their mind simply to spend talking about Him. They reminded each other about Krishna's Enchanting Form, His smile, The way He stood, walked and spoke. They recalled the Mischievous but Loving sparkle in His Eyes and they visualized Him playing the flute with His Gentle Fingers while keeping time with His Tender Feet. They recalled His yellow silk garments, the garland of flowers that He generally wore, and the charming little peacock feather that adorned His hair.

Some thought to themselves, "shall we ever have the bliss of imbibing what is left of the honey of His kiss after the flute has enjoyed it to its fill? Ah! why crave for the impossible!" So thought the gopis again and again in utter distress and despair. Other Go:pis thought, "This flute must have worshipped Him so devoutly in the past births that today it gets to drink the nectar from His lips and does not leave any for us!"

One Go:pi shouted saying, "This Vrinda:van is extended all the way to Vaikuntham, as it is now printed with the lotus feet of Krishna, Who is None Other than Sri:man Na:ra:yana Himself. When He plays His charming flute, the peacocks dance at its tunes and all other birds and animals enjoy this show quietly.



The ravishing music from the flute sends Cupid's into the hearts of Apsaras (angels) hovering in the sky. Fortunate indeed are these Apsaras in the skies. Look! these birds here also watch His style of standing and playing sweet flute without blinking. You know Why? They are not the birds, but they are the sages and rishis of the past births. My friend! Think how much they are fortunate!"

Others observed, "Look! Look! these girls from the forest also feel so overjoyed at the sound of His flute and got eager to meet Him with love. They cannot meet Him so you know what are they doing? They apply the sandalwood on their breasts and body from grass blades which are smeared with sandalwood from His feet by walking on that grass."

The continuous promptings of Cupid became a blessing to these Go:pis in so far as it brought in them intensity of attachment to Krishna, and consequent detachment from all worldly concerns.

Attachment between the sexes is normal, while devotion to the Lord, the means of salvation, may result after great effort or may not even then.

But Oh! What a blessing and Grace of Krishna that in having such human longings for the Supreme Lord, the Go:pis had both simultaneously.

Jai Srimannaryana !