

Śrī Śrī Guru-Gaurāṅgau Jayataḥ

Śrī Vilāpa-kusumāñjali Nectar

Lectures spoken originally in English by the
Crown-jewel of rasika Vaiṣṇavas

Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta
Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja

Introduction

Śrī Vilāpa-kusumāñjali is an elevated composition of one-hundred and eight verses written by Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī and included within his larger work, *Śrī Stavāvalī*. It is without question one of Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja's favourite compositions; he quotes from it often while lecturing and recites many of its verses as part of his own *bhajana*. Śrīla Mahārāja has spoken an English commentary on a majority of the verses of *Vilāpa-kusumāñjali*, and this booklet contains nine of those lectures. They were spoken in 1991 at Śrī Keśavajī Gauḍīya Maṭha in Mathurā and at Śrī Rūpa-Sanātana Gauḍīya Maṭha in Vṛndāvana. I was fortunate enough to be personally present when Śrīla Mahārāja spoke the first seven lectures of this booklet and I transcribed them from my own recordings. The eighth and ninth lectures were transcribed by Śānti dāsī but edited by myself. The lecture on 'Gaurāṅga' bolite habe was also spoken in English in 1991 in Vṛndāvana. Because many of Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja's very special realisations are included within this booklet, I am confident that it will be very well-received by all devotees.

Prema-vilāsa dāsa

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(1)

*subhaga-mṛgamadenākhaṇḍa-śubhrāmśu-vat te
tilakam iha lalāṭe devī modād vidhāya
masṛṇa-ghuṣṛṇa-carcām arpayitvā ca gātre
stana-yugam api gandhaiś citritam kim kariṣye*

Śrī Vilāpa-kusumāñjali 24

“Hey Rādhē! When will I blissfully decorate Your forehead with beautiful musk *tilaka* as splendid as the full moon? And when will I be fortunate enough to anoint Your limbs with glistening *kuṅkuma* and make wonderful designs on Your breasts with *candana* composed of saffron and camphor?”

Here Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī is praying in his eternal *svarūpa* as Rati Mañjarī, who is a *prāṇa-sakhī* and therefore more partial towards Rādhikā than towards Kṛṣṇa. She always resides with Śrīmatī Rādhikā, and she never desires the company of those who are *vīpakṣa*, inimical to Rādhikā.

Previously Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī was residing in Purī with Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Svarūpa Dāmodara, and by hearing from them, intense greed to become a *rādhā-dāsī* arose in him. As this greed increased more and more, he realised his specific identity (as Rati Mañjarī) in terms of the *sthāyī-bhāva* (permanent sentiment), that which can never be changed in any way. Then he performed *rāgānugābhakti* both internally and externally. When Mahāprabhu left this world, Raghunātha dāsa took shelter of Svarūpa Dāmodara and was always bitterly weeping. He began fasting from food altogether, but although Mahāprabhu had disappeared from his external vision, Svarūpa Dāmodara was there to console Raghunātha dāsa. Soon afterwards Svarūpa Dāmodara also left this world, and then Raghunātha dāsa gave up drinking water and even desired to commit suicide. But instead he took shelter of Gadādhara Paṇḍita, who himself was always crying in separation from Mahāprabhu. Soon Gadādhara Paṇḍita also left this world, and then there was no one left to console him. He decided to go to Vṛndāvana to give up his life by jumping from Govardhana or drowning in Rādhā-kuṇḍa. After arriving in Mathurā, he proceeded to Vṛndāvana where he fell at the feet of Rūpa and Sanātana and wept bitterly. They both tried to console him as their younger brother, and they advised him to always reside at Rādhā-kuṇḍa. Shortly thereafter Sanātana Gosvāmī also left this world, and Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī’s condition was like that of a man who is stranded in the ocean and everything which he grabs onto simply sinks. Now only Rūpa Gosvāmī remained to console Raghunātha dāsa, who was

always absorbed in chanting *harināma* and remembering Mahāprabhu’s pastimes in the mood of Rādhikā, such as how He would rub His face on the wall in the Gambhīrā and exhibit ecstatic symptoms.

There was a *vraja-vāsī* who would daily bring Raghunātha dāsa a small leaf-cup of buttermilk to drink for his sustenance. But one day he brought a cup made from large *kadamba* leaves which he had collected at Sakhī-sthalī, which is the residence of Candrāvalī situated on the eastern side of Govardhana. Seeing it, Raghunātha dāsa said, “Usually I take buttermilk from a very small leaf-cup, but I see that today you have brought a very large one—from where have you obtained it?” When the *vraja-vāsī* told him that he had collected it from Sakhī-sthalī, he became furious. Padma and others in Candrāvalī’s camp are always trying to snatch Kṛṣṇa away from Rādhikā and to make Him meet with Candrāvalī, so Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī did not like anything from Sakhī-sthalī. He picked up a stick and chased away that *vraja-vāsī*, who could not understand Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī’s inner sentiment. All *gopīs* have *mādhurya-rati* as their *sthāyī-bhāva*. But this particular sentiment exhibited by Raghunātha dāsa is called *suhṛda-rati*, meaning that one is opposed to anything which is opposed to Rādhikā, and this is why he became furious upon being offered something from Sakhī-sthalī. The symptom of this is thinking that anything which is favourable for one’s *iṣṭa-deva* (worshipable Lord) is also favourable for oneself. A *sakhī* of Rādhikā is always thinking about what is favourable for the service of Śrīmatī Rādhikā. Those who possess *suhṛda-rati* see everything with this discrimination. If Rādhikā does not desire to meet Kṛṣṇa, they try to make sure that They don’t meet, yet they know that internally Rādhikā always desires to meet Kṛṣṇa whether She is outwardly expressing it or not. So sometimes even if She is prohibiting it, they make the arrangement for Her to meet Kṛṣṇa. But in all circumstances it is solely for the pleasure of Rādhikā, and this is called *suhṛda-rati sthāyī-bhāva*. In *suhṛda-rati*, Śrīmatī Rādhikā desires service only from this kind of *sakhī*.

One morning after Rādhikā had bathed, Kundalatā came from Nandagrāma. Yaśodā had sent a message with her to Jaṭilā, not directly to Rādhikā, saying, “You should at once send your daughter-in-law to cook for my son because He is growing thinner and thinner.” She also sent many ornaments with the proposal, because she knew that Jaṭilā is somewhat selfish and crooked. Jaṭilā replied to Kundalatā, “Why should I send my new daughter-in-law here and there? Tell Yaśodā that she should call her own daughter-in-law for this purpose.” She knew full well that Yaśodā didn’t actually have a daughter-in-law, but due to excessive anger she spoke like this. Then Jaṭilā complained to the personification of Yogamāyā, Paurṇamāsī, that “Yaśodā considers herself to be the queen of Vṛndāvana. I am not less than Yaśodā, so why should I send my daughter-in-law to her as a servant? I cannot do it.” Then Paurṇamāsī told her, “You should send Her. Because I am the knower of past, present, and future, I know that if you do not obey the order of Yaśodā, your son and all of your cows will die. If you desire your own welfare, then send

Her at once to Nandagrāma to cook for Kṛṣṇa, and it will be good for both you and your son.” Then Jaṭilā became fearful, and told Kundalatā, “Because you are as dear to me as my own daughter, I am placing my new daughter-in-law in your hands. Take her to Nandagrāma, but beware—in Nandagrāma there is a very black serpent, and if He bites anyone, they cannot leave there. So always try to protect Her from this serpent.”

Before Rādhikā departed for Nandagrāma, the *mañjarīs* bathed Her, and in this verse Rati Mañjarī is praying to Śrīmatī Rādhikā, “Please give me the good opportunity to apply musk-*tilaka* to your forehead.” In this verse comes the word *śubhrāṁśu*, which means full moon. When the moon is full, it is round, but there are many blemishes on it. In the full moon which the *mañjarīs* are decorating on Rādhikā’s forehead, there is red, yellow, green and finally golden designs, and in the middle is a very effulgent *bindī*. From His boyhood Kṛṣṇa liked the full moon, and knowing this they draw a very attractive full moon on Her forehead. Then, when Viśākhā and Lalitā arrange for Śrīmatī Rādhikā and Kṛṣṇa to meet, they smile because they know that by this full-moon decoration the Kṛṣṇa-deer can be caught. Because it is so beautiful, when Kṛṣṇa sees this He will certainly enter the trap and be caught. They also applied *kuṅkuma* to Rādhikā’s body and braided Her hair in such a way that it became like a female black serpent which is ready to bite Kṛṣṇa. Seeing this braid, Kṛṣṇa will be brought under the control of Rādhikā’s *prema*.

After decorating Her to appear immensely beautiful, they were ready to go to Yaśodābhavana at Nandagrāma. Kṛṣṇa was waiting at Terā-kadamba with the cows and all the other cowherd boys, and Rādhikā came along accompanied by all of Her *mañjarīs* and *sakhīs*. Lalitā advised Her not to go by this path, saying, “You should go by another path so that You will be very far away from Him.”

Rādhikā replied, “I don’t fear Kṛṣṇa—who is this Kṛṣṇa?” Lalitā became silent, and they proceeded. As they came nearer, Kṛṣṇa took the tail of a calf, gave it a twist, and it ran straight to where Rādhikā and the *gopīs* were. Kṛṣṇa followed behind the calf until it came to Śrīmatī Rādhikā, and when He pushed Her with His hand, all the *gopīs* fearfully began running here and there. Then Kṛṣṇa ran away, and Lalitā said, “I warned You not to come by this path. He is very naughty!” They continued on their way, and though Rādhikā really wanted to meet with Kṛṣṇa, She made her mood appear in such a way that everyone would think that She did not want to meet with Him. On another occasion She broke His necklace of pearls and they were scattered everywhere. Then She sat down and made a show of not looking towards Kṛṣṇa, but still She would be peeping at Him from time to time. Every day there are varieties of pastimes like this. After arriving at Nanda-bhavana, She prepares so many different foodstuffs such as *manohara-laḍḍu*, *amṛta-keli*, and *rasa-malāi*. While She is in Yāvaṭa, She is always burning in separation, and in the kitchen at Yaśodābhavana there are hundreds of hot stoves. She cooks in close proximity to these fires, but She considers it to be very cool there in comparison to

the burning separation she feels in Yāvaṭa. She prepares everything in a pleasing mood, then Kṛṣṇa comes and takes bath. Yaśodā orders some *sakhīs* to bathe Him and the *sakhīs* make jokes while bathing Him. Then Kṛṣṇa calls out, “O Mother! O Mother!” and Yaśodā comes at once and says in great anxiety, “What happened?” Seeing Kṛṣṇa laughing and the *gopīs* also laughing, she returns. Next Kṛṣṇa takes His breakfast and then He takes the cows out to graze for the day. This is all included within *prātaḥ-līlā*, the morning pastimes.

(2)

In preaching to people in general, we should speak from the story of Prahlāda Mahārāja, the story of Vṛtrāsura, and the dialogue between Nārada and Vyāsa which describes *vaidhī-bhakti*. We should teach others how to avoid becoming implicated in *māyā* and what is opposed to *bhakti*. Only those who have developed greed should hear these higher topics, and there is no particular prerequisite for possessing that greed. The foremost cause of this intense hankering is the association of a *rasika* Vaiṣṇava, and this greed has many symptoms. When one possesses greed, it means that he has entered the stage of *āsakti* (deep spiritual attachment) and he will no longer be attracted to anything of this world. Before this greed came, he may have performed so many sinful acts, like Bilvamaṅgala. But after Bilvamaṅgala acquired this greed, he could think only of how to meet Kṛṣṇa and became so exalted.

In his *Maṅgala-śikṣā* commentary, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura describes three types of *sād-hakas*: *svaniṣṭha*, *pariniṣṭhita*, and *nirapekṣa*. *Svaniṣṭha* refers to those who follow the regulations of the *varṇāśrama* system. They love their parents, wife, children, and they always follow the rules of *vaidhī-marga*. ‘Sva’ means they follow their own *dharma*. In the conversation between Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Rāya Rāmānanda, this was the first verse which was spoken:

*varṇāśramācāravatā
puruṣeṇa paraḥ pumān
viṣṇur ārādhyate panthā
nānyat tat-toṣa-kāraṇam*

Cait.-carit. Madhya-lilā 8.58

“Viṣṇu is worshipped by the proper execution of prescribed duties in the *varṇāśrama* system. There is no other way to satisfy Him.”

But Mahāprabhu rejected this. For such people, *bhakti* is not the prominent consideration, but rather following *varṇāśrama* is prominent, and this is called ‘*svaniṣṭha*’. *Pariniṣṭhita* are also householders, but due to possessing *niṣṭhā*, they are more elevated. For them executing *bhakti* is the prominent consideration, but they have not rejected *varṇāśrama*. And finally those who have abandoned *varṇāśrama* and are fully engaged in the activities of *bhakti* such as *śravaṇa*, *kīrtana*, *smaraṇa*, *pada-sevā*, etc. are called *nirapekṣa*.

All cheating propensities should be eradicated from our hearts, otherwise when we hear the higher type of *kathā*, we will use it for material purposes, and this is called *sahajiyā*. This is how the three types of *sādhakas* cheat themselves: *svaniṣṭha-sādhakas* always pretend that they are practicing *bhakti*, but it is solely for their material happiness. They will not render service to a *niskiñcana* Vaiṣṇava, but instead they will serve a materially wealthy man. They desire to become educated, but they study only mundane logic and similar topics. They sometimes wear the dress of *sādhus* only for the purpose of material gain—*kanaka*, *kāmini*, and *pratiṣṭha*. The *pariniṣṭhita-sādhaka* externally shows that he desires the company of Vaiṣṇavas, but really he is interested only in the association of mundane persons. *Nirapekṣa-sādhakas* think themselves to be very elevated devotees, and they believe that they are the most advanced Vaiṣṇavas. They place stress merely on wearing the dress of renunciates, and not on the quality of their *bhakti*. A real *nirapekṣa* Vaiṣṇava will accept only what is necessary to maintain his life and he will never keep the company of ladies.

We should always stay in the company of devotees and accept guidance from an elevated Vaiṣṇava. When genuine greed arises inside us, we can begin to hear this higher type of *kathā*. This instruction is for both those who are practitioners and those who are perfected.

*dattaḥ pralamba-ripuṇodbhaṭa-śaṅkhacūḍa-
nāśāt pratoṣi-hṛdayaṁ madhumaṅgalasya
hastena yaḥ sumukhi kaustubha-mitram etaṁ
kiṁ te syamantaka-maṇiṁ taralaṁ kariṣye*

Śrī Vilāpa-kusumāñjali 34

“Hey Sundaramukhi (beautiful-faced one)! Baladeva, feeling satisfied after Kṛṣṇa killed the arrogant Śaṅkhacūḍa, placed the Syamantaka jewel into the hands of Madhumaṅgala, and since being given to You by Madhumaṅgala, it has become the friend of the Kaustubha jewel. When will I make this Syamantaka jewel the central jewel in Your necklace?”

It seems that there is no *rasa* in this jewel being given to Rādhikā, but in actuality this pastime has emanated from the ocean of *rasa*. In this verse, Balarāma is referred to as the killer of Pralamba, and Kṛṣṇa is referred to as the killer of Śaṅkhacūḍa. The word ‘*pralamba*’ means ‘cheater,’ and therefore Pralambāsura, although he was a friend of Kaṁsa, assumed the false dress of a *sakhā* to cheat Kṛṣṇa and the cowherd boys. Śaṅkhacūḍa was not a cheater, but excessively lusty. Once at the time of Holī, Kṛṣṇa and all of the *gopas* and *gopīs* were playing with squirt-guns full of colour at Rādhā-kuṇḍa and everyone was immensely blissful. Kṛṣṇa was running towards Śrīmatī Rādhikā to

throw *kuñkuma* on Her face, but Lalitā, Viśākhā and other *sakhīs* were lovingly trying to obstruct Him. All of the boys were helping Kṛṣṇa, and all of the *gopīs* were helping Śrīmatī Rādhikā. As they were blissfully enjoying this pastime, Śaṅkhacūḍa came and hid in a *kuñja* from where he could observe the *gopīs*' garments becoming loose and their hair becoming dishevelled. If someone is not sufficiently elevated, he will misunderstand these pastimes in the way that a *sahajiyā* does, so Śaṅkhacūḍa desired that the *gopīs* would be his. He was neither a *sādhaka-bhakta* or a *siddha-bhakta*, but rather just the opposite, a demon. He was waiting for the appropriate moment to perform his nefarious activities, and then, in the course of their playing, Kṛṣṇa hid and the *gopīs* began searching for Him. Just then Śaṅkhacūḍa came, and frightening Śrīmatī Rādhikā and the *gopīs* with a tree which he had uprooted, he began driving them off towards the north. Although Rādhikā had the power to destroy him within a second, She and the other *gopīs* were crying like ordinary worldly girls. Hearing their crying, Kṛṣṇa emerged from the *kuñja*, and accompanied by Baladeva, pursued the demon as he ran off with Rādhikā and the *gopīs*. Then Śaṅkhacūḍa left the *gopīs* and took only Śrīmatī Rādhikā, recognising Her to be the most beautiful. Kṛṣṇa told Baladeva, "Stay here to protect and console the *gopīs*—I will return quickly after killing this demon." Seeing that Kṛṣṇa was advancing towards him, Śaṅkhacūḍa abandoned Rādhikā as well and continued to run. After Kṛṣṇa caught him and killed him with His fist, He saw that there was a jewel on the demon's forehead. 'Antaka' means forehead, so 'Syamantaka' means the jewel which came from the forehead of Śaṅkhacūḍa. Taking the jewel, Kṛṣṇa was laughing as He returned, and He thought that He wanted to give the jewel to His beloved Rādhikā. But He knew that if He gave it to Her, all the other *gopīs* would be envious of Her. Kṛṣṇa always promises each and every *gopī*, such as Śyāmalā and Bhadra, that He only loves them and thereby they become intoxicated. We see this also in the *rāsa-līlā*:

*tāsāṁ tat-saubhaga-madaṁ
vīkṣya mānaṁ ca keśavaḥ
praśamāya prasādāya
tatraivāntaradhīyata*

Śrīmad Bhāg. 10.29.48

"Lord Keśava, seeing the *gopīs* too proud of their good fortune, wanted to relieve them of this pride and show them further mercy. Thus He immediately disappeared."

This is *saubhaga-mada*, being intoxicated in thinking that they alone are the dearest to Him. Seeing that they were fatigued, Kṛṣṇa was massaging their feet and wiping their faces with His yellow shawl. Each and every *gopī* has this *saubhaga-mada*, thinking, "Kṛṣṇa loves me alone the most." Therefore they were all thinking that, "Kṛṣṇa will give

me the Syamantaka jewel.” Kṛṣṇa saw that if He gave it to Śrīmatī Rādhikā, all the *gopīs* would be simultaneously angry with Him and envious of Her. So he thought of a clever way to give it to Her: “Baladeva loves Me very much, and He knows everything of My heart. He always does everything just to please Me, and because He is older than Me, if it is given to Him, no one can become angry. I know that somehow Baladeva will see that it is given to Śrīmatī Rādhikā.” Thinking in this way, He gave it to Baladeva Prabhu, who thought, “Why has Kṛṣṇa given this to Me? Really He wants to give it to Śrīmatī Rādhikā, but there is some danger in Him giving it directly to Her. I should give it to Her, and then no one will be angry.” But He could not give it directly to Her, because He treats Rādhikā like a younger brother’s wife, and therefore as a daughter. Because Baladeva Prabhu does not mix with Lalitā, Viśākhā, and the other *gopīs*—He merely gives them blessings when they offer *praṇāma* to Him from a distance—He thought that He should give it to Madhumaṅgala. Because Madhumaṅgala is a *priyanarma-sakhā*, he sometimes mixes with the *mañjarīs* and the *sakhīs*. Then Madhumaṅgala gave the jewel to Viśākhā, Viśākhā brought it to Lalitā, and together they took it to Rādhikā. They knew that Rati Mañjarī (Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī) was very dear to Rādhikā, so they called her to place the jewel in Her necklace. In speaking this verse, Rati Mañjarī is remembering this pastime and with the eyes of *bhāva* is seeing how that jewel was given to her to place in Śrīmatī Rādhikā’s necklace, near to Her very heart. Rati Mañjarī is praying, “When will such a fortunate day come when I will be able to again perform this service?”

She describes the Syamantaka jewel, which is situated at the heart of Rādhikā, as being the friend of the Kaustubha jewel, which is situated at the heart of Kṛṣṇa. Those who are friends can freely embrace, and she is immensely eager to arrange for them to meet. The friendship between the Syamantaka jewel and the Kaustubha jewel depend solely on the friendship between Rādhikā and Kṛṣṇa, and she desires that They will meet and thereby make the two jewels friends. In this verse, she refers to Rādhikā as ‘*sumukhī*’—She who has a beautiful smile. The face is the mirror of the heart, and when someone smiles it indicates that their heart is full of joy. So Rādhikā is smiling here because upon hearing this prayer of Rati Mañjarī, She is pleased and astonished that Rati Mañjarī possesses such a strong memory that she can remember this pastime, and how she wants the Syamantaka jewel and Kaustubha jewel to always be friends. When devotees remember pastimes like these, it pleases Rādhikā and Kṛṣṇa so much.

(3)

*vraja-pura-pati-rājñya ājñaya miṣṭam annam
bahu-vidham ati-yatnāt svena pakvañ varoru
sapadi nija-sakhīnām mad-vidhānām ca hastair
madhumathana-nimittam kiñ tvayā sannidhāpyam*

Śrī Vilāpa-kusumāñjali 46

“O You who are the best cook in all the worlds! When will You place all of the sweets which You have prepared with great care on the order of Yaśodā, the queen of Vraja, and for the pleasure of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, in the hands of Your *sakhīs* like me and send us to Nandagrāma?”

Here Rati Mañjarī is calling Rādhikā by saying ‘*varoru*’ which means She who is the best cook in all of the worlds, including Vraja. In the evening, Rādhikā has returned with Her companions to Yāvaṭa and Kṛṣṇa has also returned to His home. The *sakhīs* are very attentive to ensure that Rādhikā is always cheerful, but now they are seeing that She is very unhappy in separation from Kṛṣṇa. At this time Yaśodā sent a *sakhī* to Yāvaṭa with an order for Rādhikā to send some sweetmeats for Kṛṣṇa to eat that evening. Hearing this order from Yaśodā, Rādhikā became very pleased. Durvāsā Muni had previously given a boon to Śrīmatī Rādhikā that anyone who eats what She prepares will become very powerful, never become ill, and live a long life. For this reason, Yaśodā always wanted Rādhikā to cook for Kṛṣṇa.

While Śrīmatī Rādhikā was feeling separation from Kṛṣṇa, She was very hot and perspiring very heavily. The *sakhīs* tried to cool Her by lying Her on a bed of the best lotus flowers, applying cooling *candana* to the upper part of Her body, and many other things, but Her body temperature would not come down. Then when She went to the kitchen, She removed all of Her ornaments and Her beautiful white dress, because there was no one there except for Her *sakhīs*. Seeing Her at this time, Rati Mañjarī said that Rādhikā appears immensely beautiful, much more beautiful than Candrāvalī. Rati Mañjarī says, “What is the use of ornaments and costly dress to beautify Her?” Rati Mañjarī also notices that when Rādhikā is cooking, She is very happy. Rādhikā is cooking at numerous stoves at the same time, and moving between them very quickly. Rati Mañjarī with great astonishment notices that in the midst of all these burning stoves, Rādhikā is very cool, and that there is no need to try and cool Her by fanning Her with a *cāmara*. In this verse Rati Mañjarī is praying that she will be able to assist Rādhikā in the preparation of these sweetmeats.

*nītānna-mad-vidha-lalāṭa-taṭe lalāṭām
prītyā pradāya muditā vraja-rāja-rājñī
preṃṇā prasūr iva bhavat-kuśalasya pṛcchām
bhāvye vidhāsyati kadā mayi tāvakatvāt*

Śrī Vilāpa-kusumāñjali 47

“O embodiment of auspiciousness! When, after I have taken these sweets to Yaśodā, will she, knowing me to be Your *dāsī*, make me happy by touching her forehead to mine, and like a loving mother ask about Your welfare?”

Considering the *mañjarīs* to be very dear to Her, Śrīmatī Rādhikā orders them to take the sweets which She has prepared to Mother Yaśodā because She Herself is unable to go there at that time. She is confident that as Her representatives, they will present the sweets to Kṛṣṇa in an even more pleasing manner than She Herself would. She places the *manohara-laḍḍu*, *amṛta-keli*, *rasa-malāi*, and many other sweets wrapped separately inside a large golden pot and covers it with a white cloth. For some reason, Rūpa Mañjarī is not there, so in this instance Rati Mañjarī is the head of the party. She carries it on her head, and at Nanda-bhavana Yaśodā is eagerly waiting for them, continuously stepping outside the door to look and then going back in again. Seeing them coming, she became immensely happy. After the pot was removed from her head, Rati Mañjarī bent down to touch Yaśodā’s feet, but Yaśodā immediately embraced her as if she was Śrīmatī Rādhikā Herself. Yaśodā loves Rādhikā no less than she loves Kṛṣṇa. Out of great affection Yaśodā touched her forehead to Rati Mañjarī’s forehead, as if she was her own daughter. Then she asked, “How is my loving daughter Rādhikā?” and with a smiling face Rati Mañjarī replied, “She is quite well.”

If Kṛṣṇa knows someone to be a *dāsī* of Rādhikā, He bestows all of His mercy upon them. Therefore to be a *dāsī* of Rādhikā is the highest position. Narottama Ṭhākura writes that although He is a *dāsī* of Rādhikā, by Her order he is serving both She and Kṛṣṇa. He prays for the instance when he will touch both of Their feet, look upon Them with great affection, and because They are perspiring, They will ask him to come and fan Them. And when They ask him to bring a cup of very pure water, he will carry that water to Them himself. They will ask him to bring *tāmbūla* for Rādhikā to place in Kṛṣṇa’s mouth. He writes that he will serve Them both in the party of Lalitā and Viśākhā and always under the guidance of his own *gurudeva* who is in the form of a *mañjarī*. Not that he will serve independently, but always under their guidance. For instance, he will string a garland, give it to his *guru-sakhī* who will give it to Rūpa Mañjarī, who will give it to Lalitā and Viśākhā, who will give it to Rādhikā, who will give it to Kṛṣṇa. Then Rādhikā will ask Lalitā, “Who has made this beautiful garland?” and Lalitā will reply, “This new *sakhī* has made it—she has received training directly from Rūpa Mañjarī and is very

qualified.” Narottama Ṭhākura writes that upon hearing this, he will be exceedingly joyful. He concludes the song by saying that Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa and the *sakhīs* in Vṛndāvana are his very life, and without their service, he cannot live for even one moment. He is expressing these sentiments in many *kīrtanas* as if he is crying, and if someone has really developed greed, then certainly they will shed tears of separation. They will not find anything of this world tasteful, unlike us who are attracted to fine clothing and foodstuffs.

Narottama Ṭhākura says that actually he is not performing *bhajana* at all, but a *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī* considers that he is performing *bhajana* very nicely. An honest *madhyama-adhikārī* feels that he is doing *bhajana*, but that it is not what it should be. An *uttama-adhikārī* will feel that he is not doing anything, and he will always weep as Bilva-maṅgala Ṭhākura, Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī, Narottama Ṭhākura, and Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura did. Do we ever feel any separation? In our present condition we should at least feel some separation for our *gurudeva*. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu Himself prays:

nayanam galad-aśru-dhārayā
vadanam gadgada-ruddhayā girā
pulakair nicitam vapuḥ kadā
tava nāma-grahaṇe bhaviṣyati

Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka 6

“Hey Bhagavān! When while singing Your name will tears flow incessantly from my eyes, my voice become choked up, and the hairs of my body stand erect?”

But do we pray like this? These things do not happen to us while chanting because our hearts are like stone. In another place Narottama Ṭhākura writes *paśu pākhi jhure, pāṣāṇa vidare*—Mahāprabhu and Nityānanda Prabhu are so glorious that Their singing of *kṛṣṇa-nāma* could induce wild animals to chant and even melt stone. He writes that even though he has heard about Mahāprabhu’s pastimes, still he does not perform *bhajana* and is therefore the most wretched person. Mahāprabhu has descended to place the wealth of *kṛṣṇa-prema* in our hands, free of cost, but we will not accept it. We consider invaluable things to be valuable and are always endeavouring to attain them. *kṛṣṇa-prema* can be attained merely by singing *nāma-saṅkīrtana*, but we have no taste for it and do not perform *bhajana*. Our *ācāryas* have warned us against indulgence in sense-gratification, but our minds do not obey us and still we are attracted to the objects of the senses. Narottama Ṭhākura writes, “Why is it that I don’t simply die? Because I am so sinful and fallen, in this life I am unable to perform *bhajana*, so I will try again in my next life.”

(4)

*ayi vimala-jalānām gandha-karpūra-puṣpair
jita-vidhu-mukha-padme vāsītānām ghaṭaughaiḥ
praṇaya-lalīta-sakhyā dīyamānaiḥ purastāt
tava varam abhiṣekam ha kadāham kariṣye*

Śrī Vilāpa-kusumāñjali 21

“Hey Svāminī, the splendour of whose lotus face defeats that of the moon! When, after Your loving *sakhīs* have placed pots of water scented with flowers and camphor in the bathing room, will I perform Your beautiful *abhiṣeka* (bathing ceremony)?”

Having brought water in golden pots from Mānasī-gaṅgā, the Yamunā, and Pāvana-sarovara, the *sakhīs* are eager to bathe Śrīmatī Rādhikā. The Yamunā water will be of *śyāma* (dark) complexion, as if Śyāma Himself is there, whereas the water from Mānasī-gaṅgā is whitish, and sometimes resembles the complexion of Śrīmatī Rādhikā. The water is scented with camphor, roses and *campā*, *belī*, and *camelī* flowers. There are many large pots, and one small *lotā* with which they will perform the *abhiṣeka* of Rādhikā. This verse mentions that they will do it with *praṇaya*, which is very deep love beyond even the stages of *sneha* and *māna*, and all the while they will be speaking of Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes.

*prakṣālya pāda-kamalaṁ tad-anukrameṇa
goṣṭhendra-sūnu-dayite tava keśa-pāśam
hā narmadā-grathita-sundara-sūkṣma-mālyair
veṇīm kariṣyati kadā praṇayair jano ‘yam*

Śrī Vilāpa-kusumāñjali 23

“O beloved of Vrajendra-nandana! When, after washing Your lotus feet, will I lovingly braid Your hair with the many small garlands strung by Narmadā-devī?”

After Rati Mañjarī has helped to dress Śrīmatī Rādhikā, she now wants to dry and decorate Her hair. Taking a smooth cloth, she wraps it around Rādhikā’s hair and gently squeezes out all the water. Narmadā-devī is the daughter of a gardener, and she has made some very thin but exquisite garlands. Rati Mañjarī is praying, “When will I be fortunate enough to decorate Your hair with these garlands?”

While composing these verses in external consciousness, Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī would always be weeping in separation, but when he would become absorbed in his internal identity as Rati Mañjarī, he would become overjoyed. A devotee who has greed and feels this separation will be able to genuinely relish these verses, but those who do not feel separation cannot realise the deep sentiments within these verses. When we hear and read these verses, we should identify ourselves as followers of Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī and try to make our hearts one with his. When he would return to his external senses, he would weep very loudly while lying on his back on the banks of Rādhā-kuṇḍa and he would cry out “O Śrīmatī Rādhike! I am wretched and have no qualification for Your service! Will that day ever come when You will bestow Your mercy upon me?”

A *sādhaka* realises that he is not qualified for these higher topics, but if he has greed, still he cannot stop hearing and reading them. A *sādhaka* should have great eagerness to chant *harināma*, remember Kṛṣṇa, and perform all devotional activities. In the third verse of his *Upadeśāmṛta*, Rūpa Gosvāmī has mentioned the word *utsāhā*—if one does not have great eagerness to perform *vaidhī-bhakti*, then what hope is there that he will be able to follow *rāgānugā-bhakti*? Without great eagerness one will not be able to enter even one inch into *rāgānugā-bhakti*. We should have this great eagerness in whatever limb of *bhakti* we are engaged in, and where there is this eagerness, there will also be humility. Rūpa Gosvāmī writes:

*prācīnānām bhajanamatulam duṣkaram śṛṇvato me
nairāśyena jvalati hṛdayam bhakti-leśālasasya
viśvadrīcīmaghahara tavākaraṇya kārūṇyavīcī-
māśābindūksitamidamuphtyantare hanta śāityam*

Stava-mālā, Tribhaṅgīpañcakam

One may have seen from the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* how Kaśyapa Ṛṣi and Aditi performed such severe austerities. For thousands of years while standing on their heads they did not eat or drink anything, and ultimately they stopped breathing as well. Then Nārāyaṇa appeared before them and said, “What do you desire?”

They replied, “We desire a son like You, we desire a son like You, we desire a son like You.”

Nārāyaṇa said, “Since there is no one like Me, I Myself will have to become Your son, and because you have asked three times, for three births I will be Your son.” Therefore He came as their son in that birth, and then again in their births as Pṛṣni and Sutapā and Vasudeva and Devakī. Devotees like Dhruva Mahārāja also performed severe austerities. Nārada performed very severe austerities for seven thousand years, and then received only a very brief *darśana* of Nārāyaṇa. When Nārāyaṇa vanished, Nārada began

to cry, and then a voice from the sky said, “Because you cannot always see Me with material eyes, I have vanished like this. Only after giving up this body and attaining a spiritual form will you always be able to see Me.” Nārada has mentioned that he considered this the special mercy of Nārāyaṇa, who wanted to instill some special eagerness within Nārada by vanishing. Without this eagerness, Bhagavān cannot be attained, but this eagerness brings the qualification to see Bhagavān. The *gopīs* were so eager for Kṛṣṇa that when He merely blew a brief vibration on the flute they overcame so many difficulties and met with Him in the night. Those who were not so eager were checked by their circumstances. Without this eagerness, one cannot perform *bhajana*, and when this eagerness reaches its highest limit, one can overcome any obstacle to meet Kṛṣṇa.

Rūpa Gosvāmī writes that he has heard how the ancient devotees performed such severe austerities and strict *bhajana*, but his heart is burning because he feels he does not have a touch of genuine renunciation or any qualification whatsoever. We are always sunk in material desires, but still we are hopeful that we will someday enter into *rāgānugā-bhakti*. What to speak of *rāgānugā-bhakti*, even those who embody *vaidhī-bhakti* exhibited such impressive standards. Prahlāda Mahārāja’s father tried to kill him numerous times, but he was never concerned about it. Rūpa Gosvāmī says, “Because I have no *bhakti*, my heart is burning.”

If someone says to him, “Then you should die!” he will reply, “I cannot die.”

“Why?”

“Because I have a little hope.”

“What is that hope?”

Then in this verse he refers to Kṛṣṇa as the enemy of Aghāsura. Brahmā prays for *darśana* of Kṛṣṇa’s feet in his meditation, but Aghāsura could not be satisfied with that. After seeing Kṛṣṇa directly with his eyes, not merely in meditation, he was so eager that he wanted to swallow Kṛṣṇa and keep Him in his heart. Knowing this, Kṛṣṇa entered his mouth with all the cowherd boys and cows. Generally if a snake or any other animal dies, there will be an immense odour, but Kṛṣṇa purified this serpent in such a way that for one year its corpse emanated a nice fragrance and the cowherd boys enjoyed so many games by continuously entering inside it and hiding and then coming out again. In its next birth Aghāsura attained salvation, that for which Māyāvādī *sannyāsīs* perform such severe austerities. When after performing these austerities for thousands of births all of their senses become completely inactive, they attain salvation, but Aghāsura attained salvation in a single moment. And because he was Pūtanā’s brother, that was not even *sāyujya-mukti*, impersonal liberation, but *sārūpya-mukti*, obtaining a form similar to Bhagavān’s. Rūpa Gosvāmī says, “If even Aghāsura received the mercy of Kṛṣṇa, and I am chanting His name and hearing narrations of His pastimes, will Kṛṣṇa not bestow His mercy upon me? I have heard that His mercy is like the clouds which shower rain on everyone indiscriminately, or like the waves of the ocean which come to one who stands

near the shore of the ocean. Due to this I have hope that this mercy will someday touch me, and this hope is keeping me alive.”

In this verse, Rati Mañjarī is praying for the day when she will be able to decorate Rādhikā’s hair. Sometimes, when Rādhikā’s hair becomes dishevelled after She has been enjoying pastimes with Kṛṣṇa, She asks Him to decorate it as it was before. Then the *mañjarīs* place before Him golden pots of fragrant oil, *añjana*, *tilaka*, and flowers. When Kṛṣṇa takes Her hair in His hand, it appears that Her hair is the current of the Yamunā and His hand is a blue lotus. In his internal *svarūpa* as Rati Mañjarī, Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī was remembering this pastime, and when the scene disappeared he began to weep and spoke this verse. Why is he so eager to perform this service? Because he knows that once Rādhikā’s hair is nicely decorated, she will go to Nanda-bhavana and Kṛṣṇa will be very attracted to Her.

(5)

*sindūra-rekhā sīmānte
devī ratna-śalākayā
mayā ya kalpitā kiṁ te
śalakam śobhayiṣyati*

Śrī Vilāpa-kusumāñjali 25

“O Devi, will I, by drawing a line of red *sindūra* with a jewelled stick, decorate the part in Your hair?”

For ladies, this *sindūra* is essential. If they are wearing nice ornaments and fine clothing but *sindūra* is not there, it is all meaningless because others will consider her to be a widow or unfortunate because she has no husband.

When in meditation Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī is remembering the pastimes of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, he feels that They are directly standing before him. Being oblivious to whatever may be happening externally, he is overjoyed in divine blissfulness. He feels that he is serving Śrīmatī Rādhikā, but when the remembrance dissipates, he feels great separation and begins weeping bitterly. In his internal vision, he sees that Śrīmatī Rādhikā has taken bath and now the *mañjarīs* are decorating Her with ornaments and the sixteen kinds of *āvaraṇa*, such as *añjana* and *tilaka*. If all the *āvaraṇa* are there but the ornaments are not, still She appears so beautiful. As we told before, while cooking She removes Her ornaments, Her *cādara* and Her thin, light white dress. At that time a *mañjarī* approaches Her with a mirror saying, “Just look and see how beautiful You appear!”

When Rati Mañjarī spoke this verse, she went deep into remembrance of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes. This *sindūra* has friendship with Kṛṣṇa’s black, curly hair. A *sakhī* applied this *sindūra* to the part in Śrīmatī Rādhikā’s hair and also *kājala* to Her eyes, which are very large and restless like those of a deer. Then she gives a mirror to Her, saying, “Look and see how beautiful You are!” Rādhikā looks and agrees that She is very beautiful, but Rādhikā doesn’t consider that Her beauty is for Her own pleasure. She thinks, “If Kṛṣṇa becomes pleased upon seeing this face, then I will also be pleased.” Otherwise all the decoration is useless. Just then Kṛṣṇa came, and saw Her braid decorated with exquisite garlands and the deep red *sindūra* in the part of Her hair. At once He was attracted, and taking Śrīmatī Rādhikā in His arms, this *sindūra* mixed in Kṛṣṇa’s hair and They both became overjoyed. Witnessing this, the *sakhīs* became delighted, even more happy than Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa Themselves. Because all the *kiṅkarīs* have the same marks on them that Rādhikā Herself does, when Her *sindūra* becomes mixed in

Kṛṣṇa's hair, they all feel that Kṛṣṇa has taken their marks of *sindūra* as well. In this way they feel that Kṛṣṇa is meeting with them also, but they don't desire to meet with him directly, but to experience everything through Śrīmatī Rādhikā. The *sakhīs* decorate Rādhikā with ornaments and *āvaraṇa*, and Rādhikā feels that She is so beautiful. But unlike us when we decorate ourselves, it is not for their own selfishness, but exclusively to attract and please Kṛṣṇa. In our present condition we cannot possibly imagine this stage of purity.

In a mood of great separation, Rādhikā says, "If I had known of Kṛṣṇa's nature, that externally He appears very beautiful but internally He is so crooked, I would never have developed so much love for Him. I am revealing the feelings of my inner heart, and I say that no one should ever desire to love Kṛṣṇa. They should always keep very far away from Him, because He is black both externally and internally. He sets traps to catch innocent victims, and He is so cruel that from the bow of his earrings He shoots the very sharp arrows of His side-long glances. His flute melody is exceedingly beautiful, and His words are even more beautiful than that. He possesses some *rasa* mixed with poison, and when He administers it to someone, they don't die but merely become mad and do just as He instructs them. At first I fell into His trap, but somehow I escaped and since then I have always tried to never fall into that trap again, but still, time and again I fall into it."

Kṛṣṇa sent Uddhava to Vṛndāvana to deliver a message to a particular *gopī* saying, "I am your servant forever, and besides you I know nothing. I will always do as you say, and I cannot live without you. You are more dear to me than Candrāvalī, Padma, and all others." Kṛṣṇa would speak to the *gopīs* like this when He was residing in Vraja, so when He went from Mathurā to Dvārakā, He could not relinquish this habit. In Dvārakā He simply did the same things. He vowed three times, "O Satyabhāmā-devī, You are my heart and soul. I don't love Rukmiṇī—I am yours only." And when He goes to Rukmiṇī, He says, "I don't love anyone else—I desire only you."

Once Nārada came to Dvārakā with a *pārijāta* flower which he had taken from Indra's garden in the heavenly planets. The nature of the *pārijāta* flower is that whoever wears it on her head or anywhere on her body will always be immensely beautiful. They will never feel any hunger or thirst and always be happy. Nārada arrived as Kṛṣṇa was sitting surrounded by all His sixteen-thousand queens, and giving the flower to Kṛṣṇa, he said, "In my presence, right now, give this flower to the queen who is the dearest to You." Knowing that if He did so it would ignite a great quarrel, Kṛṣṇa could not decide what to do. As Nārada insisted again and again, Kṛṣṇa thought, "Now I am in serious trouble!" After deliberating, He gave it to Rukmiṇī because it is a well-known fact that she is the principal queen. Still all the queens consider that they are the dearest to Kṛṣṇa, and especially Satyabhāmā thinks this way because Kṛṣṇa was always telling her so. When He gave it to Rukmiṇī, the faces of all other queens withered in disappointment and Satyabhāmā became extremely angry. She thought, "Kṛṣṇa has insulted me. He always tells me

that I am His favourite, but in front of everyone He has insulted me by giving the flower to Rukmiṇī. If He had kept it in his pocket and not given it to anyone, at least I would have some consolation.” She wept and with red, furious eyes, she left and locked herself in her room. Taking off her queen’s dress and ornaments, she lay on the ground taking long breaths like a female serpent. Rukmiṇī was elated, but all the other queens were crestfallen. Kṛṣṇa thought, “Now what should I do?” He went alone to the palace of Satyabhāmā where He saw that she was lying down and weeping. Holding her feet, He said, “In this situation I have cheated only Rukmiṇī, but because you are less intelligent, you could not understand. I have given My whole heart to you, so why are you weeping only for that ordinary flower? Do you desire a mere ordinary flower or My heart?” Then she said angrily, “You cannot even give me a flower, what to speak of Your heart? I don’t believe You, and I want to go to my father’s home. I will not live here with You any longer.” Kṛṣṇa, being such a clever cheater, consoled her by saying, “At this very moment I will go to heaven and bring an entire tree of those flowers for you!” At once He beckoned Garuḍa, and taking Satyabhāmā in His lap, Kṛṣṇa went to heaven and uprooted that *pārijāta* tree. As he was leaving, Indra and all the demigods told Kṛṣṇa that He was forbidden to take it. A big fight ensued but Kṛṣṇa defeated Indra and took the tree back to the palace of Satyabhāmā. Then He said, “Satyabhāmā, we should inform Rukmiṇī and all other queens that from today this tree will be planted in your garden, and that they are all invited to come here and see it.” And upon hearing this, all the queens came to see it. But if Satyabhāmā had been in Rukmiṇī’s place, she would not have accepted that invitation and she would not have come to the function. But Rukmiṇī was so magnanimous and tolerant that she came.

Śrīmatī Rādhikā says, “At first I innocently fell into Kṛṣṇa’s trap, but I escaped and decided to never go again, but I was cheated and again drawn into it. Really there is no trap, but the nature of Kṛṣṇa’s love is such that day and night, always, everywhere, My very soul is weeping to meet with Him. Why? Because when Kṛṣṇa meets with Me and touches Me, I forget who I am, what I am, where I am, and what He does with me, I don’t know. He touches His mouth to My mouth, His breast to My breasts, He holds His eyes close to My eyes, and He desires to enter inside My very heart. He also desires to tear open His own heart and keep Me inside, feeling that ‘I have lost Śrīmatī Rādhikā.’ Even in meeting, when all of His limbs are touching the corresponding parts of My body, He thinks that ‘I do not have Śrīmatī Rādhikā.’ Kṛṣṇa thinks that if I were a necklace, He would carry me around his neck and at his chest. If I was *candana*, He would smear me on his whole body. He thinks, ‘Where should I keep Śrīmatī Rādhikā? She is My life and soul and My greatest treasure. If anyone sees this treasure, they will desire to possess it, so I should hide it inside My heart.’ He loves Me so much that He makes betel and places it in My mouth. He decorates My braid, decorates My eyes with *kājala*, dresses Me and gives Me ornaments. He makes a *ghee* lamp and weeping, offers it to Me, desir-

ing to always see My face. He holds My head in His lap, and tries to write His name on Me very artistically.”

In this verse, Rati Mañjarī is praying to apply red *sindūra* with a golden stick to the part in Śrīmatī Rādhikā’s hair, because she knows that upon seeing it Kṛṣṇa will become very greedy to have this red come in His black hair. Rati Mañjarī is praying, “When will I see all these things?”

(6)

*kṛṣṇa-vaktrāmbujocchiṣṭaiṁ
prasādaṁ param ādarāt
dattaṁ dhaniṣṭhaya devī
kim āneṣyāmi te 'grataḥ*

Śrī Vilāpa-kusumāñjali 48

“Hey Devī! Will I place before You the *prasāda* remnants from the lotus mouth of Śrī Kṛṣṇa respectfully brought by Dhaniṣṭhā?”

Śrīmatī Rādhikā does not take any foodstuffs besides Kṛṣṇa’s remnants. In the previous verse, Rati Mañjarī said that Rādhikā will send her to Yaśodā with varieties of sweetmeats. After Rati Mañjarī offers *praṇāma* to Mother Yaśodā, Yaśodā will take Rati Mañjarī in her arms, bless her, and ask after the welfare of her darling daughter Rādhikā. Yaśodā will give these sweets to Dhaniṣṭhā who will give them to Kṛṣṇa. At the time of taking *prasāda* at Nanda-bhavana, the cowherd boys such as Śrīdāmā and all of Nanda Bābā’s brothers such as Upananda are present there. Kṛṣṇa sits at Nanda Bābā’s right, and Baladeva sits at his left. Sometimes Nanda places food in Kṛṣṇa’s mouth, and sometimes in the mouth of Baladeva. Madhumaṅgala is also there and by assuming various comical postures, makes everyone laugh. If Yaśodā gives some sweets to Kṛṣṇa, Madhumaṅgala says, “O Mother! Kṛṣṇa has an upset stomach—He cannot digest that! Therefore give it to me instead.” Everyone enjoys the feast, and sometimes Upananda and the other brothers of Nanda Bābā also place food in the mouths of Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva. When everyone rises to wash their hands, Kṛṣṇa secretly places some of His remnants in the hands of Dhaniṣṭhā. Knowing that Śrīmatī Rādhikā’s *sakhīs* will not take anything unless Kṛṣṇa’s remnants are given to them, Mother Yaśodā also sometimes gives some of Kṛṣṇa’s remnants to Dhaniṣṭhā. When Kṛṣṇa gives them to Dhaniṣṭhā, He says, “This preparation was not nice—give it to Rādhikā and tell Her that She does not know how to prepare delicious food.” In reality that preparation is immensely delicious, but He wants to give it to Rādhikā.

In this verse Rati Mañjarī prays, “After Dhaniṣṭhā has given these remnants to me, will I bring them to You?” When Rati Mañjarī returns to Yāvaṭa, Śrīmatī Rādhikā asks her, “Were you present as Kṛṣṇa was taking His meal?”

Rati Mañjarī replies, “I was there, but at a distance because Kṛṣṇa’s elders were there.”

“Did Kṛṣṇa enjoy it?”

“He liked it very much.”

“But how did you know that He liked it?”

“Kṛṣṇa glanced towards me, and with His eyes He told me how delicious it was.”

“Did you receive an opportunity to render any service to Kṛṣṇa? And was His stomach filled?”

“Yes, he was fully satisfied.”

“How do you know?”

“I just know.” Then Śrīmatī Rādhikā looked into the eyes of Rati Mañjarī and searched for Kṛṣṇa there. She saw that Kṛṣṇa was there—how? Because Rati Mañjarī was so cheerful, and feeling Kṛṣṇa’s presence, Rādhikā began weeping, Her hair stood on end, and Her voice became choked up. Then Rati Mañjarī gave Her the remnants, saying, “Kṛṣṇa Himself secretly gave these to Dhaniṣṭhā for You.” Then Lalitā, Viśākhā, and all the *sakhīs* sat down, and Śrīmatī Rādhikā gave them back to Rati Mañjarī and said, “Divide these amongst everyone.” Therefore, in the next verse Rati Mañjarī is praying, “Will I distribute Kṛṣṇa’s remnants to You and Your *sakhīs*? You have not taken anything yet because You were waiting for His remnants.”

*nānā-vidhair amṛta-sāra-rasāyanais taiḥ
kṛṣṇa-prasāda-militair iha bhojya-peyaiḥ
hā kuṅkumāṅgi lalitādi-sakhi-vṛtā tvam
yatnan mayā kim u tarām upabhojanīyā*

Śrī Vilāpa-kusumāñjali 49

“O Kuṅkumāṅgi (She whose limbs are anointed with *kuṅkuma*)! When will I very lovingly feed You, Lalitā and Your other *sakhīs* nectar drinks and varieties of ambrosial foodstuffs along with the remnants which have been mixed with the nectar of Kṛṣṇa’s lips?”

Once, when Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu went to receive *darśana* of Jagannātha, He saw how Jagannātha was directly Gopinātha Himself. At once the *pūjārī* sent Mahāprabhu a large plate of *mahā-prasāda*, and upon seeing how beautiful and fragrant it was, Mahāprabhu began to weep, thinking, “Jagannātha is so kind that He has sent this for Me.” Only those who are greatly fortunate can taste Jagannātha’s *prasāda*. If one does not have sufficient *sukṛti* (devotional merit), he will not be able to taste it.

*mahā-prasāde govinde
nāma-brahmaṇi vaiṣṇave
svalpa-puṇyavatām rājan
viśvāso naiva jāyate*

“Those who do not possess sufficient pious credit will not have faith in Bhagavān’s name, His *mahā-prasāda*, *brāhmaṇas* and Vaiṣṇavas.”

Because *mahā-prasāda* is *cinmaya* (transcendental), they will not be able to taste it. If they possess abundant *sukṛti*, they will be able to taste it and directly experience that it is *mahā-prasāda*. Mahāprabhu says, “If someone tastes *mahā-prasāda*, then I think that they must have received the full mercy of Kṛṣṇa.” This previous merit is Kṛṣṇa’s mercy, and without it one will be unable to realise that it is directly *mahā-prasāda*.

koṭi-amṛta-svāda pāñā prabhura camatkāra
sarvāṅge pulaka, netre vahe aśru-dhāra

Cait.-carit. Antya-līlā 16.93

“To Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu the *prasāda* tasted millions of times better than nectar, and thus He was fully satisfied. His bodily hairs stood erect and tears flowed incessantly from His eyes.”

He continued to praise that *prasāda* for the entire day, remembering how Kṛṣṇa and the cowherd boys would take *prasāda* together. Once, when Śrīmatī Rādhikā was in the kitchen at Nanda-bhavana cooking, Mother Yaśodā found that there was not enough *purīs* to distribute. Then she called Śrīmatī Rādhikā, “My dear daughter, bring more *purīs*.” Emerging from the kitchen with a golden pot of *purīs*, Yaśodā asked Her to give some to Kṛṣṇa. But instead, after bringing the pot, Rādhikā ran away and began to tremble. Having taken the *bhāva* of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, Mahāprabhu could feel how She felt as Kṛṣṇa was taking *prasāda*, and He was remembering all of these pastimes.

‘ei dravye eta svāda kāhāñ haite āila?
kṛṣṇera adharāmṛta ithe sañcārila’

Cait.-carit. Antya-līlā 16.94

Mahāprabhu considered, “Where has such a taste in this *prasāda* come from? Certainly it is due to having been touched by the nectar of Kṛṣṇa’s lips.”

Weeping, Mahāprabhu said, “Mere rice, *dahl*, *kacorīs*, and sweets of this world could not possibly be this tasteful—take some and see for yourselves” and then He distributed it amongst His associates. Upon taking it, they all became as blissful as Mahāprabhu was. In the same way, Śrīmatī Rādhikā took the remnants which were sent through Dhaniṣṭhā, tasted some, and then divided it amongst Her *sakhīs*. Tasting these sentiments, Mahāprabhu said:

*tanu-mana karāya kṣobha, bāḍāya surata-lobha,
harṣa-śokādi-bhāra vināśaya
pāsarāya anya rasa, jagat kare ātma-vaśa,
lajjā, dharma, dhairya kare kṣaya*

*nāgara, śuna tomāra adhara-carita
mātāya nārira mana, jihvā kare ākarṣaṇa,
vicārite saba viparīta*

Cait.-carit. Antya-līlā 16.121-122

“The effect of taking that *prasāda* was that My desire to meet with and love Kṛṣṇa has increased unlimitedly and I have become as if mad. These remnants have made Me feel that I am directly seeing Kṛṣṇa, tasting Him, speaking with Him, and touching Him. Taking these remnants vanquishes all of one’s shame, religiosity, patience, and mundane happiness and distress.”

Dhairya, patience, and *lajjā*, shame, are what obstructs a *gopī* from meeting Kṛṣṇa. Being afraid of what others will say if she goes to Him, or desiring to go to Him in such a way that no one will know of it—both of these are vanquished when one takes His remnants. Taking His *prasāda* clears the way and then one will not care for anything, whether it is day or night or anything. These remnants have so much potency.

While Śrīmatī Rādhikā is taking this *prasāda* and also distributing it to Her *sakhīs*, She says, “Although the flute is male, he desires to drink the nectar of Kṛṣṇa’s lips, and drinking more and more, he has left nothing there for us. The nectar of Kṛṣṇa’s lips is really meant for us because we are of the same class whereas this bamboo flute is only dull matter. He consumes this nectar directly in front of us, and we are helpless to do anything about it. He is very courageous, but really he is a hooligan. He is looting our own property in front of us!”

Bilvamaṅgala wrote that Kṛṣṇa’s remnants are similar to Himself:

*premadam ca me kāmadam ca me
vedanam ca me vaibhavām ca me
jivanam ce me jivitam ca me
daivatam ca me deva nāparam*

Kṛṣṇa-karnāmṛta 17

“Hey Kṛṣṇa! You alone are the bestower of *prema* to me, the fulfiller of my internal desires, the giver of knowledge, and my only wealth. You are my life, the giver of my life, and my worshipable Deity; besides You there is nothing for me.”

In the form of Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Kṛṣṇa was so eager to give *prema*, meaning *gopī-prema*, to all *jīvas* that He went from door to door, all over India, giving it in the form of *kṛṣṇa-nāma* with no consideration of who was qualified and who wasn't. Therefore He is *premadam*, and His *mahā-prasāda* remnants also bestow *kṛṣṇa-prema*. “*Kamadam ca me*”—His *mahā-prasāda* also gives *kāma*. There are two types of *mādhurya-rasa*: *saṁbandhātmikā* and *kāmātmikā*. Only the *vraja-gopīs* are *kāmātmikā*, and Yaśodā, Nanda, Upananda, Śrīdāmā, Rukmiṇī, Arjuna, and all others are *saṁbandhātmikā*. *Kāmātmikā* is of two types: direct and *tat-tad-bhāva-icchā-mayī*, which is *mañjarī-bhāva*, the sentiments of the *nitya-sakhīs* and the *prāṇa-sakhīs*. Caitanya Mahāprabhu came to taste *kāmānuga sakhī-bhāva* and to give *tat-tad-bhāva-icchā-mayī*, which inspires one to become a *pālyadāsī* of the *gopīs*. In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, it is written that He also tasted *pālyadāsī-bhāva*, because if He had not tasted it, then how could he give it? Therefore He has tasted Kṛṣṇa in *dāsya*, *sakhya*, *vātsalya*, *mādhurya* and the many varieties of *mādhurya*. Because there are three-hundred and sixty-four types of *gopīs*, He tasted *mādhurya* in three-hundred and sixty-four ways. The aggregate of all these is Śrīmatī Rādhikā, and no other *gopī* can always give Kṛṣṇa whatever He desires. Because Mahāprabhu assumed the *bhāva* of Rādhikā, He tasted it in every way—*kāmātmikā*, *saṁbandhātmikā*, and whatever any *sādhaka* or perfected devotee could ever taste. Previously all *bhāvas* up to *vātsalya* had been given, but not *mādhurya*, and especially this *mañjarī-bhāva*. Caitanya Mahāprabhu distributed this, and for ordinary people He gave *Hari-nāma* and the knowledge that they are eternal servants of Kṛṣṇa. Therefore, in this verse “*kāmadam ca me*” means *kāmānuga*, and within *kāmānuga*, *bhāva-icchā-mayī*. He gave it by transmitting His mercy into someone's heart, as in the case of Rūpa Gosvāmī, and He prayed to His associates that they also would transmit their mercy into Rūpa Gosvāmī's heart.

“*Vedanam ca me*”—this means He who gives knowledge. By acting as both a *śikṣā-guru* and the *caitya-guru* also, Mahāprabhu inspires *saṁbandha-jñāna*, *abhidheya-jñāna*, and *prayojana-jñāna* within the heart of a *jīva*. As Bilvamaṅgala says in this verse, Kṛṣṇa is our wealth, our very lives, the giver of our lives, our *iṣṭa-deva* (worshipable Deity) and besides Him we know nothing else. All of this can also be said for His *mahā-prasāda* which is non-different from Him in all respects, and therefore Rādhikā takes nothing besides His *mahā-prasāda*. If anyone offers Her any foodstuff, She will first offer it to Kṛṣṇa, and only if He takes some of it will She then take the remnants.

(7)

*tvad-alokana-kalāhi-
damśair eva mṛtaṁ janam
tvat-padābja-milal-lakṣa-
bheṣajair devi jīvaya*

Śrī Vilāpa-kusumāñjali 9

“Hey Devī! With the medicine of the red lac from Your lotus feet, please bring back to life this person who is now dead from the bites of the black snake of not seeing You.”

Internally Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī is serving Rādhikā and Kṛṣṇa, and externally, while remembering and weeping, he is offering *puspāñjali* to the lotus feet of Śrīmatī Rādhikā in the form of this *Vilāpa-kusumāñjali*. He is praying to Her for the opportunity to serve Her in the way in which he is seeing with his inner vision, and he is feeling separation in a similar way as Rādhikā feels separation from Kṛṣṇa. Even when Rādhikā has just returned from Kṛṣṇa, still She thinks “I have not seen Kṛṣṇa for such a long time!” and feels great separation. We cannot even imagine this stage—only those who are perpetually serving Her can possibly imagine something of it. We may possess some eagerness to see Kṛṣṇa, but we have no *mahābhāva*. What to speak of *mahābhāva*, we don’t have any *śuddha-sattva bhāva* or even any *āsakti* (deep spiritual attachment). One can only taste separation as Śrīmatī Rādhikā does in the elevated stage of *mādana*—even Lalitā and Viśākhā do not possess this. By serving Her, the *mañjarīs* can realise something of it. Feeling intense separation from Śrīmatī Rādhikā, Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī in this verse describes that separation as ‘*kalahi*,’ a black snake. This word is used for the black snake Kṛṣṇa because sometimes Kṛṣṇa steals Her away to enjoy Her in a solitary place, causing the *mañjarīs* to feel great separation.

He uses the word ‘*mṛtaṁ*’ meaning he is about to die. He is praying not only for the medicine of Rādhikā’s *darśana*, but the opportunity to serve Her. In his meditational trance, a vision came and he saw that while in *niśānta-līlā*, Śrīmatī Rādhikā is saying to Kṛṣṇa, “You have not decorated Me correctly. My garlands have broken, and My *bindī* has washed away.” In performing *pūjā*, a devotee will always pray that his *iṣṭa-deva* will come by saying, “*Svāgataṁ, svāgataṁ*”, “*kliṁ kṛṣṇāya namaḥ*”, “*idaṁ ācamaniyam*”, “*idaṁ snāniyam*”, “*idaṁ naivedyam*”, and “*idaṁ puspāñjali*”. Then while touching the Deity’s feet, one should pray, “The worship is now completed, please return to Your *siṁhāsana*.” Then all the articles and the area where the *arcana* was performed should be very carefully cleaned. If after completing the *pūjā*, one does not request the Deity to

return to His *śiṅhāsana*, clean the paraphernalia and return it to its proper position, it will be *aparādha*. A priest should always be mindful to do all of these things. Rādhikā is saying to Kṛṣṇa, “You are a priest, and having called Your *iṣṭa-deva*, She came and You worshipped Her. Now You should request Her to go away because the worship is finished, and then clean all the paraphernalia and replace it in its proper location. If You don’t do this, it will be *aparādha*, so do it at once.” Hearing this, Kṛṣṇa became so pleased. There are so many hidden points included within this dialogue, but they cannot be spoken of openly. They are very, very sacred things. After He decorated Her hair with garlands and arranged Her dress as it was before, Śrīmatī Rādhikā told Him, “The red lac on My feet has been washed away—You should replace it.” Then a *sakhī* brought some of this lac, but when Kṛṣṇa took Rādhikā’s lotus feet in His lap, He began trembling—His hands were trembling, His mind was trembling, His heart was trembling, and He could not do it. Then Śrīmatī Rādhikā called out, “O Rati Mañjarī, come here! See how He is trembling? He is not trained for this service and is unable to do it. Show Him how it is done.” But it is not Kṛṣṇa’s nature to leave such a nectarean service, even though He was trembling. Seeing that He had made some mistakes here and there, Rādhikā softly kicked His forehead, leaving a stamp there. In this way Kṛṣṇa became a certified servant of Śrīmatī Rādhikā. When She ordered Rati Mañjarī to take the brush from Kṛṣṇa and apply the lac herself, Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī’s trance broke and he saw that there was no brush, no Rādhikā, no Kṛṣṇa, nothing. He began to weep bitterly, crying out, “*Where has this vision gone?*” At that time He wrote this verse, saying, “A black snake has bitten me. I wanted to serve those lotus feet which Kṛṣṇa was serving, and I was about to do it, but at once it vanished. *What should I do?*” Wailing, he began to roll on the bank of Rādhā-kuṇḍa.

In this verse Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī prays to his *iṣṭa-deva* Śrīmatī Rādhikā, “When will the day come when after having decorated Your feet with red lac, Kṛṣṇa will become Your certified servant upon receiving Your footprint on His forehead, and You will order me to take over the service from that untrained newcomer? This is the only medicine which can save me, and without it I will certainly die. Please let this vision come again, where I will be engaged in that service and my life will thereby be saved.”

This is a brief explanation of this verse, and anyone who has developed a little greed for *rāgānugā-bhakti* will weep while praying to their *gurudeva*, to the *mañjarīs* such as Rūpa Mañjarī and Rati Mañjarī, and to Śrīmatī Rādhikā, “When will such a vision come in my heart, and when will I receive the opportunity to serve like this?”

By instructing you to meditate on serving Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī as Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī is describing in these verses, I want you to develop some *saṁskāra* (qualification). Our *gurudeva*, Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, used to tell us to never sing any songs other than those composed by Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, Narotama Ṭhākura, and other such perfected, great personalities in our *paramparā*. Because such devotees are empowered and very elevated in *bhakti*, if we sing their *kīrtanas* something of their *bhāva* will certainly enter our hearts.

Our *gurudeva* also told a story once about Narahari Prabhu who was a disciple of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī. Narahari Prabhu was not very learned, but he was a very sincere devotee and such an excellent *guru-sevaka* that all the *sannyāsīs* and more learned devotees would bow down at his feet. I met him and saw for myself how he was always chanting, never sleeping, and always doing any type of service at any time. He was the mother of the Gauḍīya Maṭha—he would even take the young boys on his lap, feed them, give them medicine, put them to sleep, and do everything to look after them. In the night he would take a lamp to attend the younger boys, and if one of them had passed urine, no harm, he would clean it up. Everyone knew him as “Florence Nightingale.” Once he was unable to digest anything and became so ill that he was on the verge of death. Our *guruji*, who was Vinoda Brahmācārī at that time, took Narahari Prabhu with him to Gurudeva's ancestral home in East Bengal to meet a very famous *ayurvedic* doctor. After examining him, the doctor said, “This man would have died within two or three days. Anyhow Bhagavān has sent you to me, so first I want to give him one spoonful of *ghee*.”

Our Guru Mahārāja said, “He cannot digest even water, what to speak of other things? He will die at once if he takes *ghee*.”

Then the doctor explained his theory: “I will give him *ghee* knowing that it will pass through him, but some coating will remain in his stomach. I will give him one spoonful twice a day for seven days—this will be his treatment.” After fifteen days they had obtained a good result, and in one month he was totally cured.

The reason that I am giving this example is that in our present condition we have no realisation of these higher services to Śrīmatī Rādhikā which Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī is describing here, but by reading it some ‘coating’, some *saṁskāra*, will be established inside us. Then in the future when we develop greed for these services we will be able to genuinely enter into them. So we should read these books and sing these songs, but with immense *śraddhā* and great care. I know that I am not qualified to read these things, yet I cannot stop reading them. Without reading these topics about Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs* I

cannot live, so therefore I read them. So if you read these books and sing these songs, it will create *śraddhā* and *saṁskāra* in your hearts, certainly.

We should know that there are two types of *bhajana*: the first is reading, chanting, and remembering *vipralambha-līlā* (pastimes in separation), and the second is reading, chanting, and remembering *sambhoga-līlā* (pastimes in meeting). A *sādhaka* should feel *vipralambha-bhāva*, thinking, “I’m not seeing Kṛṣṇa, I’m not seeing Śrīmatī Rādhikā, I’m not seeing Vraja, I’m not seeing anything.” In the *bhāva* of his internal *svarūpa* as a *mañ-jarī*, Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī has expressed his feelings of separation here by the words “*Hā Svāminī!*” The *gopīs* and other *vraja-vāsīs* like to meet Kṛṣṇa, but Kṛṣṇa plays in such a manner that they may enjoy *vipralambha-rasa*. A *sādhaka* should always feel separation like Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī is showing here—separation from Kṛṣṇa, and especially from Śrīmatī Rādhikā. He also felt separation from Rūpa Gosvāmī, and when Rūpa Gosvāmī entered into the *aprakāṣa-līlā* (eternal, unmanifest pastimes), Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī composed this *śloka* (*Stavāvalī, Śrī Prārthanāśraya-caturdaśaka* 11):

*sunyāyate mahā-goṣṭham
girīndro ’jagarāyate
vyāghra-tundāyate kuṇḍam
jīvatu-rahitasya me*

“Now that I no longer have the sustainer of my life, the land of Vraja has become empty and desolate. Govardhana Hill has become like a great python and Rādhā-kuṇḍa has become like the gaping mouth of a ferocious tigress.”

Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī felt that he was so unfortunate because Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu departed this world and left him behind. After that he always resided with Svarūpa Dāmodara, but soon afterwards he also departed. Next he took shelter of Gadādhara Paṇḍita, but soon he also left the world. Then he had to flee away to Vṛndāvana because every place, every particle of dust in Purī, reminded him of them.

Although our *gurudeva* has entered *aprakāṣa-līlā*, we are not feeling intense separation from him. We have special opportunities like his appearance and disappearance days to remember him, but on those days we are so busy arranging elaborate festivals that we don’t always have the opportunity to realise such separation from him. Perhaps sometimes while we are speaking a tear may come to our eye, and if the festival is too elaborate then that also may not even happen. Arranging the festivals is really for those general devotees who come from outside the *maṭha*, but we should do something by which we feel that separation, and that is called ‘*bhajana*’. Those who feel immensely obliged to him, who did a great deal of service for him, and who feel indebted to him for all that they received from him will feel this separation. If we genuinely feel this way, we may weep, but not everyone will weep. Only those who served *gurudeva* with *viśrambha-bhāva*

(intimacy) will weep. It says in the *śāstra*, “*Viśrambhena guror sevā*”—we should perform intimate service to the *guru*, so much so that the *guru* will not even consider that the servant is actually his disciple, but simply that the servant is so dear that he is like his very heart. One example of this is Īśvara Purīpāda and the immaculate service he rendered to Mādhavendra Purī.

This mood is absolutely necessary for the cultivation of *rāgānugā-bhakti*. When we see that *gurudeva* is very merciful and so much greater than us, then we will feel one kind of sentiment. But when we think upon how he was very near and dear to us and how he loved us so much, then we can weep profusely for him. Nanda Bābā cries for Kṛṣṇa, but Yaśodā weeps more than him, and the *gopīs* weep more than her because their relationship with Him is so much more intense. If we don’t have such a relationship with our own *gurudeva*, we cannot imagine having a relationship with Rūpa Mañjarī or Rādhikā and Kṛṣṇa. Everything depends on how intensely we serve our *gurudeva*; all other relationships and experiences will develop in relation to our service to our *gurudeva*. If we can weep for *gurudeva*, then only can we weep for Śrīmatī Rādhikā. Whatever we have known has come exclusively from *gurudeva*, so we should weep for our own *gurudeva* with our heart.

In the first *śloka* of *Vilāpa-kusumāñjali*, Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī has wept for Rūpa Mañjarī. It may seem that this verse was written in a joyful mood, but in actuality he was remembering a pastime that took place before and is weeping at the feet of Rūpa Gosvāmī, saying, “You have been so merciful to me, and I remember seeing you (in your form as Rūpa Mañjarī) after Kṛṣṇa kissed you and made some mark on your lip.” And in the second verse Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī is offering *praṇāma* and weeping, saying, “When will I see you in that condition again?”; these two verses are very important. Now in the seventh verse he says “*hā svāmini kṣaṇam iha praṇayena gaḍam*”—“Can I weep for a moment? Not constantly, but just for one moment? Is it possible? And if my realisations were full, I would weep constantly.”

How should we weep? Mahāprabhu has given that in the sixth verse of the *Śikṣāṣṭakam*:

nayanam galad-aśru-dhārayā
vadanam gadgada-ruddhayā girā
pulakair nicitam vapuḥ kadā
tava nāma-grahaṇe kim bhaviṣyati

“Hey Prabhu! When, while chanting Your name, will tears flow from my eyes like waves? When will my voice tremble in ecstasy and the hairs of my body stand erect?”

We should pray, “When will I weep while taking the names Hare Kṛṣṇa, Rādhā-govinda, or Vṛndāvaneśvarī?” So weeping is our *dharma*. In verse seven Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī says, “*aty-utkatenanitarām virahānalena*”—my heart is burning in the great fire

of separation,” so he is feeling this sentiment. I hope that by the grace of Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, our *gurudeva*, and our *guru-paramparā* we will also realise something of this sentiment one day—this is our prayer. When we read and sing this *śloka*, this should be our mood. Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī is praying to Śrīmatī Rādhikā, “Now I want to offer some flowers to Your lotus feet, and those flowers are songs about the pastimes which I have either realised or heard about from Rūpa Gosvāmī and others.” In writing like this, Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī is in the mood of a *sādhaka* and he has composed this *Vilāpa-kusumāñjali* for the benefit of *sādhakas*. We find that Narottama Ṭhākura prayed in a similar way (*Prārthanā* 32):

*hari hari āra ki emana daśā haba
chāḍiyā puruṣa-deha kabe bā prakṛti haba
dunhu aṅge candana parāba*

“When, upon relinquishing this material male body and obtaining the spiritual body of a *gopī*, will I anoint the limbs of the Divine Couple with sandalwood paste? O Lord Hari, Lord Hari, when will this day be mine?”

He is praying, “Lalitā will give an order, and Viśākhā will pass some words to Rūpa Mañjarī: ‘Kṛṣṇa always likes to see new *sakhīs* and you have collected some, so send one to Rādhikā and Kṛṣṇa to bring them some *candana*, *kuṅkuma*, and *aguru*.’ Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa like these very much because they are so fragrant, beautiful, smooth, and cooling. Then I will take them and anoint the limbs of Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, always looking towards my *guru-sakhī* (*gurudeva*) and Rūpa Mañjarī to see whether I am doing it correctly or not. Śrīmatī Rādhikā and Kṛṣṇa desire this service, but because I am a new *sakhī*, if I do anything wrong, They will laugh and become very much pleased.”

*tāniyā bāndhiba cūḍā naba guñjā-hare beḍā
nānā phule gān̄thi diba hāra*

In the *bhāva* of a *gopī*, Narottama Ṭhākura is remembering and he sees that Rādhikā's hair is untied and scattered hither and thither. He says, “Then, from the corner of her eyes Rūpa Mañjarī will indicate to me that I should fix Rādhikā's hair, so I will comb Her hair as well as Kṛṣṇa's. Rādhikā will sit in such a way as to indicate that my combing is causing Her some pain and Her mouth will be slightly curved. Then Rūpa Mañjarī will say, ‘What are you doing? You should do everything gently.’ Then Rūpa Mañjarī will take the comb from my hand and teach me how to do it. Afterwards I will ask her, ‘Can I do it now?’ and she will reply that I can. After combing and braiding Rādhikā's hair, Śrīmatī will be decorated with fragrant flowers like *beli*, *camelī*, *jui* and *guñjā*. Then by gathering seven or eight different colours of flowers I will make the garland known as *vai-*

jayantī-mālā or *vana-mālā*. Some flowers will also be placed in Her hair—this is a very fine art.”

When Kṛṣṇa is given a garland, especially if it is made by Śrīmatī Rādhikā, He always knows who has made it. Likewise, if Kṛṣṇa makes a garland and someone gives it to Rādhikā, She will immediately be able to discern that Kṛṣṇa made it.

*pīta-basana aṅge parāiba sakhī-saṅge
badane tāmbūla diba āra*

Sakhī-saṅge means that Narottama dāsa is taking the help of his *sakhī-guru* and Rūpa Mañjarī because he is a novice. He says, “After giving Rādhikā garlands and clothes, I will decorate Her ears, braid, and forehead with varieties of flower ornaments.”

*duñhu rūpa manohāri heriba nayana bhari
nīlāmbare rāi sājāiyā
naba-ratna-jari āni bāndhiba bicitra beṇī
tāhe phula mālatī gāñthiya*

“Then I will decorate Her chin with a musk dot and draw fish on Her cheeks. When it is all completed, I will hand Them a mirror and from the side I will watch, thinking, ‘How beautiful They are!’ I will give blue cloth, like the colour of Kṛṣṇa, to Rādhikā. She will wear a red skirt and Her very fine upper cloth will be blue. I will place many beautiful jewels in Her hair while decorating Her braid with garlands of *mālatī* flowers.”

*sei rūpa-mādhurī dekhiba nayana bhari
ei mane kari abhilāṣa
jaya rūpa sanātana deha more ei dhana
nibedaye narottama dāsa*

“My desire is that someday I will be able to directly see the sweet beauty of the transcendental forms of the Divine Couple. O Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī and Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī, all glories to you both. Please grant my desire—Narottama dāsa appeals to you in this way.”

In our present condition we can read these prayers, and certainly some *saṁskāra* will enter our hearts.

In the *Kṛṣṇa-karnāmṛta*, similar desires have been expressed by Bilvamaṅgala Ṭhākura, who was a *rasika bhāva-bhakta* but not a *siddha-bhakta*. Because he was more in Kṛṣṇa’s camp, he expressed feelings of separation for Kṛṣṇa though he had some taste for serving Rādhikā also. Kṛṣṇa does not like or listen to prayers which are devoid of a connec-

tion with Rādhikā. Bilvamaṅgala has written all the *ślokas* in this book in connection with Śrīmatī Rādhikā. In the first verse he wrote “*jaya śrī*”: Kṛṣṇa is so beautiful—His mouth, His eyes, His nose, His hands, everything. Though Kṛṣṇa’s feet are not as beautiful as His face, Bilvamaṅgala only described His feet. He compared Kṛṣṇa’s feet to lotuses and His toes to petals. He wrote that rays are emanating from the end of those petals, meaning the nails of His toes, and Rādhikā is offering *ārati* to those rays. But we don’t like to hear these things. Within his own mood he has written something very beautiful, but it is only for those of his mood. We would become pleased if Bilvamaṅgala had written about Kṛṣṇa offering *ārati* to Śrīmatī Rādhikā’s lotus feet. Although Caitanya Mahāprabhu, being in the mood of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, certainly relished *Kṛṣṇa-karnāmṛta*, we are more interested in aspiring for the service of the *sakhīs* and *mañjarīs*. Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī has written *Vilāpa-kusumāñjali* for Rādhikā, and in his *Saṅkalpa-kalpa-druma* (1), Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura prays to Rādhikā:

*vṛndāvaneśvarī vayo-rūpa-līlā
saubhāgya-keli-karuṇa-jaladhe ‘rādhehi
dāsī-bhāvanī sukhayani sadā sa-kantam
tvam alibhiḥ parivṛtam idaṁ eva yāce*

“O queen of Vṛndāvana, O great ocean of mercy, playfulness, good-fortune, transcendental pastimes, beauty, virtue, and youthfulness, please hear my prayer. Let me be Your maidservant. I will always please You, who stay with Your lover and Your friends. I beg this of You.”

Jīva Gosvāmī and all of our *ācāryas* have also prayed like this. This is the speciality of our *sampradāya* and we should also pray this way. And when we pray to Śrīmatī Rādhikā, Kṛṣṇa will also come and secretly try to hear.

When a *sakhī* desires to render service in the correct manner, it is called *svabhāviki-sthiti*, one’s natural position. But when one loses one’s perspective due to ecstasy and does things which should not be done, it is called *unmāda*, becoming maddened or intoxicated. When Kṛṣṇa left the *gopīs* during the *rāsa-līlā*, they thought about Him more and more until they became mad and began imitating Him. Each and every *gopī* thought, “I am Kṛṣṇa and all of you are my beloveds.” In the *Ānanda-vṛndāvana-campū*, Kavi Karṇapūra explains how this happened. Each *gopī* was thinking herself to be Kṛṣṇa and saw some of the others as Pūtanā, Bakāsura, or Aghāsura. How was this happening? One’s *āsakti* or attachment is never directed to where there is no taste. If something tastes sweet, we can become attached to it and only then can we have *tadātmya-bhāva* (feelings of unity or oneness). We will not become attached to something which is *pratikūla* or unfavourable, nor will we become absorbed in remembering it. Pūtanā is *pratikūla*, so the *gopīs* will not become *unmāda* and feel oneness with her. In re-enact-

ing *pūtanā-līlā*, one *gopī* forced another *gopī* to the ground, climbed on top of her, and took her breast in her mouth. Here Kavi Kṛṣṇapūra reveals that those ladies who were lying down as Pūtanā were not actually *gopīs*, but rather manifestations created by the potency of Yogamāyā because *gopīs* will not take on *pūtanā-bhāva*—this is a very important point and it is difficult to understand this from reading the description of this pastime in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. The *gopīs* were all thinking “I am Kṛṣṇa,” and Kavi Kṛṣṇapūra reveals something else here: Kṛṣṇa, Himself acting in *tadātmya-bhāva*, has entered the *gopīs*’ hearts and is the actual cause of their identifying with Him. But where there is *pratikūla-bhāva* such as when they were imitating Pūtanā, everything is arranged by Yogamāyā. Another example of this is when the *gopīs* heard Kṛṣṇa’s flute-melody and left their husbands in the dead of night, Yogamāyā expanded duplicate *gopīs* to take their places.

Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura makes a point in this connection. At that time, because Kṛṣṇa had entered the *gopīs*, all of His six opulences fully manifested in them. Although they were only imitating Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes, they became capable of lifting Govardhana Hill or subduing Kāliya.

Returning to our original point, when praying we should feel some *vipralambha-bhāva*. If we have no mood of separation, then we will have to gradually develop this *bhāva* through the execution of *sādhana*. By reading about these pastimes, something will enter our hearts and someday we will fully experience all these things. In *rāgānugā-bhakti*, our *sādhana-bhajana* should be performed with *lobha* (greed) for *rāga-bhakti*. Rūpa Gosvāmī and Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī are weeping and weeping, but we are not shedding even one teardrop—we are quite dry. Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī prays, “O Śrīmatī Rādhikā, you are my supreme *arādhyadeva* (worshipable Deity). If anyone asks me who Kṛṣṇa is, I will tell them that Kṛṣṇa is the *praṇanātha* of my *īśvarī*, Śrīmatī Rādhikā.” So our relationship with Kṛṣṇa is through Śrīmatī Rādhikā. We know that He is Śrīmatī Rādhikā’s *praṇanātha*, and He is also worshipable to us, but our main worshipable Deity is Rādhikā. Then, because she is so close to Śrīmatī Rādhikā, Lalitā-devī is also worshipable. Viśākhā-devī was born on the same day as Śrīmatī Rādhikā and is no less qualified than Rādhikā. Both Lalitā and Viśākhā always desire everything to be in relation to Śrīmatī Rādhikā and then only will they have any appreciation for it. This is their mood perpetually, and we should also be like this and see everything in relation to Rādhikā. Suppose one girl is coming from Nandagrāma and another is coming from either Yāvaṭa or Varṣāṇā—which will we prefer? The one from Yāvaṭa because she is coming from Śrīmatī Rādhikā. A *rūpānuga-bhakta* will always give preference to Śrīmatī Rādhikā.

Weeping and weeping, Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī is lying on the bank of Rādhakuṇḍa, taking nothing to eat or drink and always chanting “*Rādhe! Rādhe!*” He prays, “I think that someday or another You will have to give me Your mercy, and if You don’t, I have no need for Kṛṣṇa’s mercy or Rādhakuṇḍa’s mercy or any mercy.” In his commen-

tary on *Vilāpa-kusumāñjali*, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda is saying that *sambhoga* and *vipralambha* are standing side by side forever. Someone who has some realisation of *vipralambha* can taste *sambhoga-līlā* for all time, but those who have no experience of *vipralambha* cannot. *Vipralambha* is the ultimate goal of our *sādhana-bhājana*, and because all of the prayers in *Vilāpa-kusumāñjali* are of *vipralambha-rasa*, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Prabhupāda has mentioned this here in his commentary.

If someone has *śraddhā* but not *rati*, and he endeavours for *rasa* whilst having unripe *śraddhā*, he is a *sahajiyā*. He wants to create *rasa* by *vibhāva*, *anubhāva*, *sāttvika*, *vyabhicārī* and all these things, but due to not having *sthāyī-bhāva* (permanent sentiment) he cannot attain them. Someone who is at the stage of *śraddhā* should not imagine “I am a *gopī*”—it has been prohibited by our *ācāryas*. Our *śraddhā* should transform into *niṣṭhā*, our *niṣṭhā* into *ruci*, our *ruci* into *āsakti*, *āsakti* into *bhāva* and ultimately *rati*, and then we can directly follow the instructions in books like the *Vilāpa-kusumāñjali*. In our present condition we should only pray that we desire these higher services and not try to immediately immerse ourselves in them.

We have discussed how without *vipralambha* we cannot enter into *rāgānugā-bhakti*. In *rāgānugā-bhakti*, and especially in *rāgātmikā* (the devotion of the eternally liberated souls), there are two kinds: *sādhakocitta-bhāva* and *siddhocitta-bhāva*. Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī and the other Gosvāmīs are in both of these. In *sādhaka-bhāva* Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī is himself, and in *siddha-bhāva* he is Tulasī or Rati Mañjarī. When he is offering prayers to Śrīmatī Rādhikā, we can assume he is in *siddha-bhāva*, but when a *sādhaka* possesses sufficient greed, he can also pray like this.

devī duḥkha-kula-sāgarodare
dūyamānam ati-durgatam janam
tvam kṛpa-prabala-naukayādbhutam
prāpaya sva-pada-paṅkajālayam

Śrī Vilāpa-kusumāñjali 8

“O Queen, please rescue this unfortunate person drowning in an ocean of pain. Place him on the strong boat of Your mercy and carry him to the wonderful realm of Your lotus feet.”

He is feeling that he is drowning in an ocean of misery, and what is that misery? That he is not seeing Śrīmatī Rādhikā. His unhappiness lies in the obstacles which are preventing him from obtaining Her *darśana*, and we also know about these obstacles. We want to keep our minds always in Śrīmatī Rādhikā’s *sevā* but are unable to do so. For example, there are so many duties we must perform and sometimes we are attacked by illness, and being unable to remove these obstacles to being always immersed in Her *sevā* causes our unhappiness. “*Dūyamānam*” means immense distress, and his heart is burning in the fire of not seeing Rādhikā or Vraja. In our present condition we have no

real greed, but those who are *siddha*, who realise all these things, suffer more. There will be some imitation in our hearts, but there is no possibility of imitation in theirs. Śrīmatī Rādhikā can really weep for Kṛṣṇa but it is very difficult for us to weep for Him. It may be that in *pūrva-rāga* (attachment which arises before any actual meeting takes place) a *sādhaka* sometimes receives *darśana* of Śrīmatī Rādhikā. At present we are experiencing *pūrva-raga-abhāsa* (semblance of real *pūrva-rāga*), and even if *rāga-abhāsa* enters our hearts, we should understand ourselves to be very fortunate. But ultimately that *rāga* should be pure, not imitation.

In this verse Raghunātha dāsa says that in this world he sees no hope at all except the mercy of Śrīmatī Rādhikā. Her mercy is like a wonderful boat which will come to our *ghāṭa* and take us across the ocean of material existence. An example of Rādhikā's *kṛpā* is seen in *Śrī Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta* where She sent Gopa-kumāra's *guru*, Her dear Jayanta, to him for his deliverance. If one is very simple-hearted and has *ruci* for his *bhājana*, then Rādhikā will send them one of Her associates or even She or Kṛṣṇa may come Themselves. Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī says that everything he knows about Śrīmatī Rādhikā has been acquired from Rūpa Gosvāmī and Sanātana Gosvāmī. However, Rūpa Gosvāmī and Sanātana Gosvāmī came to him due solely to the mercy of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, so She is the root cause of mercy. Because She is *antaryāmī* (knower of all souls), She knows our hearts and can bestow mercy from within.

Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura says (*Prema-bhakti-candrikā* 107-109):

rādhikā-caraṇa-reṇu bhūṣaṇa kariyā tanu
anāyāse pābe giridhārī
rādhikā-caraṇāśraya je kare se mahāśaya
tāre mui jai balihārī

“If one decorates his body with Śrīmatī Rādhikā's foot-dust, then it will be very easy for him to attain Giridhārī. I congratulate such a great soul who takes shelter of Her lotus feet and I say to him, ‘Well done! Excellent!’”

jaya jaya rādhā-nāma vṛndāvana yāra dhāma
kṛṣṇa-sukha-bilāsera nidhi
hena rādhā-guṇa-gāna nā śunile mora kāna
vañcita karila more bidhi

“Glory, glory to She who is named Rādhā, whose home is Vṛndāvana, and who is Śrī Kṛṣṇa's treasury of blissful pastimes. Alas, destiny has cheated me, for my ears have not heard Her glories.”

*tāra-bhakta-saṅge sadā rasa-līlā-prema-kathā
je kare se pāya ghanaśyāma
ihāte vimukha jei tāra-kabhu siddhi nāhi
nā śuniye tāra yena nāma*

“A person who, in the company of the devotees, again and again hears narrations of the pure love of the *rāsa-līlā*, will attain Śrī Kṛṣṇa, whose complexion is dark like a monsoon cloud. A person averse to hearing these pastimes will never attain perfection, and I refuse to even hear the name of such an offender.”

We should desire to have the association of only those devotees who have a strong desire to serve Śrīmatī Rādhikā, and by their mercy we will also receive Her mercy.

*yadavadhi mama kañcin mañjarī rūpa-pūrvā
vraja-bhuvi bata netra-dvandva-dīptim cakāra
tadavadhi bata vṛndāraṇya-rajñi prakāmaim
caraṇa-kamala-lakṣāsandidṛkṣā mamābhūt*

Śrī Vilāpa-kusumāñjali 14

“O Queen of Vṛndāvana, since Rūpa Mañjarī filled my eyes with light in the land of Vraja, I have yearned to see the red lac which decorates Your lotus feet.”

Here Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī is remembering something in *siddha-bhāva*, but as a *sādhaka* he is saying it through his outer senses, “When my *gurudeva* described to me all these points concerning Rādhikā and *rasa* from the *Ujvala-nīlamaṇi*, *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, and *Lalitā-mādhava*, my eyes were opened and I saw that Śrīmatī Rādhikā is so merciful. Without Her mercy we cannot have Kṛṣṇa’s mercy. Everything I know about *rasa* I have learned from Rūpa Gosvāmī.”

Speaking in *siddha-bhāva*, he is saying, “Through the grace of Śrīmatī Rādhikā I met Rūpa Mañjarī who told me about Rādhikā’s mercy as well as about Her *rūpa*, *guṇa*, and *līlā*. Then my eyes were opened and now I desire to see the lac on Rādhikā’s lotus feet. But how? Perhaps as Śrīmatī is sitting with Her *sakhīs*, Kṛṣṇa takes Her feet on His lap and is putting the lac on them. Then, in a mood of *prema*, because He is *nāgara*, *nāyaka*, *dhīra-lalita*, and has so many qualities, He takes Her feet and holds them to His heart. In this way the applied lac comes to His heart, leaving a red mark like a stamp on His chest. I desire to see that lac on Kṛṣṇa’s heart, signifying that although He is Parabrahma Himself, He has been subjugated by Śrīmatī Rādhikā’s *prema*.”

There are eight kinds of *nāyikās* (heroines), and in this instance it is *svādhīna-bhartṛkā*, meaning that the *nāyaka* (hero) has been conquered by the *nāyikā*. Rati Mañjarī always prefers her dear *sakhī* to be victorious and for Kṛṣṇa to be conquered. Here

Kṛṣṇa is taking Rādhikā's feet to His heart and it is not Śrīmatī Rādhikā taking His feet to Her heart. So Rati Mañjarī is overjoyed and desires that this lac will always be visible there. If Śrīmatī Rādhikā is searching for Kṛṣṇa and is somewhat unhappy, Rati Mañjarī does not like it. She always desires that Kṛṣṇa will be searching for Śrīmatī Rādhikā and that He should always serve Her. Our *gurudeva*, Śrī Keśava Mahārāja, composed this *śloka*:

*rādhā cintā-niveśina yasya kāntirvilopitā
śrī-kṛṣṇa-caraṇaṁ vande rādhā-liṅgita vigrahaṁ*

Leaving Rādhikā and all the *gopīs*, Kṛṣṇa went to Imlītala where He repented, and His remembrance of Her became so intense that His complexion became golden like that of Rādhikā. Our *gurudeva* has taken this view and established the deity of Kṛṣṇa here (in the Mathurā Maṭha) while Kṛṣṇa is in that mood. In the same way, Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī is praying here to see that insignia from the lotus feet of Śrīmatī Rādhikā on Kṛṣṇa's chest. He prays, "When will the day come when I will give pure water in a golden pot to Śrīmatī Rādhikā and serve Her lotus feet? While She has a rendezvous with Kṛṣṇa I will help Her by offering *tāmbūla* and *pāna*."

In *Jaiva-dharma* we read that there are sixteen different types of *sevā* that are performed by the *sakhīs*, and these are some of them. The *sakhīs* also help Śrīmatī Rādhikā to meet with Kṛṣṇa by cheating Her husband and so on. Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī is asking, "When will I be able to serve Śrīmatī Rādhikā in these ways, as Rūpa Mañjarī, Rati Mañjarī, and all the other *mañjarīs* are? When will that day be mine?"

Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura writes (*Prārthanā* 40):

*prabhu lokanātha kabe saṅge lañā jābe
śrī-rūpena pāda-padme more samarpibe*

He is praying to his *guru* Lokanātha Gosvāmī, "When, by your mercy, will you offer me to the feet of Rūpa Mañjarī, who will accept me as a new *dāsī*?"

*ei naba-dāsī bali śrī-rūpa cāhibe
hena śubha-kṣana mora kati-dine habe*

*sīghra ājñā karibena - dāsī hethā āya
sebāra susajjā-kārya karaha tvaraya*

*ānandita hañā hiyā tāñra āñña-bale
pavitra manete kārya karibe tat-kāle*

Prārthanā 41

“When will I be a young *gopī*-maidservant? When will that auspicious time be? When will Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī repeatedly order me about, saying, ‘O *dāsī*, come here. Quickly arrange our Svāminī’s fancy garments and ornaments.’ By hearing these orders I will become delighted. These orders will completely absorb the attention of my purified mind.”

He continues, “She will tell me that I should do *tāmbūla-sevā*, beautifully cover Rādhikā’s bed with coloured flowers, and then she will take me to see Kīśora and Kīśorī. I will follow behind Rūpa Mañjarī as she takes me to see Śrīmatī Rādhikā. Then she will indicate my presence to Rādhikā by a sign with her finger and Rādhikā will ask, ‘Who is she?’ Rūpa Mañjarī will reply, ‘I have brought a new *sakhī* to serve Your feet. Mañjulālī has collected her and placed her in my hands.’ Then Śrīmatī Rādhikā will order her, “Yes, you should teach her all kinds of *sevā* and engage her.”

This prayer is for those who are *siddha*, and for *sādhakas*, Rūpa Gosvāmī has written this verse in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya-līlā 22.128)*:

*sādhu-saṅga, nāma-kīrtana, bhāgavata-śravaṇa
mathurā-vāsa, śrī-mūrtira śraddhaya sevana*

“One should associate with devotees, sing *nāma-kīrtana*, hear the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, reside at Mathurā, and worship the Deity with faith.”

There are sixty-four kinds of *bhakti*, and these five are the most favourable for us. Particularly favourable for us to hear are the narrations of Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs* from the Tenth Canto, such as the *Gopī-gīta*, *Yugala-gīta*, and *Bhramara-gīta*, as well as the commentaries on these sections. In the *Prema-bhakti-candrikā*, Narottama Ṭhākura has written that if someone has greed towards these topics, they should read the *Ujjvala-nīlamanī* because there Rūpa Gosvāmī has thoroughly delineated this science, knowing it is very favourable for our entrance into *rāgānugā-bhakti*.

*pādābjayos tava vinā vara-dāsyam eva
nānyat kadāpi samaye kila devi yāce
sākhyāya te mama namo ‘stu namo ‘stu nityaṁ
dāsyāya te mama raso ‘stu raso ‘stu satyam*

Śrī Vilāpa-kusumāñjali 16

“Hey Devi! I am not praying for anything except that most exalted, direct service to Your lotus feet. Time and again I offer *praṇāma* to Your *sakhīva*, a position as Your *sakhī*, but I swear that my unwavering devotion will always be only for Your *dāsīva*, a position as Your servant.”

Kāmānuga-bhakti is of two types: *sambhogecchā-mayī* and *tat-tad-bhāvecchā-mayī*. *Sambhogecchā-mayī* is for those *gopīs* who, having *kāma* for Kṛṣṇa, want to meet with Kṛṣṇa directly and serve Him as *kāmātmikās*. Śrīmatī Rādhikā and the eight principal *sakhīs* as well as Candrāvalī, Padma, and Śaibyā are all this type of *sakhī*. Those who desire to arrange the meeting of Kṛṣṇa with Śrīmatī Rādhikā or any other *yutheśvarī* (party leader) such as Candrāvalī or Śyāmalā are called *tat-tad-bhāvecchātmikās*. They don't want to directly meet Kṛṣṇa themselves or serve Him directly, but instead they become happy seeing the *ānanda* of Kṛṣṇa and their particular *yutheśvarī*. Those in Rādhikā's camp try to arrange everything to facilitate Her meeting with Kṛṣṇa, and when They meet, these *sakhīs* experience all the feelings which Rādhikā Herself does and in this way they become pleased.

Rūpa Mañjarī is *tat-tad-bhāvecchātmikā* whereas Lalitā, Viśākhā and the other principle *sakhīs* are *kāmātmikā*. Those who are *tat-tad-bhāvecchātmikā* also have *kāma* but their *kāma* is in a subordinate position whereas the principle *sakhīs* are fully independent in the expression of their *kāma*. In this verse, Rati Mañjarī is saying that if Rādhikā were prepared to offer her the opportunity to become Her *sakhī* like Lalitā, Viśākhā, and others, she would not accept it. She says that she bows down to *sakhya-bhāva* and keeps it on her head, but she only wants to serve Śrīmatī Rādhikā. The *tat-tad-bhāvecchātmikā mañjarīs* enjoy everything which Śyāmalā, Lalitā, Viśākhā, and the others enjoy, yet they have something which these other *sakhīs* cannot enjoy by always desiring to serve Śrīmatī Rādhikā and be in Her party (*svapakṣa*).

Rūpa Gosvāmī's special *bhāva* is as a *mañjarī*; he never wants to become a *nāyikā*. One who follows his *bhāva* is a *rūpānuga*, but for those who want to become *nāyikās* or even be in a different *rasa*, he has also written instructions. But everything which Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī is writing here is exclusively for *rūpānugas*. He is praying to Rādhikā, “When I saw Rūpa Mañjarī at Rādhā-kuṇḍa and she told me about Your mercy, I accepted the shelter of Rūpa Mañjarī and under her guidance I became Your *dāsī*. So my dear Śrīmatī Rādhikā, I don't want to be anything except Your *dāsī*.”

In *kāmātmikā-bhakti*, Kṛṣṇa is the *nāyaka*, the *gopīs* are *nāyikā*, and both being the *alambana* of this *rasa*, there are some special *sañcārī-bhāvas*, *anubhāvas*, and *sāttvika*. In *dāsyā*, *dāsyā-bhāva* is the *sthāyī-ratī*, in *vātsalya*, *vātsalya-bhāva* is the *sthāyī-ratī*, and here in *mādhurya* it is *ullāsa-ratī* or *suhṛda-ratī*. Rādhikā is *suhṛda*, Rūpa Mañjarī is Her *sevikā*. This *bhāva* is called *ullāsa-ratī*, and it contains some special *sañcārī-bhāvas* and *sāttvika-bhāvas*. It is *mādhurya-rasa* but there are some specialities within it. These points have been delineated in the *Govinda-līlāmṛta* and the *Saṅkalpa-kalpa-druma*.

We should always approach these subject matters step by step under the guidance of *gurudeva*. If we try to enter into these things having only *śraddhā* but not the qualification for *rati*, we will go to hell. Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has written (*Kalyāṇa-kalpataru*, *Guṇa-kīrtana* 2.4):

*vidhi-mārga-rata-jane, svadhīnata-ratna-dāne,
rāga-marge korāna praveśa*

“Kṛṣṇa eventually bestows the jewel of independence unto those persons who strictly adhere to the path of rules and regulations, thus allowing them entrance into the path of spontaneous loving service.”

‘Gaurāṅga’ bolite habe

As Narottama Ṭhākura was singing this song, he at once remembered the pastimes of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu in the Gambhīrā. Because he lived perhaps one-hundred years after Mahāprabhu, Narottama Ṭhākura never received Mahāprabhu’s direct *darśana*, but Mahāprabhu left *prema* for him in a cave at Prematali and when Narottama Ṭhākura went there, it at once entered his heart. And what kind of *prema* was it? *Gaura-prema*, which is Rādhā’s love for Kṛṣṇa. Whenever Narottama Ṭhākura used to sing, his mind would at once reach the Gambhīrā where Mahāprabhu would weep while chanting “*Kṛṣṇa! Kṛṣṇa! Hari bol! Hari bol!*” in a mood of great separation. Sometimes His limbs would contract like those of a tortoise, and even Svarūpa Dāmodara and Rāya Rāmānanda could not comprehend such an elevated stage of separation. This mood of separation has been described by the *gopīs* in the *Bhramara-gīta* where they are feeling extreme separation, even more than what is described in the *Gopī-gīta* where they knew that Kṛṣṇa had merely hidden in some *kuñja* in Vraja. But in the *Bhramara-gīta*, when Kṛṣṇa has gone forever to Mathurā and Dvārakā, they lost all hope that He would ever return. For all the years which He remained in Mathurā and Dvārakā, the *gopīs* were perpetually crying and lamenting. When Uddhava went there, he hid at the entrance to a *kuñja* at Uddhava-kyāri. Not seeing Kṛṣṇa, Rādhikā was senseless and appeared as if She would soon die. The *gopīs* time and again held some cotton below Her nostrils to see if She was still breathing. They were so sorrowful, thinking, “What should we do? How can we keep Śrīmatī Rādhikā alive?” She would die, become revived, again die and again become revived—we cannot possibly imagine it. If anyone could imagine it, they would simply weep day and night without ever smiling and they would be rendered completely helpless. In that state Rādhikā was lying on a bed of flower petals, and the inconceivable heat which was emanating from Her body made the flower petals dry up.

*madhupa kitava-bandho mā sprśāṅghriṁ sapatnyāḥ
kuca-vilulita-mālā-kuṅkuma-śmaśrubhir naḥ
vahatu madhu-patis tan-māninīnām prasādām
yadu-sadasi viḍambyām yasya dūtas tvam idṛk*

Śrīmad-Bhāg. 10.47.12

“O honeybee, O friend of a cheater, don’t touch My feet with your whiskers, which are smeared with the *kuṅkuma* that rubbed onto Kṛṣṇa’s garland when it was crushed by the breasts of a rival lover! Let Kṛṣṇa satisfy the women of Mathurā. One who sends a messenger like you will certainly be ridiculed in the Yadus’ assembly.”

Because Rādhikā’s feet were more sweet, fragrant, soft, and beautiful than a lotus flower, a bee kept hovering around them, and then Śrīmatī Rādhikā spoke this verse to it. Being absorbed in Her mood of separation, Mahāprabhu would bitterly weep. We hear these narrations, but we do not fully realise them, because otherwise we would have to weep also. In divine madness, Rādhikā says, “Don’t touch My feet! First you should tell Me from where you have come. I think you are a messenger of that cheater, and through you He has come to cheat Me again, but now I am so much wiser. I will never again enter into friendship with that black person, so don’t come around Me. He has now become Madhupati in Mathurā (one meaning is ‘the Lord of the Madhu dynasty’ and ‘*madhu*’ can also mean ‘wine’), and He has a very large wine shop. In His shop you have drunk so much wine, and now He has told you to come to Me so that I will forget all of His faults and again establish friendship with Him. He wants Me to compromise and again become cheated, but I am determined to never compromise with Him. You have drunk so much wine that you have simply become senseless and gone mad. You don’t know how to appease a lover. At one time I was the lover of Kṛṣṇa and He was My beloved, but now that relationship is over. If He can leave us, then why cannot we leave Him? He has left us and gone to Mathurā, and then to Dvārakā where He is tasting the love of numerous queens. Therefore He has nothing to do with us, and we have also left Him.”

Hearing the buzzing of the bee, Rādhikā imagined that it said, “O beloved queen of Kṛṣṇa...” Then Rādhikā said, “You should not refer to Me as the beloved of Kṛṣṇa—first you should take back your words. I am not Kṛṣṇa’s beloved and He is not our beloved—don’t even mention His name. Why have you come here?”

“O queen, I have come to arrange a compromise.”

“You have not approached Me in an appropriate manner. I know that you have come from Mathurā because He is Śyāma, black, and you are also black. So you have come as a messenger from that black person, and your whiskers have become reddened as if from *kuṅkuma*—from where has this come? Tell Me, otherwise you should leave here at once!”

“My queen, I am telling you the truth—this is the natural colour of my whiskers. I don’t even know what *kuṅkuma* is!”

“Oh no, you know very well. You have come from Mathurā, and when Kṛṣṇa has embraced the wife of a prince in Mathurā, the red colour of her breasts has come on Kṛṣṇa’s garland. When you sat on that garland, it came upon your whiskers. In this way I know you have come from Mathurā, and as Kṛṣṇa was going to appease some lover, you accompanied Him. There the *kuṅkuma* came upon your whiskers. You should just return there. There is no use in coming here, because there are thousands of women in Mathurā who will be exhibiting jealous anger, and Kṛṣṇa will have to spend the entire day appeasing them, one after the other. If they have renounced their jealous anger and

become appeased, then you should go and sing your song to them. Then they will satisfy you by giving you whatever you desire, whereas I am a mere street-beggar. Because Kṛṣṇa took whatever I possessed, I cannot offer you anything. Really you should be in Mathurā, so I can discern that you are very foolish, the same as your master. The colour of your body and the colour of your whiskers tells Me everything about you. We know that ignorant animals have four legs whereas humans, who possess superior intelligence, have two legs, but you have six legs, so you are the biggest fool. You should return to Mathurā. Kṛṣṇa is like you, because as you wander from one flower to the next flattering them, taking their nectar, and never showing any gratitude towards any of the flowers you have left behind, He behaves the same with we women who are like flowers. Like flowers, we are so beautiful, soft, pure, and fragrant, but that cheater is very foolish and ungrateful like you, so we will not compromise with Him. Because we have become fully aware of His nature, we are now more careful.”

“O Svāminī, I am not that type of person and neither is Kṛṣṇa. You should place your faith in me, and also in Kṛṣṇa. He loves You so much that I cannot possibly describe it. If Kṛṣṇa is really a black-hearted cheater, then why does Lakṣmī always want to reside at His chest?”

“Foolish owls cannot see the sun, but we are not so foolish. We know that Lakṣmī can be entrapped by Kṛṣṇa’s flattery, but we cannot. When Kṛṣṇa comes and smiles and flatters her, she at once forgets His nature and wants to serve Him. But we are not so easy to fool—now we are always vigilant.”

The name ‘Gaurāṅga’ has come in this song because He is that same Śyāma, but by always remembering Śrīmatī Rādhikā’s qualities and Her mood, He has become Gaurāṅga. In the same way that Rādhikā would take Kṛṣṇa’s name and weep, Mahāprabhu would become senseless and always cry while chanting, “Hari bol! Hari bol!” And when He would sing *kīrtana*, all His associates such as Nityānanda Prabhu, Advaita Ācārya, Svarūpa Dāmodara, and Rāya Rāmānanda would also be there. Narotama Ṭhākura is remembering the pastimes of Mahāprabhu in the Gambhīrā and expressing them in *sūtras*, condensed verses.

*‘gaurāṅga’ bolite habe pulaka-śarīra
‘hari hari’ bolite nayane ba’be nīra*

He says that tears will come to his eyes as he sings “*Hari! Hari!*” in separation as Mahāprabhu did and as Rādhikā did. ‘Hari’ means He who has stolen Rādhikā away to a *kuñja*, such as at Saṅkeṭa, and he is weeping while remembering those pastimes.

*āra kabe nitāi-cānder koruṇā hoibe
saṁsāra-bāsanā mora kabe tuccha ha’be*

This mood will come to one who is completely devoid of material desires, to one who has forgotten everything of this world and always thinks “I am a *pālyadāsī* of Rādhikā”. Narottama Ṭhākura’s eternal *svarūpa* is as Vilāsa Mañjarī, and when he performs *kīrtana*, he becomes absorbed in that serving mood. He is praying for Nityānanda Prabhu to bestow the mercy upon him by which he can become *niskiñcana*, possessionless. One should have no concern for their material necessities, like the *gopīs* who left everything behind to meet Kṛṣṇa. One should think, “Only Śrīmatī Rādhikā is mine—She is my *iṣṭa-deva*, and if She is not merciful to me, I have no need for Kṛṣṇa at all.”

*viṣaya chāriyā kabe śuddha ha’be mana
kabe hāma herabo śrī-vṛndāvan*

The mind should be pure, but mere purity is also not sufficient—as Anaṅga Mañjarī, the younger sister of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, Nityānanda Prabhu will also bestow upon one the service of Rādhikā. When he bestows that mercy which He did upon Kṛṣṇa dāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī, we will also be granted *darśana* of Vṛndāvana. In our conditioned state we may visit Vṛndāvana, but we don’t see Rādhā, Kṛṣṇa, and the *gopīs*. When our love has matured sufficiently, then we may receive the real *darśana* of Vṛndāvana, as Kavirāja Gosvāmī did, and as Narottama Ṭhākura is praying for here. But not being satisfied with the *svarūpa-siddhi* vision of Vṛndāvana, where one is perfected but still remains in this world, he sings the next verse, praying for *vastu-siddhi*:

*rūpa-raghunātha-pade hoibe ākuti
kabe hama bujhabo se jugala-pīriti*

This will come by serving Rūpa and Raghunātha, Rūpa Mañjarī and Rati Mañjarī. Without their mercy, we cannot realise Śrīmatī Rādhikā as our *svāminī* and enter into Her intimate service. Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī wrote:

*tavaivāsmi tavaivāsmi
na jīvāmi tvayā vinā
iti vijñāya devi tvam
naya mām caraṇāntikam*

Śrī Vilāpa-kusumāñjali 96

“I am Yours! I am Yours! I cannot live without You! O Devī (Rādhē), please understand this and bring me to Your feet. Without Your mercy, I have no use for living in Vṛndāvana or even for Kṛṣṇa’s mercy.” He also wrote:

*pādābjayos tava vinā vara-dāsyam eva
nānyat kadāpi samaye kila devī yāce
sākhyāya te mama namo 'stu namo 'stu nityam
dāsyāya te mama raso 'stu raso 'stu satyam*

Śrī Vilāpa-kusumāñjali 16

“Hey Devī (Rādhe)! I am not praying for anything except that most exalted direct service to your lotus feet. Time and again I offer *praṇāma* to Your *sakhīva*, a position as Your *sakhī*, but I swear that my unwavering devotion will always be only for Your *dāsīva*, a position as Your servant.”

He prayed only to become the *pālyadāsī* of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, and Rūpa Gosvāmī prayed:

*ha devī! kākubhara-gadgadayādya vācā
yāce nipatya bhuvi daṇḍavadudbhatārtiḥ
asya prasādamabudhasya janasya kṛtvā
gāndharvike! tava gaṇe gaṇanām vidhehi*

“O Devi Gāndharvike! In utter desperation I throw myself on the ground like a stick and with a choked voice humbly implore You to please be merciful to this fool and count me as one of Your own.”

This position of a *pālyadāsī* is so favourable for serving Śrīmatī Rādhikā that She thinks, “That *pālyadāsī*, Rūpa Mañjarī, performs such sweet and beautiful service to Me—where is she? When will she come and give Me the Śyāmantaka jewel, which is the friend of the Kaustubha jewel? By decorating Me in so many ways, she will prepare Me to go to Kṛṣṇa.” These are the special qualities of Rūpa and Raghunātha and why Narottama Ṭhākura takes their names in this verse. Jīva Gosvāmī and all the other Gosvāmīs also possess this mood, but not like Rūpa and Raghunātha. That is why in their writings, Kṛṣṇa dāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī, Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura and Narottama Ṭhākura pray only for the mercy of Rūpa and Raghunātha. They want the mercy of all Vaiṣṇavas, but especially the mercy of Rūpa and Raghunātha by which they will realise the amorous pastimes of Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. The *mañjarīs* have no fear of seeing Them meeting in a solitary place whereas Lalitā, Viśākhā, and the *sakhīs* do. The *mañjarīs* can go directly there without feeling any shame, and no one can enter there without serving these two personalities, Rūpa and Raghunātha. If anyone desires to engage in *rāgānugā-bhajana*, they must follow in their footsteps and attain their mercy.

*rūpa-raghunātha-pade rahu mora āśa
prārthanā koroye sadā narottama dāsa*

Here Narottama Ṭhākura is saying that his prayer at their feet is that he will be able to understand Gaurāṅga, why He was always weeping, and what He was feeling in the Gambhīrā, all of which only Rūpa Gosvāmī knows. When Mahāprabhu was singing a verse before the Ratha in Purī, only Rūpa Gosvāmī understood His *bhāva*, and he composed a parallel verse on a palm leaf. Seeing it, Svarūpa Dāmodara concluded that Mahāprabhu must have invested His *śakti* directly into Rūpa Gosvāmī's heart, and Mahāprabhu also requested all of His associates to be merciful to Rūpa Gosvāmī so that he could give Mahāprabhu's *bhāva* to the whole world. At Prayāga, Mahāprabhu invested all of His hidden *bhāva* into Rūpa Gosvāmī's heart so he could compose *rasa-śāstras* such as the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* and the *Ujvala-nīlamaṇi*.

In this way, if Rūpa Gosvāmī and Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī are merciful to us, we can understand something of what is Vṛndāvana, what is *mādhurya-rasa*, and who is Caitanya Mahāprabhu, for what purpose He came, and why He was always weeping in a mood of great separation. We pray to Narottama Ṭhākura that he will be merciful to us so we can fully realise all these things.