

# *Śrī Hamsaduta*

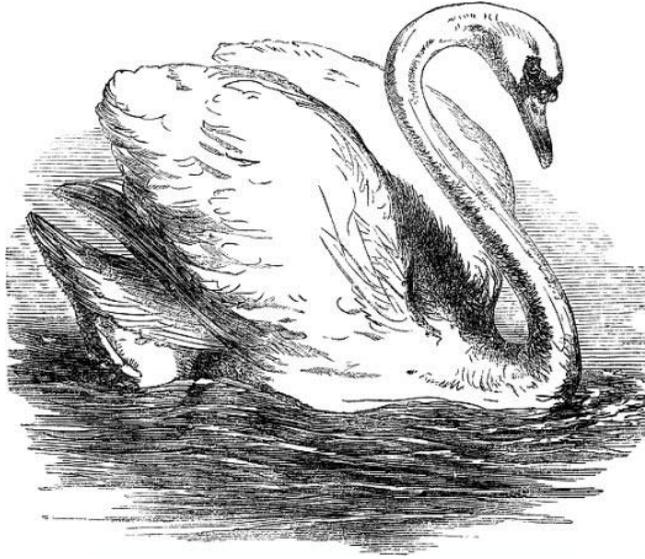
The Swan Messenger



Radharani Fainted in Separation



Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī



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Again I have raided the beehives of Vraja and taken the choicest honey. May all those bees smile upon my efforts.

Vicitri dasi  
Kartika, 2008

1. Let my heart become the abode of that eternally delightful Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is dressed in lustrous yellow silk garments, the bottoms of whose lotus feet are comparable only to the crimson *jaba* flower, whose body is blackish like a *tamāla* tree and whose lotus face perpetually radiates indescribable and extraordinary beauty through a graceful smile.

2. Since the day Mukunda left King Nanda's house and started for Mathurā accompanied by Gandhini's son Akrūra, Śrī Rādhā has been thrown into a fathomless river of remembrance which is filled with waters of suffering and punctuated by whirlpools of dizziness.

3. One day Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī went to the bank of the Yamunā with Her friends, desirous of extinguishing the fire of separation that was burning Her up. However, upon seeing the leafy bower where She had met many times with Kṛṣṇa, She again became intensely absorbed in those memories. Just then Her dear friend Suṣupti (deep sleep) came and rendered Her unconscious to protect Her from the agonizing memories.

4. Laying Her motionless body on a bed of soft lotus stems, Rādhārāṇī's *sakhīs* surrounded Her and with lotus leaves began to fan Her. Feeling great love for Her their hearts filled with hundreds of fears, and their tears flooded the Yamunā's waves.

5. As Lalitā held the quiet Rādhā against her breast and She was fanned by lotus leaves cool with Yamunā water, Her throat quivered with the sprout of a breath, at which sight the multitude of *sakhīs* were greatly relieved and rejoiced loudly.

6. Lalitā again lay Śrī Rādhā down on the lotus bed and rose to bring Her water from the river. As she stepped forward she saw a graceful and sweetly warbling white swan approaching her.

7. At the sight of the charming bird, Lalitā's hopes began to fly. She welcomed him respectfully and quickly approached him, seized by the conviction that this swan was the messenger they had been seeking who could deliver their message to Hari's residence.

8. Lalitā was indignant thinking how the killer of Kāmsa had cruelly departed for Mathurā, leaving Rādhā and the other *gopīs* behind. Overcome with the anger of love she began to reveal her heartfelt wishes to the swan. One should not think that there is any fault in her appealing to a dumb animal like this for it is the nature of *kṛṣṇa-prema* to arouse one's innocence, and thus, seeing Hari everywhere, the devotee has faith in everyone.

9. Lalitā addressed the swan, “O king of birds! You reside in the pure waters of the holy pilgrimage places, and take pleasure in feeding upon lotus stems, not in the ephemeral things of this world. Thus, we recognize you as a great soul. I, a distressed and weak maiden, seek your help. I know that one who appeals to a noble person is never disappointed.

10. Madhu-ripu, the enemy of Madhu, is skilled in conjugal arts, but He threw us into oblivion long ago and went to live happily in the city of Mathurā while we remain here, out of our minds scorched by the unrelenting fire of separation. Take pity on us. At once go to Mathurā and relay our anguished words to Him.

11. O dear swan, Godspeed! Your journey to Mathurā should be safe. Kindly have compassion on us and don’t delay a moment longer. Spread your wings in the sky with a joyous heart and let the playful cowherd children run beneath you with their eyes cast at you flying above.

12. O crest jewel of the saintly persons! Please listen attentively as I explain the route to be traversed. Follow the road to Mathurā – famous throughout the universe – along which the merciless Akrūra speedily took away the ocean of handsomeness, the master of our lives.

13. O lover of female swans! Follow that road which is marked with the chariot wheels, which exulted at the touch of His lotus feet, and where you will see the doe-eyed *gopīs*, cheeks pale from their gushing tears. Even now they are suffering with the intensity of their desire to be reunited with their lover.

14. O friend, please drink the sweet waters of the Yamunā, blue as the *jambu* fruit, and satisfy yourself with some tender lotus stems, cooling as camphor. Then rest awhile under the deep shadows of a broad tree before starting for the city of the Vṛṣṇis.

15. When Akrūra charioted away the master of our hearts, we *gopīs* followed for a great distance, grieving loudly. Fly above the path they took on that day and I guarantee that you will achieve the highest perfection of spiritual life. You will truly become ‘*parama hamsa*’, the greatest of swans.

16. O king of swans! One day Hari suddenly stole our garments and climbed up a *kadamba* tree while we were bathing in the Yamunā. Then he made us reveal our long-secret love for Him. You may enjoy resting on the branches of that tree whose thick foliage restricts the sun’s scorching rays.

17. Here Kṛṣṇa radiated His beauty in all directions as He began the *rāsa* dance by playing sweetly on the simple flute which kissed His lips, flooding the world with waves of supreme joy. He wore His peacock-feathered crown and a most precious silk cloth which glowed like gold, and His body was glossy black like a *tamāla* tree. How sweet was the sound of His flute that day!

18. That place, the site of Hari’s *rāsa-līlā*, was decorated by the blackness of musk dripping from the bodies of the *gopīs* as they danced, engrossed in those loving pastimes with their beloved. Still effulgent with the *mālatī* creepers that had been trampled in the course of the circle dance, O swan, this *rāsa-sthalī* will sweep you away with divine bliss.

19. Not far from there, fashioned from *mādhavi* creepers, is our hero’s festive love bower. I warn you, do not cast your eyes at that retreat lest your heart should erupt in joy, for then, forgetting your mission, you will become rooted to the spot. Should that happen, we *gopīs* would surely perish.

20. No, no, never mind. Take a look at that place where Hari performed most intimate pastimes even though your delay will interfere with the speedy fulfillment of our desire. O friend, your purity should not go in vain, for what is of value if it does not lead the mind to thoughts of the enemy of Cāṇūra?

21. Govardhana, the friend of the cows, is witness to the intimate love-games of the *gopīs*, who would rush to meet with Kṛṣṇa upon hearing the first irresistible sound of His melodious flute. Govardhana’s beauty is enhanced by the many vine-covered *kuñjas* scattered over its slopes and by the stones which turn into comfortable couches for the pleasure of the killer of Madhu. Feast your eyes, for a single glance will fill you with delight.

22. We believe that Govardhana is the greatest of all the mountains on earth. After all, didn't Govardhana taste *rasa* due to being touched by Kṛṣṇa's *cakra*-marked hand? And didn't he defeat Indra, the enemy of his own clan who had cut off the wings of the mountains which were previously able to fly, and thus earn the epithet 'increaser of the joy of the cows, *gopas* and *gopīs*' by which he is universally known?

23. Seeing a *tāmala* tree at the foot of Govardhana the Pulinda girls burn in the memory of Govinda. When you fly past them the wind stirred by your wings and moistened with Yamunā water, will instantly soothe them, even if only for a moment.

24. Not far from there you will see a grove of *kadambas*, still shivering with the delight of having been the site where the *gopīs*' lover displayed His expertise in amorous battle. If you rest under those *kadamba* trees for even a moment you will experience rapturous bliss. If not, then your reputation as a *rasika* will all be in vain.

25. On the outskirts of Vṛndāvana you will see Ariṣṭāsura's old withered head, now as white as autumn clouds. Kuvera's servants, mistaking it for the peak of Mount Kailāśa, come to scale its summit.

26. Friend, I humbly request you to proceed to Mathurā, and sing sweetly as you pass over the *gopīs*, their condition now acute being separated from their lover. Your singing, so like the jingling of Hari's ankle bells, will revive them, their life airs having all but deserted their bodies.

27. Dear messenger! Happily stay for a moment on the branches of the dark Bhandira-vaṭa shimmering in the bright sunshine. While you sit there inundated by the sun's rays it will appear as if Nārāyaṇa has appeared holding the conch and disc and is about to cover the sky as Trivikrama. (The tree here is being compared to Nārāyaṇa, the swan to His conch and the sun to His disc.)

28. If you go to the place where the grasses were sprinkled with the tears of pure love which flowed from Brahmā's eyes as he sang Kṛṣṇa's praises, then the forest sylphs will assume that Brahmā himself has returned on his swan carrier.

29. When Kṛṣṇa battled with the serpent Kāliya, the *gopīs* rushed anxiously to the Yamunā. The profuse tears streaming from their eyes muddied the path so much that they stumbled and fell along the way, and attained a state that cannot be described.

30. But Murāri was simply dancing on the heads of that monstrous serpent Kāliya, showing off His prowess. Drink the sweet water of that lake purple with jewels fallen from the serpent's hoods and fragrant with pollen of the *kadambas* lining its banks.

31. Nearby you will come across the goddess Vṛnda Devī living there as a *tulāsi* plant. Her body is wilting due to the fire of separation from Kṛṣṇa; and when she sees the new flowerbuds appearing on her branches her lamentation increases, for she knows that Kṛṣṇa is not here to enjoy them. Only she can truly appreciate the anguish of the *gopīs* and therefore you must honor her with all humility and reverence.

32. Passing through eleven forests echoing with the peacocks' singing, you will reach the twelfth, Madhuvana, thick with mango trees. There stands the glorious capital of the Yadu dynasty, whose fame purifies the earth.

33. Filled with splendid flower gardens and innumerable grand columned mansions looking like Mount Kailāśa's children, this pleasing abode of the Yadus, beautifying the banks of the sweet-watered Yamunā, will fill you with bliss.

34. Somewhere in that city you will see Śiva's bull Nandīśvara grazing on tender grasses. Elsewhere, Lord Brahmā's swan carrier is eating lotus flower stems. Somewhere else you will find Kartikeya's peacock mount grappling venomous serpents and in another place again you will see Indra's elephant carrier, Airavata, happily munching the leaves of the *śallakī* (frankincense) tree.

35. When Kṛṣṇa first entered Mathurā, the ladies of the town were heard speaking: "O dear one, can't you feel that your apparel has loosened? You don't know that the jewels from your necklace have spilled on the road? The litany of Govinda's glorious acts has inebriated you so much that the town harlots are mocking your hard-earned reputation for chastity."

36. Another Mathurā beauty said, “My left foot is still not anointed with red lac, but I am going anyway. O foolish one, stop. What is the use of more ornaments now? From the tumultuous sounds of the crowds of women in the street, I think Vṛndāvana’s Kāmadeva walks by my doorstep.”

37. Looking at Kṛṣṇa one maiden said, “When the destroyer of Kāmsa, adorned with lustrous *aśoka* flowers, rides His chariot, His glances flood the avenues of the town with ecstasy.” Hearing this, her girlfriends said, “O dearest friend! Why are you pushing us aside to occupy the entire window alone gazing with fixed eyes? Won’t you allow us to also have a glance at what you see?”

38. “Dear friend, what are your eager eyes searching for in the void? What are you absorbed in, sitting here alone? You don’t heed the hundreds of appeals of your friends. O lotus-eyed one, we can guess that youthful Śyāmasundara, who is the color of a beautiful new black cloud, has crossed the field of your vision.”

39. “Dear friend! Don’t allow the tears to roll helplessly down your cheeks any more. Kṛṣṇa will come shortly and accept your affectionate glances.” In this way the ladies of Mathurā talked amongst themselves the day Kṛṣṇa arrived in town.

40. O dear swan, before you are the city women, whose minds have been kissed by the waves of joy arising from directly seeing the moon of Dāmodara’s face. Though they little care that they have placed the burden of endless calamities squarely on the heads of the cowherd maidens of Vṛndāvana, the sight of these women is sure to delight your eyes.

41. O dear swan, passing by the palaces of the Vṛṣṇis in the heart of the city, you will find your way into the interior where Murāri’s quarters are located. Famous for their complex construction, their glamour is increased by the countless banners atop fluttering in the wind and decorating the sky.

42. Along the turrets on that splendid palace are a great number of crystal swans whose beaks and feet are encrusted with gems. Many live swans come from a pleasant lotus lake and greet them most respectfully.

43. The pair of parrots the *gopīs* placed in Uddhava’s care as a gift for Kṛṣṇa can still be heard plaintively repeating this conversation: “When will I see Him again? The *gopīs* could not find Him, though they searched long for Him in the forests on the Yamunā’s banks where He surely went to hide. O friend, upon seeing me, He would break into a smile which would sway the whole universe with joy. When will the killer of the Mura demon appear before me again?”

44. “O Radhe! Shake off your depression! Kṛṣṇa promised that He would come back. He wouldn’t lie to us. Very shortly Your friend, sporting a new peacock feather in His hair, is sure to be reunited with You.”

45. Atop of Hari’s palace you will see whirling vine-like clouds of incense smoke, so dark and blue that the peacocks mistake them for rain clouds and greet them heartily. O prudent swan! If by this sight you become fearful of the imminent thunderbolts of the rainy season and wish to fly off to Mānasa Sarovara like all swans do at that time, then I will understand that you have been ruined living with dullards.

46. Proceed to the inner portion of the palace, where you will find Kṛṣṇa’s private pleasure chambers, the windows bedecked with fresh flowers, strands of pearls swinging from splendid white crystal pillars, and the walls engraved in gold with descriptions of Kṛṣṇa’s own pastimes from the Tenth Canto.

47. At one end of the verandah by His private quarters is an emerald perch where the peacocks, making excited sounds, sleep away the night. Rest there free from anxiety, and wait for a suitable opportunity to speak with the Lord of the Yadus.

48-49. O dear swan, there you will see Hari, the fountainhead of all beautiful things in the universe, relaxing on a couch with soft white cushions, leaning slightly to the left with both elbows resting on the moon-like pillows before Him. Charming jewelled dolphin-shaped earrings swing against His cheeks, His splendid silken dress eclipses the lustre of gold and His dark splendor is as pleasing as the rising waves of the Kālindī. Should you chance to see Mukunda's full beauty, an ecstatically maddening ambrosia will flood your eyes.

50. Sitting near Him you will find Bikadru, the eldest of the entire Yadu clan, singing many amusing tales from the Purānas. Leaning against a dazzling jeweled pillar you will see the hard-hearted Akrūra (the very utterance of whose name makes the *gopīs*' breasts shiver in fear) recounting the history of the Kurus.

51. You will also see Satyaki, the most glorious of the Śini clan of Yadu fighters, as well as the renowned Kṛtavarmā, fanning Kṛṣṇa gracefully on either side with royal *cāmaras*. Bṛhaspati's disciple Uddhava will surely be seen massaging Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet as he kneels on the golden floor before Him.

52. There you will find Garuḍa with folded hands and a heart brimming with love and veneration, awaiting the order to go off somewhere quickly. When that great bird flies off on his missions the sound of his flapping wings induces the Mathurā *brahmacārīs* to stop their debate on the correct chanting of the Sama Veda.

53. When even one as clever as Brahmā finds himself unable to properly depict the magnificence and beauty of just a single one of Dāmodara's toenails, then how could an ordinary woman like myself ever hope to portray this? It is only because my intelligence has become influenced by His transcendental charms that I venture to do so.

54. Hari's toenails shine with great splendor. Lord Brahmā fell before them, touching them with his crowns upon deeply repenting for having stolen the cowherd boys and calves. The great sage Nārada was overwhelmed with bliss when he saw them for just a moment and greatly lamented for those poor souls who, though liberated, have been deprived of this great ecstasy.

55. The lotus flowers, envious of the rosy hue of Kṛṣṇa's beautiful lotus feet, have taken the vow of performing austerities in the water. All glories to the winter season which comes every year and punishes them for their improper addiction to such practices by causing them to wilt to death.

56. The luster of Hari's legs outshines emerald-colored banana trees, destroying their pride in their own beauty. With these legs, stout like pillars, He ties the wild elephants of the *gopīs*' hearts, powerful and fierce in their intoxication.

57. O dearest of birds! The deep lake of Madhusūdana's navel is the prime source of life for the *śapharī* fishes of the *gopīs*' eyes. From that lake, in the beginning of the creation, sprouted a lotus flower in whose stem the fourteen worlds have their abode and in whose whorl Brahmā took his birth.

58. When Mother Yaśoda tied Kṛṣṇa up with a piece of rope it left three lines which still beautify His belly. When she looked into His mouth She was twice favored with a view of the entire universe populated by men, gods and serpents.

59. When the slender-waisted *gopīs* gaze upon Kṛṣṇa's chest, garlanded with forest flowers, then Cupid immediately appears in their minds. The *kaustubha* jewel, though possessed of a radiance equal to millions of suns, upon His brilliant chest appears no brighter than a firefly.

60. All glories to His arms, which, being more brilliant than two sapphire pillars set with precious gems, remove the darkness of the whole world. Marked with a decorative band from Keśi's teeth when He killed that demon, and fragrant with musk, these arms would firmly embrace the necks of the *gopīs* languid from love's intoxication.

61. His countenance, sweet from happy absorption in thoughts of love, conquers the empire of the most wonderful waves of nectarean loveliness flowing throughout the universe. His eyebrows dance like a vine in the breeze, His sweet smile, the abode of ever new ambrosial mellow, unfolds a wreath of glittering pearl-like teeth.

62. O minstrel of the skies, what more need be said? I have clearly described Him. Just catching sight of Him, my friend, will inundate your heart with supreme delight and you will know that He is none other than our Kṛṣṇa, the killer of Madhu.

63. O dear swan, you are well acquainted with intrigues of the heart through your experiences with your sweetly singing lady-swan friends. You may find Kṛṣṇa similarly absorbed in such affairs with the city women. If so, do not bother to tell Him of our suffering because He will not be interested in us rustic village girls. One who has gotten a taste of nectar will never go looking for whey.

64. O feathered friend, if, on the other hand, the melodiously singing cuckoos have encircled Him, flooding Him with pleasurable memories of Vṛndāvana, or cool breezes fragrant with Govardhana's flowers are blowing gently, then only should you convey to Him the distress of our hearts.

65. Please repeat my message to Him exactly as I say it to you now: O lover of the *gopīs*! Lalitā, who is the dearest friend of that *gopī* whom You loved above all others when You resided here in Vṛndāvana, O playful one, respectfully bows Her head at the golden stool upon which rest Your lotus feet, and sends you this message.

66. O Murāri, that calf You so carefully reared from childhood by feeding her fresh lotus leaves and stems has now given birth to her first calf, and the weight of her udder is so great that the teats hang down below her knees.

67. O lover of the *gopīs*, do you remember that *mādhavi* sapling You took from the *kadamba* grove and married to a mango tree? It was only a foot long with two or three leaves on it then. Now it has grown so big. Yet, in Your absence she constantly sheds tears of sap which gush down her side; seeing her deplorable condition we weep along with her.

68. There was once a child who took birth in the womb of Yaśoda and who was to become the abode of the greatest happiness for the *gopas* of Vṛndāvana. Another child was born in the stone-like womb of Gandini who was to ... O Śiva! Śiva! ... put an end to the glory of Gokula.

69. O Murāri! The demons You killed have returned one by one: Aristāsura has shaken the beautiful-eyed *gopīs* and thrown them to the edge of calamity; Tṛnavarta has returned as the grasses covering Your vacant playgrounds with fear; and Vyomāsura has come back, making the whole of Vṛndāvana seem as empty as outer space.

70. O Kṛṣṇa, under no circumstance should You come to Vṛndāvana now, for its creepers have become so dreadfully poisonous that the whole area is a danger zone. If that were not so then why is it that the *gopīs* are falling unconscious just by breathing the perfumed air? It must be toxic fumes from the flowers. What else could it be?

71. O Hari! O Yadu-nātha! We are but ordinary village girls and therefore You should not waste Your time thinking of us when the princesses of Mathurā are at Your service. Gone is that time when, anxious for our company, You would wait at night in the gardens near our homes, even just to catch a glimpse of us.

72. O Master! We do not blame You for having forsaken us, because persons of dark complexion can rarely give up their deceitful nature. Just consider the cuckoo who, though reared by the crow from the time of incubation, flies away as soon as his wings have grown, forgetting his benefactor forever.

73. O undisputed Master of Vṛndāvana! I have finished my preamble. Now listen to the drama which is still being enacted here. First, however, I must ask You one question: Do You ever remember those two unfortunate syllables, Rā-dhā?

74. O You who enjoyed loving affairs in the forest *kuñjas* and the caves of Govardhana, what anguish it is for me that everyone is whispering about the misfortune of the *gopīs*, for She who was formerly supreme in Your estimation has now been reduced to nothing more than any other common-place woman.

75. O foremost of the Yadus, it is impossible for my friend to stay alive if You remain oblivious to Vṛndāvana. She is thinking that if death is not kind to Her soon then how will She be able to pass the days seeing the picturesque landscape which was formerly the abode of joy for Her, but is now simply a source of endless torture in Your absence.

76. But death does not favor Her either. Her tears, coming in waves, have formed a river larger than the Yamunā. Considering this, Yamunā's elder brother, Yamarāja, has become envious and does not oblige Her, O Murāri, even when She cries out, "O Lord of Death, please have mercy on Me. I do not wish to live another moment!"

77. O killer of the Mura demon, my friend Rādhā saw Your indescribably attractive form only once from afar and immediately She lost all understanding of what is good and what is bad. Like a moth speedily enters into a flame She has entered helplessly into a blazing fire of love for You, giving up all hopes of ever being happy again.

78. O Kṛṣṇa, You are to the residents of Vṛndāvana what the moonlight is to the water lilies. I cannot say anything more than that my friend is a victim of Her own foolishness, for even now She has not been able to remove from Her heart even slightly the memory of that person who is responsible for Her distress.

79. Aho, how fortunate is the hunchbacked Kubjā, who was crooked in three places. She attained a beautiful form and now freely enjoys the pleasure of carefree residence in Your heart. My simple friend Rādhā, bereft of Her piety, was born straight and so She is no longer able to enter there for even a moment.

80. O destroyer of the Mura demon! When Rādhā faints hearing the wind blowing through the bamboos, Her elders conjecture: "Has She been possessed by ghosts, or bitten by some cruel serpent (not knowing that actually yes, She has been bitten by that snake Akrūra), or struck with epilepsy? Why did She suddenly fall unconscious?"

81. O handsome one! Your form is like honey for the starving eyes of the world. You left for Mathurā so long ago and Rādhā is at Her wit's end not getting any news about You. Lately, new waves of ominous fear are dancing constantly in the inner chambers of Her heart.

82. Listen, I will tell You how She passes Her days. Sometimes She offers Her respects to the perfected sages in hopes of finding out how She can get You back; She sometimes tries to please the mystics who

know various spells (thinking that there must surely be some *mantra* which will bring You back); sometimes She humbly renders service to those who know the art of using potions in order to get their help; at times She devotedly prays to Pārvatī Devī to be initiated in the sight of You. What remedy does Her agitated heart not consider?

83. O enemy of Kāmsa! My dearest friend spends all Her time these days by Nandīśvara, worshiping You as She remembers You as the protector of the cows, fond of wearing peacock feathers, more playful than Kāmadeva, arousing lust in all women, graced with more beauty than a new rain cloud, and the enjoyer of *rāsa-līlā*. All She wants is to have You by Her side again and that is all She prays for – whether to You, Śiva or any other god.

84. In Her suffering She draws on the ground with *tāmala*-leaf juice a captivating image of You, whose arching eyebrows break Kāmadeva's bow. Embracing the neck of that image with Her vine-like arms She falls to the ground unconscious.

85. Obsessed with thinking of You, sometimes my friend even thinks that She has become You! Still the fire of separation continues to consume Her. O Murāri, Her torment does not let up for even a moment.

86. Although You have so cruelly thrown Rādhārāṇī into an ocean of suffering, O enemy of Kāmsa, still She constantly meditates on You. That most perfect of chaste maidens thinks that Your heart must be broken due to separation from Her – though we know that it is as hard as a thunderbolt – and thus Her own heart breaks day by day.

87. O destroyer of Kāmsa! Our sweetest friend Rādhā, having heard that You always reveal Yourself to meditators, has gone into deep yogic trance. She is preparing Herself for the severest of austerities because She thinks that You favor *tapasvis* by appearing before them.

88. Always tearfully calling out, "O Murāri, splendid as a blue lotus moving in Yamunā's waters! O Mukunda! O Cupid of Vṛndāvana! O jewel of the demigods! O Hari! O joy of Vraja! O delight of Nandīśvara! O beloved son of Nanda!" She increases Her friends' grief.

89. O Hari, tortured on every side by the flames of the forest fire of separation and gravely wounded by the hunter Kāmadeva, this doe will be forced to abandon the withered forest of Her body today or tomorrow. (Therefore, if You wish to see Her again in this life You had better come quickly for there is not much time left.)

90. My friend has now surrendered Herself fully to Śiva, who is splendid as a monsoon cloud, who is charming with the moon as his crown, and who with a crooked glance defeated Kāmadeva. Now Cupid cannot harm Her. Only You remain tormenting Her – is it for Your own amusement that You do this?

91. O jewel of the Yadu dynasty! You do not know the intensity of the feelings of the *gopīs*; neither do we know what magic causes us to go on loving You despite Your cruelty. The madman Uddhava tried to mitigate our suffering with many scriptural teachings, but frankly, such utterances only doubled Rādhā's anguish.

92. That Uddhava, a true disciple of his teacher Bṛhaspati, now reigns as prime minister in the Yadu court. And our friend Yamunā is the sister of Yamarāja. These two are therefore no longer actively pursuing our interests. O chief of the Yadus, we don't know of anyone else in Your court who will be able to properly communicate Rādhikā's sorrows and appeal to You on Her behalf.

93. Her wounded heart covered with budding hopes yet to be fulfilled, Her pale body bruised from falling on the ground again and again, for Her no joy anywhere. Even Her girlfriends no longer find amusement in Her company just as bees no longer swarm around a wilting flower. O Kṛṣṇa, You are like the moon. When will You come and revive Rādhā with the touch of Your feet, just as the moon revives the lily with the touch of its rays?

94. O Hero! Yearning for Your company, my *sakhī* somehow protected Her life from a host of calamities. Now Her life near its end and Her hopes crushed, She blankly stares at a mango bud in expectation of a quick demise.

95. Tormented by Kāmadeva and abandoned by friends whose hearts have stopped trying to save Her, this lotus-eyed girl is on the verge of death. It is impossible to do anything at all to help Her. Only one friend still remains by Her side and continues attempts to keep Her alive – the hope of Your return.

96. O enjoyer of the *rāsa* dance! If You have truly forsaken that Rādhā with whom You once shared an ever intensifying love, then curses on this swab of cotton which we are holding before Her nose and which indicates that there is still some slight bit of life within Her.

97. O Mukunda! Who on this earth can narrate the hundreds of babblings that this restless-eyed girl speaks in Her delirium? O Master! Let me repeat some of those utterances and allow them to enter into Your beautiful ears decorated with *makara* earrings.

98. “O friend! The love Mura's enemy felt for Me made Me ignore the path of piety. Alas, now He is aloof. I am ashamed to remain alive for another moment.”

99. “O *sakhī*, didn't these forest *kuñjas* delight My heart? Weren't these bending trees a source of unlimited pleasure? Now they simply torment Me. When a maiden's beau abandons her, what girl would not look upon the whole creation with distaste?”

100. “‘I love You dearly’ – that is too light. ‘I cannot live without You’ – too heavy. ‘Why do You not return?’ – I put Him under My control. Dear friend, I do not know which words are right for a message to Hari.”

101. “O well-wishing friend, long past is the day when He, so greatly eager to enjoy with Me, found Me in a cave in Govardhana where I was playfully hiding from Him. He grabbed hold of Me suddenly, pulling Me to His chest as I feigned anger, and marked My breasts with hundreds of crescent-moon scratches.”

102. “O dear Lalitā! My body rippling with love, will I ever gaze again on the killer of the Mura demon, whose sweet flute melody dragged the deer-eyed *gopīs* to Him, whose sidelong glance is so playful, whose dancing eyebrows have ruined the religious vows of all the chaste girls of Vraja?”

103. “In the beginning of sweet autumn filled with the sounds of buzzing bees in the forest whitened by waves of silver moonlight, will I ever wrap that Govinda tightly in these arms as We battle one another in Cupid's amorous war games?”

104. “My dear beautiful-faced Lalitā, I cannot express how My heart is burning! I have fallen into an endless ocean of suffering. What should I do? I am praying to you with my head bowed – please tell Me some remedy by which I will find a particle of courage, even if it lasts for just a moment.”

105. “If the crest-jewel of the hard-hearted leaves Me, then let Him go – He is free. But who could endure His coming here to Vṛndāvana pretending to be part of My dreams and forcibly ravishing Me against My will?”

106. “His impudent behaviour causes Me great distress so you should go to Mathurā and stop that reckless Hari. O friend, do it quickly before that rake comes again and at the beginning of My dreams tears off my waistbells in a frenzy of lusty passion.”

107. “Listen. It is not just in dreams that He comes either. Don’t suddenly disbelieve Me thinking that I’ve gone mad, but hear what I’ve experienced directly. How surprised I was when your friend unexpectedly came to the woods by Govardhana and demonstrated His professionalism in the game of love.”

108. “Indignant, I ran away from His touch trying to escape deep into the dark woods where He would not be able to see Me, but He could tell where I had gone by the sound of My anklebells which only tinkled louder as I quickened My step in fear of being caught. So eager was He to embrace Me that His eyes positively gleamed in excitement and He did not even notice that His flute had fallen from His hand to the ground.”

109. “O *sakhī*, unable to flee I covered Myself with thick vines bursting with smiling flowers. I whimpered in trepidation, ‘Don’t touch Me, You fiend.’ Then your friend laughed as He lifted My head to kiss Me with His glistening *bimba*-fruit lips.”

110. “O friend, I hid the flute in My braid, knitted my eyebrows in feigned anger and gradually escaped His clutches. But to stop Me from going Hari playfully caught Me by the hair and discovered the flute. Then by force He carried Me off and kept Me prisoner in a nearby cave on the hill.”

111. “Another time when I was in a *kuñja* of *mādhavi* creepers, that impertinent youth crept up from behind and fiercely covered My eyes

with His hands. I became angry and tried to pull His fingers off, but as I did so He suddenly disappeared. O *sakhī*, where that *guru* of scoundrels went I don’t know.”

112. “O virtuous one! These are all incidents from the past. Enough of them. Look before you, your friend, an ocean of amorous pastimes, is here now, His face decorated with a honeyed smile. He is tossing a red *banduka* flower to Me, suggesting with His pillar-like arms His immediate intent to embrace Me.”

113. “O *sakhī*, don’t be shy! Get up quickly and tie that miscreant up with your thick necklace of pearls before He runs off to Mathurā again!” Speaking in this way She became stunned with love. How She made all Her *sakhīs* weep!

114. Alas, what pain it gives me to think what a wicked-hearted girl I am! Since our childhood days I always advised my guileless friend to play hard-to-get and taught Her to tie the knot of jealous anger. O *guru* of the art of love for the *gopīs*, because of me She was never able to fully enjoy the embraces of Your flawless arms even though She never wanted anything else from the very first time She saw You.

115. When will I again be able to serve Her by fanning Her with a bunch of fresh blossoms, Her hair aromatic with new *mādhavi* flowers, Her eyes closed in the happiness of undisturbed sleep as She rests in Your arms on the terrace before Your *kuñja* scented by the breezes fragrant from Yamunā’s lotus flowers?

116. Hiding in a nearby *kuñja* in Vṛndāvana, when will I joyfully smile at Her, in great joy after having spent the autumn night in amorous play with You, all the flowers decorating Her hair crushed and wilted and Her arms wrapped around Your shoulders?

117. When will the day come when I shall say to Her, “*Sakhī*, I am going to gather flowers over there some distance away. You go ahead to the river bank where there are so many nice *tulasī* trees and pick their leaves.” In this way I shall cunningly send Her to the *kuñja* where You are hiding, O lover of the *gopīs*, so that the two of You can meet.

118. O friend of the lady swans, after you have thus submitted all these Gokula messages at the lotus feet of Śrī Kāmsāri, you must offer our respects to His intimate entourage, all His ornaments, one by one, and incur their blessings, for they are the recipients of His special mercy and love.

119. O lover of the she-swans! First you should joyfully speak to the *vana-mālā* swarmed by bumblebees. After inquiring about her health you should say to her: O Guṇavati! O most qualified one! Have you forgotten the doe-eyed Rādhā who for so long clinged to Kāmsāri's chest with you?

120. O Rasikā! Don't you remember the time on the slopes of Govardhana when my friend Rādhā, incensed at the master of Gokula for His infidelity, pulled on you so violently that His peacock feathered crown toppled from His head and His eyes rolled in fear?

121. Then you should turn to His *makara* earrings and say: What is the necessity of asking a fortunate entity such as yourself as to your well-being, for you are always kissing Mura-ripu's smiling cheeks and being caressed by the darting glances from the corners of His eyes?

122. O goddess! Listen to me. I am taking shelter of you with a heart full of love because I know that you live at the base of His vinelike ears. O friend, in a very secret place, when there are no Vṛṣṇis about to overhear you, with plaintive words please whisper Rādhā's grief in His ear.

123. O best of birds! Then affectionately embrace the Kaustubha jewel for me. Please tell him: O friend, it seems you have completely forgotten even Rādhā, one who was so dear to you. It must be that, always remaining on Hari's chest, you have become fickle like Him and everyone knows how foolish it is to love the fickle.

124. O jewel of the gods! Because you dwell on His chest you know His heart. Therefore I am asking you whether we shall ever again see Hari play the flute and dance wildly on the banks of the Yamunā with the sweetly singing *gopīs*, their sashes, anklebells and bracelets all tinkling.

125. O conchshell! You are a newcomer and have never met us *gopīs*. Thus you have no idea of Rādhā's glories. Even so, we appeal to you, telling you of the pain within our hearts, for those of generous nature are always affectionate to the downtrodden.

126. You are the offspring of the ocean's heart! O friend! Please bring Govinda to Vṛndāvana and reside here happily. What other way can

you please the land of cows where the greatly fortunate flute was being played for a very long time?

127. After you have delivered this message of love to each of His intimate associates, then, brother, speak to Cāṇūra-mathana (the killer of Cāṇūra) once again, telling Him the tales of His own ten incarnations in words which are sweet and loving but mixed with a good dose of anger also.

128. O Great Fish, Mahā-mīna (Matsya)! My *sakhī* baited the hook of Her heart with the delicacy of love just to catch You, throwing it into the ocean of *rasa*. But, swallowing the bait and the hook, You cut the string of Her discrimination and have drowned Her in those waters. Alas, what can the poor girl do now?

129. Seeing Your beautiful, graceful form, this unfortunate girl approached You. She was both curious and greatly enlivened, but You immediately behaved like a tortoise, hiding Your beautiful limbs and showing only a hard shell. O Kurma, is such behaviour proper?

130. O Kāmsāri! Once again You have acted like a hog by taking Kubjā, a low-class servant girl, to Your heart, lifting her up from the sandalwood paste she was carrying for King Kaṁsa. Thus You accepted her as Your beloved just as in Your boar incarnation You picked up the earth from the mud at the bottom of the universe and made her Your wife.

131. Although Your pastimes as halfman and halflion are long since past, still You have not abandoned the mood of that incarnation. At that time You favored Prahlāda while being extremely cruel to others, tearing open their hearts. This time also You show affection to Akrūra but us, You left in a savage way and ripped apart our hearts.

132. O Vāmana! Just as Bali ignored his *guru*, my dear friend proudly ignored Her elders, thinking Her love was sufficiently powerful and that thus You were Hers. In this way She surrendered the kingdom of Her heart to You completely. Well, She got Her just deserts, for You have shackled Her in the bonds of unfulfilled love and cast Her far away, just as You bound Bali in chains and exiled him to the lower planets.

133. O Paraśurāma, You are so cruel and unyielding that You would let all the Brajabāsīs die in separation, just as You destroyed all the *kṣatriyas* twenty-one times, even though only one was at fault. O Bhṛgu-pati, Lord of Govardhana, now Rādhā has become cruel also – to Herself and to us – threatening to jump from Girirāja. If She dies, how will we survive? Come back and protect us before it's too late. You made us so many promises and declared that You could not live without us, but You left anyway. OK, we have no direct relation with You, so it You are not obliged to us; but what is difficult to understand about Your behavior is how You could forget Your own father, the king of Nandiśvara. But we know know Your history – You neglected to come on time to protect the bow of Your *guru*, Lord Śiva. What was the use for You to come after Lord Rāmacandra broke it? If You don't come on time to save Your father, again You will be reprehensible.

134. O decoration of the Raghu dynasty! Now that You have left Vraja, the demon Dūṣaṇa whom You once killed has returned, heaping a host of miseries (*dūṣaṇa*) on all the cows. The area surrounding Govardhana appears to be drying up (*khara*), taking on the nature of Rāvaṇa's brother Khara. Vraja will soon be bereft of Rādhā who is dying in separation from You, so it seems that the land is being subjugated by Virādha, another demon You annihilated. And now the demon Mārica, like a great plague, is dancing throughout the once happy land, spreading fear everywhere. How can You remain indifferent when all these demons You once killed are thus dancing in delight at Your absence?

135. O Balarāma, You plowed up our hearts and made us fall in love with You. Then You treated us like Dhenukāsura and tossed us away into the trees, but certainly we are not guilty of an offense to You. Now we are being attacked by the demons of our desires to serve You. O Vilāsin, Rādhā is still with us. Why do You not favor Vṛndāvana with Your presence, manifest Your autumn-sky effulgence here and enjoy the *rāsa* dance with us? Your older brother once came from Dvārakā and danced with us, but afterwards our suffering only increased. O Holder of the Plow, if You don't come and satisfy us, these demons will kill us and people will hold You responsible.

136. O Buddha, omniscient one! You are always merciful to all, but why are You not sympathetic to Rādhā who is never attached to anything or anyone but You? She is inimical to the god of lust and opposes everything that interferes with the attainment of Her desired goal, always remaining absorbed in meditation on You.

137. O Kalki! Seated on Your horse come here to Your homeland and with the sweet sword of Your loving sidelong glances – restless like maddened bumble-bees – cut apart the *mleccha* suffering born of Your separation. With Your unblinking eyes increase our *prema*. O auspiciousness for the *gopas*, make all Your *sakhās* happy once again, just as You previously made the world fit for the righteous.

138. O king of birds! In this way, your face wet with tears you should repeat these messages of love to Govinda. Then with your head lowered look at His lotus feet and wait attentively for His reply.

139. O lord of the swans! Please bring Nanda Mahārāja's son on the pathway of our eyes. We *gopīs* are the glory of the world. Don't you think you should do this little favor for us? Don't worry – it will only take a few hours. Please, brother, don't delay.

140. O enchanter of the lady swans, you enjoy playing amongst the lotuses. You are the most discerning of persons, for you are able to separate milk from water. Therefore I ask you, do you think it proper to delay in such an important affair of the heart as going to Mathurā to speak to Kṛṣṇa on our behalf?

141. All glories to my spiritual master who is known as Sākara Mallika (Sanātana Gosvāmī). Just like Śukadeva Gosvāmī, he is filled with *prema*, is learned in *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, is always indifferent to material pleasures due to tasting the sweetness of devotional life, and is accepted as the leader of the devotees.

142. May this sweet and faultless poem, which is praised by those of virtuous heart for its glorious descriptions of Murāri's form and pastimes, send waves of joy flowing within our Master, the friend of the whole universe.