

Dr Mohendra Irengbam

Part Nine

Seventh Chapter

DESCENT OF RADHA KRISHNA TO GOLAK DHAM BRINDABAN

NARD WAS DESPONDENT AT THE SIGHT OF DENIZENS OF BRINDABAN
INCLUDING SHREEDAM



Imagery painting of Radharani at the prime of her youth.
(Courtesy: ISKON Desire Tree)

As Nard Muni was trotting merrily in the windy and dusty streets of Brindaban, he became very dumfounded. Everybody looked dejected and mirthless. Nobody was frisky or laughing. The melancholic sight of the residents of Brindaban made him depressed as well. He was not happy with Krishna. He murmured to himself, “Oh Hari, why such a reckless abandon? My heart sinks. What kind of leela are you playing at? I, your devotee, find it rather devastating.”

“I am seeing for the first time the wanton aberration of life in Braj. Your negative disposition towards the people of Braj, had turned their life experience upside down. You are abominably wrong-footed in this. It is contrary to what the Vedas and Puranas describe you as merciful and graceful to humanity.

I dread to think what the state of your parents, Nand and Yashoda, would be, who, because of their love for you, have suffered so much by your departure. I hate to imagine that they are probably no more in this world. If they are still alive, I doubt I will be able to bring some joy to their hearts.

I am stupefied to delve into the minds and hearts of the gopis of Braj, who had been smitten with your love but had been unable to disclose openly. I cringe at the idea of seeing them. I am also swamped with an edgy feeling at the thought of meeting Shree Radha, the lovely daughter of Brishbhanu, who is *Adya Shakti* (Primal Energy). I fear, lest I dissolve into nothingness with a mere stare of her wrathful eyes and ruin everything I come for.”

With fretfulness weighing heavily down on his heart, Nard Rishi continued to stride forward with all kinds of negative thoughts that were rumbling in his mind, particularly about fulfilling the decree he had from the Destiny Maker.

He took some delight in the meantime, with the positive thought that some good things might come out while waiting and walking before he comes face to face with Radhika. He was hopeful that he would have a *darshan* (Auspicious vision) of Radha if he was lucky. And that would make his day as it is human desire always, to find fresh cause for optimism.

He was steadfast in his resolve. He went straight towards the gate of Radha's house, hoping that, at the gate he would seek for permission to see her, and hopefully, she would send out some of her best friends to welcome him. He was determined to find out for real if Radha was the *Pradayani* [Dispenser of intellectual enlightenment], often mentioned in the Vedas.

Eight Chapter

NARD RISHI WAS NOW CLOSE TO SHREE RADHA'S RESIDENCE.

With this solemn deliberation and magnificently accoutered with a pleasurable thrill of anticipation, Nard approached Radha's house, contemplating touching the holy feet of Radha, while his veena played the tunes, sounding 'Radhe Radhe' bhajan [Devotional song]. Both Nard and his veena were recipients of *siddha* (one who had attained spiritual perfection) and thus, his veena could play any tune by itself.

So, the Muni instructed the veena that Brindaban was a sacred place for pilgrimage, and nobody would want to listen to any instrumental music apart from that flute music that used to be played by Shree Krishna. And that, it should play only the melody that Shyam used to play, and which enchanted Radha. And it did.

Hearing the old familiar Krishna's flute music so suddenly, everybody in Braj, had a jolt of surprise, and they wondered if Krishna had indeed come back!

They dropped everything they were doing and were rushing out to their gates and to the source of the music. The streets of Brindaban, where Nard was marching, were thronged with crowd after crowd. Nard was quite pleased with himself.

All the residents of Brindaban dashed out with pleasant expectations of seeing Krishna again. Nothing, nothing at all, could bother them in their exciting rush towards the source of the music. No physical obstacles, such as pitted, rough, and bumpy roads or thorny bushes could delay them. Surprise, Surprise. It was such a shock. It was such an anti-climax and let-down, when they saw the person with the music, was not Krishna at all.

They saw a tall man of spare built and with a complexion as bright as the sun. He had dreadlocks (*Jata*) of white hair on the crown of his head. He was carrying a veena that played itself. All those who saw him could not help but being awed by and be reverential to him though. Such was his magnanimous personality.

They discussed with each other about the identity of this rishi-looking man, and the purpose of his visit to Brindaban. But, because of his distinctiveness and eccentricity, while possessing a great physical beauty, no one dared approach and ask him who he was. They all stood perplexed and motionless as if they were cardboard humans or wooden puppets. They just gazed at him in bewilderment and with open mouths.

Whilst Nard Rishi, seemingly insouciant, proceeded without looking to the left or right, and indifferently spinning out the time before he would meet Radha face to face. He went on chanting ' Radhe, Radhe, as if no one was watching him.

Nard ignored that Brindaban had an air of a place that you see in a melancholy dream. Even the rustling leaves had a dead sound.

Ninth Chapter

RADHIKA'S FAINTING ATTACKS

Taciturn Radha was sitting in a solitary room in her home, alone. Torn with the grief of separation from Krishna, she became underweight by refusing to have enough food or drink. She looked mottled like a flower infested by insects.

She spent her entire life in constant transcendental meditation, quietly and focusing on Krishna, whose image she had entombed in her sacred heart. She continued to exist in the land of dreams and shadows. She slept very little. Only the intense love for Krishna sustained her life.

She sat immobile in yogasana position [a seated posture in yoga typically used for meditation, such as a basic cross-legged position like sukhasana (Easy pose). She maintained the position by sheer happy memories of days gone by. At times, when her thoughts travelled back to the remote merry days, she would burst into laughter while at others, she would just look ahead with no interest in her surroundings. Then, she would erupt into sobbing bouts, followed by episodes of transient loss of consciousness without falling.

Her close friends were in constant attendance to her, sharing her agony and heartbreak. Like Radha, they all looked sullen and despondent. Still, life tracked on in a snail's pace without a purpose, which is senseless.

Amidst her doom and gloom of existence, one day, like a bolt from the blue, a euphonious fluctuating sound produced by a flute afar, was wafted by the gentle breeze to her ears. It was just like the ethereal tune Krishna used to play. But she took no notice of it.

The familiar but obsolete flute music gave her friends the impression that Krishna had come back to Braj. As the sound of the sensuous music was steadily closing in, one friend asked the other if she also heard the alluring flute song with a musical motif, calling 'Radhe, Radhe'?

But the Gopis speculated among themselves and could not help wondering whether Krishna had come back after all, to re-illuminate Brindaban after one hundred years of darkness, just like a full moon that would wash away the inky black night caused by a dark moon. Perhaps,

they thought today would be the end of the dull and dreary Brindaban that has remained mirthless and without a soul.

They all stopped whatever they were doing and followed Nard.