

Part Eleven

DESCENT OF RADHA KRISHNA TO GOLAK DHAM BRINDABAN

BRINDA CAME OUT YO MEET NARD

Radha further talked to Brinda the reason why the person must stop playing his veena. It was to save Yashoda, “You can persuade him with all humility, to come and see me. I want to hear what he has to say, and I will see that he gets what he wants.”



Image of Brinda Devi (Courtesy: Pinterest)

Radha’s thoughts after that, were in a blurry of overdrive. It was more confusing to her milkmaid friends, who were not as discerning as her as they lacked the power to see what was not evident to the average mind.

Brinda Devi soon set off to execute Radha’s command. She took her reverential bow to Radha and emerged out of the gate with a sense of misgiving at the thought of meeting a strange person. As she marched down the road, she could see a person walking towards her at some distance. He looked like a ‘god from heaven’, who has just descended, and someone who, she has never seen before.

He looked tallish with a white *jota* [A pile of plaited hair that sat, condensed on the crown of his head]. He had white and long eyebrows, a beard, and a moustache. He looked quite old. But he still had an awesome personality, with his face emanating a light-hearted but moral qualities, unlike the selfishness and deceit of the knave. He had a smirk on his lips .He had wrinkles around his eyes that were not from laughter.

He had Vaishnavite *chandon marks* [paste made of sandalwood powder] all over his face. [A Vaishnav chandon mark goes vertical on the forehead, while a Shivite one goes horizontal]. A string of Tulasi [Holy basil] beads were strung around his neck, which dropped down to his navel. His chest was bare. He was dressed in a saffron dhoti and held a veena in his right hand and shoulder.

His veena itself was more spellbinding. It played a simulation of the flute notes Shyam used to play. Brinda guessed without consulting anybody, that he must certainly be Nard Rishi whom she had heard about. She wondered why he had come to Gokul so suddenly, and why his veena was playing the same notes as that of Krishna!

Brinda went mute for some time, while she was formulating ways of confronting him. It was quite a daunting task, but she had to convey what Radha instructed her to do. She plucked up her courage, having found a few words that were succinct and precise. She walked straight to him face to face. Nard stood stock-still when she was close enough. She genuflected to touch his feet. Then she stood up in front of him with her hands clasped in salutation.

Choosing her words carefully, she asked Nard the reason why the great Rishi paid such a visit to Braj, and why his veena had to play the note that Shree Krishna used to play? Why was he clad as an ascetic [yellow dhoti] and shining like the sun? And why did he come to Gokul? She begged him for answers to her questions, as she had to go back and make her report to lady Radhika.

Nard was delighted with the encounter. His response was brief: "I was born to Brahma. I have come here to have a private audience with Shreemati Radhika. It is great that I have met you. Please take me to Radhika. I have something very important to tell her."

Brinda chipped in with another request: "Before we do that, I pray you kindly stop your veena playing Krishna's flute melody. It is just that, if it continues, it is going to traumatise Yashoda. She has been in such a state as if she has been waiting for death to relieve her of the heartbreak caused by the separation from her son. She is so weak due to her refusal to eat. She can hardly get out of her bed. She spends all her time calling her Krishna.

If Yashoda Rani hears the flute tune, she will rush out believing that her Krishna has come back. When she sees you and realise that you are not Krishna she will collapse, and that would be the end of her life.

That is why Radharani has sent me ahead, to see you and request you to stop the veena playing Hari's tune, and at the same time, to guide you along to see her. Shall we proceed? Kindly follow me.

Nard, happy with the text of the conversation with Brinda, stopped the veena at once. He was over the other side of the moon as he felt the meeting with Radhika was now a certainty. He allowed Brinda to guide him along to Radha's residence.

Eleventh Chapter

WELCOME RECEPTION OF NARD BY RADHIKA AND HER ENTOURAGE AT HER GATE

During the amplitude of time Brinda was away, Radharani kept turning the problem over in her mind. Who could be this person? She had *Adya shakti* [Primal energy – the power of the godhead [like Durga]. She had *unterjami* [Omniscient] with which she could visualise everything with her mind's eyes. She was also the possessor of *Dibya gyan* [Quintessence of knowledge and reality].

Using the power of *Dibya gyan* [clairvoyance], she knew what was happening, that Brahma was worried lest the *Shristi* (the created universe) come to an end (apocalypse) and knowing that her vile temper could just do that, he sent his son Nard to try to prevent that from happening, by organising a reunion of Radha and Krishna. And because of her long-standing suffering, Nard was sent first to her for a calming effect.

Looking at her friends, Radha explained about Nard as a guest on sufferance, “Nard’s veena was playing Krishna’s flute tunes, to make the inhabitants of Braj aware of his presence, and to seek signs of me welcoming him with an open arm, me standing at my gate.

That was his way of knowing whether the outcome of his mission would be successful. It is just right that I sent out Brinda. I will now go and wait for him at the gate to welcome him. I will grant this *Bhakta* (devotee) his wish today.”

While talking to the gopis, she dillydallied towards her entrance gate, surrounded by her chums. Her face was radiant with hope and happiness. She was determined to show why she was known as ‘merciful’.

For one hundred years she had hardly been to the gate. She had spent all these years quietly whining away her emotional and physical suffering because of her breakup from Krishna. There was never a sound of laughter coming out of the house but her moaning, which was like a raving wind that blew through the house, rattling the windows every now and then.

Now, Radha who was equally anxious like Brinda, stood at the gate waiting for the person with the veena to arrive.

Time was ticking mercilessly.