

Part Nineteen

DESCENT OF RADHA KRISHNA TO GOLAK DHAM BRINDABAN

SHREE KRISHNA CONTINUED TO BERATE THE GOPIS OF BRINDABAN



Brinda Kunj at Panghat (water collecting place) on the bank of Jamuna River in Brindaban. Remember the song '*Mohe panghat me Nandalal chher gayo re*'- (Film Mughal-e-Azam). There is now an Ashram honouring Sri Narottam Das Thakur, who was the founder of the sect of Vaishnavite movement, as is practised in Manipur since the 16th century.]

Nard was listening to Krishna's wisdom with an admiration that plainly confused him. Krishna continued with his witty dialogue about Radha. "Oh, Muni, you were talking about Radha's misery. You will not believe this either. Radha was often skittish, voluble, and doe-eyed, but when I showed I had a crush on her and tried to get closer, she always gave me the cold shoulder. I was contemplating a life-long relationship with her.

Let me tell you a funny story about her self-esteem. You may pay heed to this. Once, I went to Chandrabali Kunj [Chandrabali = Birja, was a great friend of Radha and head of the milkmaids; Kunj is a shady garden alcove with trees and climbing flowers]. When I came back, I was barred from meeting her by her milkmaid friends. They would not let me see her. I was very embarrassed, and I did not know what to do, to be honest.

I met many women in my life, but I never came across a lady who was so jealous and possessive like Radha. She was always green with envy and forever begrudging about something or the other that I did. Still, people talked about her as the personification of love. What's more, once she got offended there was no easy way to placate her. No one would have a greater appetite for vengeance and retribution.

Krishna continued with his tirade. My welcome was as warm as the frozen lake of Manasarovar in winter, near Kailash Parbat. My despair turned into a lingering sadness. I felt dryness in the throat, sadness in heart and emptiness in my stomach. I apologised to her with great humility. But she would not have it. She did not even look at me. She turned away her face, and severely reprimanded me all the same.

Completely helpless, with hands on my heart, I offered my headgear and flute at her feet. I then prostrated, touching her two feet, asking for her forgiveness. Even then muni, you might be surprised. She got up and left me, inarticulate and looking away from me.

That was her ego. I got the blues. I felt so insulted that I considered getting away from her forever. But Nard, it is easier said than done. it was hard to forget her. Next day, disguised as a Yogi. I walked over to her house, pretending to beg for alms.

Fortunately, her milkmaid friends recognised me, and out of pity, they asked Radha for clemency. No, nothing doing. There was no amnesty. Only mockery in her queer glance and a sardonic smile upon her lips. I was not allowed to speak to her. That was it. Rudeness is not synonymous with wit. With my poor heart broken into pieces, I trudged back home.

I still cannot forget her vicious indifference to my hopelessness and intense devastation. The news about her emotional incontinence you are talking about, does not eat away at the fabric of my soul. I feel no true compassion for her. I cringe beneath the lash of her inhumanity and savagery. Do not talk about her anymore.

Shree Govind noticed Nard's befuddlement. He smiled and spoke condescendingly to him, using choice words in his vocabulary of *byajstuti* [Words that are outwardly depreciating but inwardly appreciating]. Govind explained to Nard what he was going to do (See below).

Twenty-Eight Chapter

SHREE KRISHNA TOLD NARD WHAT HE WAS GOING TO DO. THEN BOTH CAME BACK TO WHERE THEY SAT EARLIER

Shree Krishna became condescending to Nard for the first time. He was relaxed and explained to Nard about his plan. He said, "It is quite difficult to fathom what one is thinking. You cannot take anybody's word for sure. However, as you are serious, I think I will certainly go to Braj as soon as I can. But not now.

As you are here, you can see for yourself how I am tied down to Dwarka. I am here as a king, with sixteen thousand and one hundred and eight consorts. They feed me the best cuisines, all kinds of savoury, sweet and sour. I have so many children and lots and lots of grandchildren with whom I have a close emotional bond.

In Brindaban I never had a full stomach. When I returned home after a day's hard work of rounding up cattle and bringing them home, I was always famished. But there was never enough food to eat.

Then with the first light of dawn, I would be woken up and told to go and milk the cows. After that I was given a frugal breakfast, and then, sent out to tend the cattle at the pasture for grazing. When I came back home, I must milk the cows again. I remember how I waited for the night to descend so that I might have some rest and forty winks. Think about it, Nard. I dread the thought of going back to Brindaban.

Shree Govind said what he wanted Nard to hear. Then he got up and walked out of the room. Nard followed. They both came back to where they were in the first place. Krishna sat down in his royal chair, the seat of dignity with splendour and magnificence [Birajman = radiant in the throne], surrounded by the ladies.

Nard rishi was not that unhappy now, but all kinds of worrying ruminations were drifting on his mind, such as Govind is unlikely to go Brindaban, and lady Radhika no doubt, will not come to Dwarka. While Nard was contemplating how to revamp his mission, ShreeKrishna dwelt on his thoughts with compassion.

Soon enough, as Krishna inspired his resolve, Nard decided that he would organise for Radha and Krishna to meet at Prabas Tirth. He would motivate Basudev to perform a Yajna. He would invite everyone from the

three loks with all the people, devas, demons, and many other supernatural beings. And surely, all the relatives of Krishna from Braj, including Radha should be coming. That was a comfortable place between thought and outcome. A pleasant feeling of being breezy although it was still a little too hot for comfort.

Narda was satisfied with his gargantuan idea. He resolved to work it out to bring Radha and Krishna together at *Prabas Tirth* in Kurukshetra. He took his leave from Krishna without disclosing his plan. He went straight to see Basudev.

It is the imperishable leela of Hari. Whoever listens to it will be blessed and will ease all their suffering.

Twenty-Ninth Chapter

NARD GAVE ADVICE TO BASUDEV

Nard arrived at Basudev's house. He was received warmly and with great respect. A puja was performed for him with rice grains, sesame seeds, bananas etc, He talked about virtues in general, such as faith, righteousness, ethics, with examples quoted from the holy texts.

Having primed Basudev about the karma of performing a yajna – a propitiation of celestial beings through offerings made to Agni god of fire, he went about ‘organising a charity event along with a yajna,’ which will endow a tremendous blessing to him. A variety of gifts such as food grains, clothes, water, cows, land, gold and so on would be handed out.

All these largesse carry cardinal virtues. The ancient Horse sacrifice or King’s sacrifice was the grandest of the Vedic religious rites. Now, it is the Vaishnavs’ preference that there is no animal sacrifice.

Nard instructed Basudev that all the ingredients necessary for the charity event must be readily available beforehand and in generous quantities. They should be handed out with a solemn vow, while chanting a mantra. The donations should be offered to the ‘twice born’.

[Twice born or *Dvija*, the first of which is physical, the second is spiritual. These are three top castes in Hinduism: 1. the Brahmins (priestly people); 2. the Kshatriyas (rulers, warriors, and administrators); 3. the Vaishyas (artisans, merchants, tradesmen, and farmers). They wear a white cotton thread across their bodies, the loop going over the left shoulder. These white threads with three strands are worn by Brahmins, representing Rig, Yajur, and Sam Vedas].

Nard went on further with the requirement of the Yajna. Everyone should be fed with a generous bill of fare, and to their hearts’ content. This is essential when giving any kind of alms.

Nard emphasised that everyone, such as the blind, deaf and dumb, the destitute, rishi, muni, Gandharva [A class of celestial beings whose males are singers and female are dancers], demons, Rakshas [benevolent spirits], all the animals, birds, fish, even Hari Chandal [people who cremate dead bodies] should be sent proper invitations to attend the *Maha yajna* (Mammoth propitiation ritual).

While Basudev was wondering aloud where he would find a Tirth that is so big as to accommodate all these people from three loks, Nard chuckled And in front of everybody present he said: “Why are you so worried *chakrapani* (Benevolent person)?”

Please stop taxing your brain. Remember the saying, ‘If one has money, one has paddy and then there is no shortage of rice’. And, if you have rice, you have curries automatically. Likewise, if you buy a horse to ride, then you are bound to have a stable built.”

Nand went on as if it was the easiest thing to organise in the world.