

Part Thirty-Four

DESCENT OF RADHA KRISHNA TO GOLAK DHAM BRINDABAN

Sixty-Fourth Chapter

‘LADY BRAJBHUMI’ SHED TEARS AT THE FEET
OF RADHA WHO WAS READYING FOR PRABAS



Brinda Devi is also known as Tulasi Maharani (Courtesy: Pinterest). Brinda is the epitome of pure and unselfish love for Krishna. Highly revered especially in Vaishnavism. Anyone who touches the Tulasi plant [avatar of Lakshmi, consort of Brahma] with great esteem, lives eternally in Vaikunth [Skanda Puran].

Radhika was now in seventh heaven. She was assiduously graceful in the newly found rhapsody. That was Jatila's call to go to Prabas. She thanked Jatila. She was very ecstatic with the alluring thought of meeting Shyam, face to face after one hundred years. Time became her worst enemy. She had difficulty in killing time.

While chanting, 'Madhab, Madhab' [another name of Krishna. Root Madhu, meaning honey]. Radhika was waiting for an auspicious moment to start her journey. This was to find the moment when her breath flowed through her left nostril, and that was the instant she would put her left foot forward for the travel ahead. [This is a Hindu custom of starting a journey at an auspicious moment. Left nostril breathing is spiritual].

About this time, Lady *Brajbhumi* (Land of Braj), after changing to her human icon, arrived at Radha's home. She wept at Radha's feet, saying, "What kind of dharma it is that you Radhika, are now leaving the poor Land of Braj? How did I annoy you so much that you are deserting me so surreptitiously?"

You must know that because of you Radhika and your Lord Krishna who had been playing Ras leela that so many yogis, rishis, and devas in all the three Loks had been admiring Braj as the most fortunate place. You were very kind and generous to me. For ages, I have been living with the hope that since you are here, Govind might come back here at least once.

From the day Shree Hari had left, there had been an absence of dust from his and your feet at the Ras leela mandab. Brahma and Vishnu had been trying to obtain even a grain of such dust from Braj, by meditating very hard and for long periods, but without success.

Lady *Brajbhumi* persisted in her moaning, holding Radha's feet and sobbing. Kind-hearted Radha stroked her head gently, and said sympathetically, "Stop crying oh, great lady. You are fortunate to be the most coveted place in the three loks because of Lord Krishna. Shree

Hari and I will continue to play Ras leela in many of your Kunj, day and night, and throughout the years. You will be the place for all sadhus who are leaving this world. Krishna devotees will pay their homage to you every *yug*. A person who has a speck of your dust would have no fear for Yam Raj anymore. Those who use your dust as *chandan* on their forehead, would receive the blessing of Krishna.

Furthermore, those who come to Brajbhumi to spend their last days will escape punishment by Yam Raj, having their sins vindicated [by Krishna], They would be lifted to *Swarg* in a chariot of flowers. I will also bless anyone who comes to Braj with a sincere heart, that they be blessed by Shree Hari. Besides, those who, with their dying breath, but still able to utter the sound of Brindaban, will be granted *Salokya Murti* [residence in heaven with other deities and Hari]. Having thus assuaged her feelings, Brajbhumi left with peace of mind.

Shreemati Radhika now set off along with many Sakhis for Prabas, chanting 'Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna'. She had no make-up on her face and no decorations on her body. Her hair was not plaited but tousled. Because of her possession of *angkanti* (light of body), there was bright luminescence radiating from her body that lit up her surrounding area with a golden aura. It was like thunder and lightning that had stayed on her body, and as if the moon was rising from her exquisite person.

There are not enough words to describe Radha's beauty. She can be compared to a lovely lotus flower, which a few wild, slender-waisted blue male bumble bees might mistake for a real lotus flower if she happens to be in their hurried flight path, attracted by her natural body scent that breezes around her, not unlike the fragrance of a fully bloomed lotus. Radha, as usual, was strolling gracefully, surrounded by her closest sakhi friends. She was like the full moon surrounded by many stars.

Many people could not help wondering about her beauty! How did

Bidhi (Brahma) take time to create her? There was none as adorable as her.

Sixty-Fifth Chapter

BRINDA DEVI URGED RADHA TO TRAVEL BY PALANQUIN

Brinda Devi saw Radha travelling on foot. She tried to persuade Radha to travel by a palanquin or bullock cart, saying, “Please listen to me hê Radhe. Prabas is very far away and the road we are going to travel on, is full of thorns, spines, splinters, and shards. It is not for you with your delicate feet. Please go on a palanquin or bullock cart. Your face is already burnt by the sun, and you are perspiring profusely. Please pay heed to my humble request.

Radhika replied in a level-headed way, “ Oh my dear friend, I appreciate what you are saying, but it seems opposite to what is written in the sacred Hindu scriptures, such as Agam, Ngam and Purans. It is written clearly that you will never find Krishna without hard work. Nothing ventured, nothing gained. Many munis and rishis will leave their comfortable ashram and go to the dense forests, where they meditate undisturbed.

In the beginning, they would survive on trees, bamboo, and water, but in the end, they would abstain from food and water. They would subsist on pure air only, for years and years. Even then, only some fortunate ones would succeed in their quest. It is human nature that people in only deep distress pray for Krishna. But Krishna does not forget the destitute and the abandoned. Therefore sakhi, for this trip, the unfortunate Radha has decided to walk all the way to Prabas.

I will be chanting his name while walking and if I die from exhaustion on the way, so be it. Once I am dead, I will not suffer from heartbreak and deep longing for him anymore. I would endeavour to reach him in my next birth. All of you, please sing Govind's name in a chorus and hearing that sound will help me to endure my hardship. Saying that, Radhika continued her journey on foot, along with her sakhi friends.

The elderly folks took the lead in front. The younger ones were herded in the middle along with Radhika and the sakhis, followed by more elderly people. Jatila and Kutila also joined in a frivolous mood. Pournimashi Devi also arrived. Everyone from Braj had now joined the massive crowd.

Before the start of the journey, Nand at his palace, called up ShreeDam and Sudama and told them to bring their cows and calves. He ordered, "Do not leave any cow that my son used to tend. Anybody, any living thing, animals, birds, fish and so on, that are willing to come, are welcome. My son Krishna loves everybody.

Sixty-sixth Chapter

ALL THE FISH, BIRDS, AND ANIMALS FROM BRINDABAN ARE NOW LEAVING FOR PRABAS

As per the order of Nand, ShreeDam ran around to tell everybody to bring their cattle and Shree Govind's cows. He individually called the cows by their names: Dhabali, shyamli, Madhumati, Bali, Kali, Surbashari, Piyali, Chamari, Bhamari and so on. As soon as the cows heard ShreeDam, they came running and jumping with joy, blowing loud moos.

They were not mere cattle with names, but very intelligent ones through the blessings of Krishna. They had been crying as they had been very unhappy with their separation from Krishna. Even though they were with their calves, their mooing sounds had an emotional content. Their eyes were filled with tears because of Krishna's departure from Braj. They knew why the crowd was gathering around Nand's palace.

It was not only the domesticated animals but wild animals, such as deer, stags, peacocks, cuckoos, *nongyin* [Manipuri, Hume pheasant], and all kinds of birds, monkeys and snakes, bumble bees, and black and yellow carpenter bees, began their journey along with the crowd. They were also followed by lakes, rivers, and forests.

Gopas and Gopis sauntered happily, chanting Shree Krishna's name. Overhead the birds flew with the crowd while various animals followed them. Often, the cowherds and milkmaids cheered with the refrain 'Radharani ki Jay, Giridhari ki Jay' [victory to Radharani, victory to Krishna]. Nobody complained of any kind of suffering or hardship. Their only resolve was to proceed to Prabas.

They trudged on until the night was getting near when they had to stop. The 'Council of elders' had to decide on a suitable place for overnight stay. Once that was found and following Nand's directive, the children and the elderly people were placed at the centre, followed by women all around. The men formed the outer layer. The bullock carts encircled them as a further insurance. Nand placed armed guards patrolling all night.

The birds settled on the boughs of leafy trees and forest animals took their rest at the feet of trees in their own flock. Dog-tired, everybody slept fast. Then, as the pale morning sun, low in the east with its soft grey light was coming in almost horizontal across the dormant land, everybody got up. Once finished their ablutions, they began to march again with restored strength.

Listen to this story of Radha and Krishna that is as sweet as Amrit.

