

Part Forty-One

DESCENTION OF RADHA KRISHNA TO GOLAK DHAM BRINDABAN

Eighty-Fourth Chapter

STORY OF EASTERN GATE AT PRABAS



Painting of Krishna holding up Gopabandhan Hill (Credit: The Legend of Hari (Krishna). Lahore, c1590-95 (Mughal period)).

At the eastern gate, the sakhas with their catatonic faces, unable to hope for the best, or plan for the worst, were in a state of limbo. Nothing drifted to the forefront of their thoughts.

About this time, Shree Krishna, dressed as a cowherd, walked in, calling them, “Oh, dear friends, how are you?” Seeing their long-lost treasure, they surrounded Krishna, who gave a warm hug to everyone. He made everyone happy with soothing words.

Some would come and embrace Krishna with tears in their eyes. Others held his hands and asked him about his health and welfare. Some were so overwhelmed that words would not come out of their mouths. Many brought fruits and eatables wrapped in a piece of their clothing. All came at the same time and were struggling to be the first to feed Krishna. Krishna in his many forms received all the presents and danced with them in a joyous union. He ate all sorts of things just to please them.

Then, Krishna went to see the cows and gave a soothing rub to each one. All the cows ran up to him with their tails lifted towards the sky. They licked his body with their tongues, while blowing their noses, ‘shoo, shoo’. He also went to *the upabans* and pretending to be a cowherd, attended to the cows for some time.

In this way Shree Krishna in his old form in Braj, entertained everyone, addressing the elderly gopas and gopis with honorific titles or informal uncle, aunty, brother, sister and so on, for respect. He thus welcomed everybody, and where indicated he prostrated before some of them. He made them very happy indeed.

If a certain economy with the truth is what is needed, what happened was that Shree Krishna inspired an emotional response in all the gopas and gopis at the eastern gate, which defied conventional wisdom and shook off all the prejudices against him.

While this happy union was going on at the eastern gate, please listen to what went on when Krishna met Radha at the northern gate.

Eighty-Fifth Chapter

MEETING OF RADHA AND KRISHNA

Radhika, who has been subject to ignominious situations in the face of the gatekeepers, had her thoughts quite disarranged. So, she quietly went and sat under a bat tree. Radha's girlfriends were also sitting around her, trying to cheer her up. Radhika closed her eyes and was contemplating, thinking about Krishna.



Coincidentally, at this moment, ShreeKrishna, dressed in his usual *Natwar* dress arrived, chuntering 'Radha, Radha'. [Natwar is a Krishna costume, traditionally comprising of a colourful yellow dhoti, an embellished crown radiant with peacock feathers, and holding a flute in his right hand].

Child Krishna with Natwar dress.

With a scarf around his neck and with folded hands he stood in front of Radha. His vocalisation of 'Radha, Radha' was exactly in tune with Radha's intonation of 'Krishna, Krishna'. Radhika, hearing Krishna calling her, opened her eyes and was astounded to see Krishna standing just in front of her.

Seeing Krishna in the flesh, Radha's longstanding pent-up anger and bitterness burst forth at once. Without uttering a word, she looked down to the floor and remained motionless, while Krishna, with an emotional wallop, just stood and looked at Radha in a vacant and voluminous way.

The sakhis with Radha, were equally stunned to say anything. Everyone had their tears running down like mini waterfalls. At this solemn sight, all the fish, birds and animals could not help grieving. There was an awful eerie silence as if the world stood still. It was an awful turn of events for both Radha and Krishna.

Conflicting emotions churned inside Radha. She said to herself. “Oh, hateful wrath, leave me alone. I have now found my Love, my Lord. I am quite satisfied. I do not want you to be with me anymore. Because of your insinuation, if I lose my lord, I who is down on her luck, may never find him again in this life.

As Radha tried to cast off all her longstanding resentment, her indignation overtook her even more forcefully. After a fleeting glance that showed Shyam who had his eyes closed, Radha continued to put her head down. Krishna knew Radha’s rage and fury. But when he saw Radha’s dreary and dismal face, he became even more apprehensive. He felt his heart sink. Knowing Radha’s stubbornness and that his mere plea would get him nowhere, he sat down and held her feet in his hands and entreated her earnestly.

Krishna was consumed with apology and said in a soft and mellow voice, “Please Radhe, give up your umbrage. Have a little compassion for me. I have nobody except you to call my own. It is not all my fault. As you know, it is all due to ShreeDam’s curse. The duration of his jinx has now passed. There is nothing more to worry about. It is now time for you to be gracious to me again.”

“Hear me, Radhe. You are my *dhyān* [journey of my mind]. You are my *tap* [spiritual meditation practice]. I cannot bear anymore the debilitating effects of feeling entirely alone and incomplete. It is very painful and disconcerting.” With these words, Shyam kneeled, still holding Radha’s feet.

Seeing the pathetic scene, the sakhis flooded in and stood on the right and left of Krishna. It was like a solitary blue lotus blooming among a host of golden lotuses. Seeing Radha in that dreamy state, the ever so worried Brinda approached Radha with folded hands and implored her, “What is this, my Lady? It is not the time for nursing a long-standing resentment. Failing to resolve the grudge will only grow into an unresolved regret that will haunt you and bite you like a poisonous snake. Please Radhe, be

magnanimous and hug the Lord who is in front of you begging your pardon. Kindly dedicate your body and soul to him while you can. Please seize the day.

Radhika understood Brinda's short and eloquent statement that made sense. She raised her head, opened her eyes, and held Krishna in her arms. She begged for forgiveness, pleading that she could be excused for lacking in appropriate behaviour and courtesy, having been born and brought up in a distant rural peasantry. She moaned, "I am still behaving wildly like I did in my childhood when we played together in the groves in Brindaban."

"But I must also tell you what the most horrendous behaviour on your part is now, my Lord. It is this. You bow to me, a wretched woman, a village bumkin. What would the great Lakshmi-like ladies, your consorts, who are the daughters of great kings who are now at Prabas, think about you when they heard of it? Or if they saw you doing it?

In any case, you have no place for me in your heart. Please enjoy living with those ladies. This unfortunate Radha has come only to shed her false prestige and end her life here. Then my mental and physical suffering would be over." Radha then fainted and lay on the ground.

Shri Krishna picked her up and held her on his knees. He whispered in her ears, while gently stroking her forehead, "What are you saying my love? Who is there for me? You are half of myself and there is none like you. You are my *Kalpalata* [a wishing vine that grows in Indra's heaven].

You can confer all my desires. You are my *Maha bhab* [great emotions. In the school of Vaishnavism, it is the joy that is derived from such feeling]. You are my soul. You are my religion. You are my *Tatbha* [reality] and Guru [spiritual teacher].

Krishna continued with a few more adulations of Radha to swoon over her deeply adverse and entrenched emotions with a few more well-placed words. "You are the primeval energy, the mother of all living things, the

sacred ash of all women, and the salient among the sati women. You are my only love. Please believe me when I say there is none beside you.”

Shree Krishna, having been successful in pacifying Radha’s agitation and excitement, now led her out, holding her hand, followed by all the sakhis towards the mandir that Biswakarma built on the model of a Braj temple. The Brindaban-like environment pleased Radhika. She smiled and cast her sultry eyes on her Lord.

Radha and Krishna spent some pleasant time talking to each other about old memories in Brindaban. Thereafter, they drifted to Nikunjaban, where they gave the image of *Jugalrup* with Radha standing on the left of Krishna, to the sakhis. It was highly delightful for all the sakhis, a sight they had missed for so many years.

Tender-hearted Krishna conferred divine grace to inspire virtuous impulses on anyone and everyone, sprinkling his blessings in the form of a light shower of rain that came unexpectedly. Nikunjaban had its Spring season. There were all kinds of flowers blooming and various trees bore fruits. The peacocks began to dance, the cuckoos began to sing, and the gentle breeze began to waft the fragrance of the roses to Radha and Govind.

Shri Krishna spent some time with all of them. It was like old times in Brindaban. Everybody forgot they were at Prabas. They rejoiced in their good fortune of seeing Krishna again. However, Krishna had to leave them and Radha in the Nikunjaban. He had to go back to the venue of Basudev’s yagna.

Eighty-Sixth Chapter

BASUDEV OFFERED PURNAHUTI

As the yagna was coming to its completion, Basudev and Devaki offered

punahuti [final offering] to the yagna. They took their solemn vow and distributed alms to the satisfaction of everyone. They fed everybody to their heart's content. Basudev and Devaki were extremely happy, full of joy, and their hearts were blessed with peace and tranquility.

Now it was time for guests to say goodbye to the hosts. With polite words, all of them, humans, devas, munis, and rishis, gandharva, charans, and other living beings, such as fish, birds and animals left for home. There were no strangers left at Prabas tirth, except for the Yadavs, the Pandavs and the Brajabashis.

Shree Govind was quite relaxed, having successfully completed a great yagna. He ambled to where his father Nand was sitting. Ram soon joined them. Whilst at the residence of Yashoda in the Upaban, all the Brajabashis were also provided with delicious food and drink. Jatila and Kutila enjoyed their fare. Annapurna organised separately for the ladies of the Yadav and Pandav families to partake various delicacies with her.

While in Nikunjaban, after one hundred years, Radhika ate her first sumptuous meal in front of her Lord.

This was the end of the yagna at Prabas. It was the meeting point of Radha and Krishna after one hundred years.

This was Krishna leela at Prabas tirth. Listen hê restless mind; this is the most precious wealth of life. The more you hear about Krishna leela, the more blessed you will be.

