

Free Write Journal #24

January 4, 2019

I'm looking at Radha-Govinda. I mentioned to Krsna dasi that I thought Radharani's blouse was slightly crooked. She explained to me that this was the way it had to be because She is in a dancing pose with Her head tilted. I was satisfied by her explanation, and I can take *darsana* without fault-finding. They are wearing a light-purple outfit which has no sewn embroidery but a painting done carefully. On Radharani's skirt, at the border, there are two deer and many flowers. Never think the *arca-vigraha* is metal or any material element. It is *sac-cid-ananda-vigraha*. This is the version of the *sastra: arce visnu siladhir . . .*” One who thinks that the Deity is made of material elements (and thinks that the Vaisnava has to belong to a certain caste, etc.) dwells in hell. I peacefully look at Radha-Govinda and receive Their *darsana*.

Hare Krsna. I want to speak confidentially. Dr. Shruti Singh wrote me that she likes my writings because they “humanize Krsna consciousness.” She wrote that it's important to discuss Krsna conscious philosophy, but sometimes it's done in such an esoteric and “pure” way that those devotees who are struggling on the path are made to feel shy or ashamed. But my

writing doesn't do that to readers. I empathize with their struggles and present myself as one who also finds obstacles on his path.

I received a letter from Japa-yajna at Bhaktivedanta Manor. I hadn't heard from him in many years. He wrote me that he is doing well, engaged in a "soft edge" program called "Gratitude," in which they distribute large amounts of *prasadam* to innocent people. Japa-yajna works with Parasurama. Parasurama is a genius in that he can gather enough food to feed 2,000 people a day. That's a lot of purifying *prasadam*. I offer my obeisances to him. Japa-yajna is living with his family near Bhaktivedanta Manor, and he's also very much involved in the Deity worship of Radha-Madhava in Leicester. He wrote he feels that he's failed me as a disciple, and he's embarrassed about things he said in the past. I wrote back and told him that if he's pleasing his authorities in the U.K., then he's pleasing to me. I forgive him for any unsavory things he said about me in the past.

I also received an email from Dr./ Ms. Shruti Singh. She has her first job as a doctor, with a practice in northwest Indiana. She told me that the year 2018 was very difficult for her, but as soon as her twins were born, things changed. She likes being a mother, and she no longer dwells in sadness or self-pity but looks at things in the bigger picture.

Lord Caitanya's teachings to Sanatana Gosvami have sections which

are so technical and repetitive that it's hard to savor them. I refer to the listing of the twenty-four Visnus, each named differently according to how He holds the weapons in His hands. It's repeated in the verse and then also in the purport. It seems that it's repeated several times. And then the different categories of *vilasa* and *vaibhava*, etc., get a little tedious. We are trying to read everything that's in the book and not skip over, but we're looking forward to reaching sections with more narratives of Caitanya Mahaprabhu's pastimes.

This is supposed to be unobstructed free writing, but I am pausing and facing blocks. I have to cut through and stop censoring myself or editing myself and just write what comes to mind.

Ramila is my representative in Mayapura. She held a one-person Vyasa-puja there, gathering materials and cooking and inviting guests to her house. When she bathes every day in the Ganges, she says a prayer and dedicates the bathing to me. She also offers various prayers and thinks of me. So although I cannot go to Mayapura, I have a representative there who is offering me sacrifices and devotional service in separation. In this way I feel connected to Mayapura. I don't think I could do it by going there, but I'm grateful that Ramila is there performing her service and offering it to me.

I read the news magazine, but it was mostly a diversion from my spiritual life. I'm addicted to keeping informed of the worldly news. I think it has some value since I'm a "citizen" of the world, even though I am detached from material affairs.

*Rama! Raghava Rama! Raghava Raksamam/ Krsna! Kesava!
Krsna! Kesava Krsna! Krsna! Raksamam!* This was the mantra that Lord Caitanya used to chant while He was walking and walking on His southern tour of India. It is a wonderful chant, and to think of Caitanya Mahaprabhu singing it brings bliss: "*Krsna! Krsna! Krsna! Krsna! Pahimam! . . .*"

My disciple Jiva-tattva in Spain is dedicated to developing rural living and inviting other devotees to take part. But he said it's not possible financially to live a simple life growing your own food. There has to be some other source of income, and he doesn't know what it is. That used to be the problem at Gita-nagari. We sent out a collecting party (selling paintings) of women who had a quota of \$40,000 that they tried to make in a month. The money was spent on expenses at the farm. The farm did not bring in money. So the problem isn't solved.

Hare Krsna. I read in a news magazine a page about happiness. They said one should keep a diary of things you are grateful for. This will help

make you happy.

I am most grateful that I met a pure devotee, A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, and that he accepted me as his disciple, and gave me many assignments to do. I made mistakes in doing them, but he always kept me and gave me respect because, “You do what I say.”

I am grateful to Saci-suta for giving me this house to stay in. The deal is that I can stay here for the duration of my life. I don't feel like moving somewhere else. We have a nice *ashrama* with Baladeva and I and Bala and Krsna dasi. There is also a constant stream of visitors. So I am grateful to have been given this place, which I call Viraha Bhavan, where I worship Sri-Sri Radha-Govinda.

I am grateful to have Krsna dasi as the *pujari* of Radha-Govinda. She changes Their clothes every three days, so there is wonderful variety in the *darsana* as we gaze upon Them in the variety of outfits made by the master *mukut-walla* in Vrndavana, Tapan.

I am grateful to the GBC committee who investigated me and allowed me to retain the *sannyasa* order and keep disciples who are faithful to me.

I am grateful for the service of the *Free Write Journal*, which I do for my readers and post weekly for their enlivenment.

I am grateful that when we eat meals, a few of us gather together and

we read out loud from Prabhupada's books.

I am grateful that I have tolerable health. My immobility (disabled foot, which makes me unable to walk except by pushing a four-wheeled carriage or holding onto a man's two hands) -- I tolerate this confinement and am not saddened by it. It is all Krsna's mercy, and I am only getting a token reaction for my sinful deeds. Or rather, Krsna is just personally handling me this way. He is leading me on a peaceful path that leads back to Godhead.

So I am grateful for *everything*. Not a blade of grass moves but by the will of the Lord. I don't like this material world with all its threats, cheating, politics and wars. It is not a fit place for a gentleman. If I am sincere about this, actually detached from material pleasure, and following in the footsteps of guru and Krsna, then I am on the safe path protected by the internal energy. Krsna says in *Bhagavad-gita*, "Tell it boldly, Arjuna, My devotee never perishes."

I am grateful that Lord Caitanya has given us the *maha-mantra* as the only way to attain God consciousness in this age of Kali.

I am at a roadblock. Can't think of what to write or say. Believe in God. Believe in the process of writing. Believe you can reach people and

help them. Be grateful you have a few more years in which to serve your master. I know I will have a chance to continue this service after the end of this present body. I don't know what form or shape that will take, but it is guaranteed. Those who have a strong desire to serve Krsna will be given the opportunity to do so in the next life. So don't be afraid of death. You will get a new body with youth and no big disabilities. You will not use the body for sense gratification. You have indulged in enough sense gratification in this lifetime. You know better now. Lord Caitanya says, "*Na dhanam na janam na sundarim . . .*" I do not want great learning or a beautiful woman, many followers, or anything. All I want is to have Your causeless devotional service in my life, birth after birth.

I am chanting the Hare Krsna mantra by this free writing. It is a way of praying and calling to Radha and Krsna, to Gaura-Nitai. I want to break through the superficialities and touch something deep and valuable. I can do it by Krsna's grace, if He is kind to me. We each have a minute amount of free will, so if I use that free will in serving Krsna, I will be all right. I am grateful for that small amount of free will, and I pray not to misuse it and get covered by *maya*. Prabhupada, please help me. You reply, "God helps those who help themselves." I already know what my Prabhupada wants. I just have to use my free will and not misuse it and ruin the gift I have been

given. All glories to all the Vaisnava devotees of the world. All glories to my spiritual master, who wrote, “I am never displeased with any member.” He can be hard as a thunderbolt, or soft as a rose. “You have the right, you hold the mace . . .” O my beloved spiritual master, kindly keep me in the shade of your lotus feet. Everything is going on by Krsna’s arrangement. If we just cooperate for Him, then it will be auspicious for us. *Jivera svarupa haya-krsnera nitya-dasa*: We are the eternal servants of Krsna.

I wrote a book titled *Human at Best*. The meaning is that the best human is a devotee of the Lord. A “best human” tries to share Krsna consciousness with others. I didn’t mean to say “human at best” in a negative sense (“only a human, not a spirit soul”). It was not meant for atheists or humanists. But I meant the best human is one who, even though imperfectly, engages himself or herself in full devotional service. That’s what I mean by a human at best. It’s a book containing short edited excerpts from the volumes of *Every Day, Just Write*. There is a humility in the title. I am only human. I try my best. I am not a demigod or a *visnu-tattva* or a *mahabhagavata*. I am a human at best, and that’s pretty good.

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January 5, 2019

Radha-kunda is very dear to Radharani. She used to sport in Radha-kunda, and sometimes Krsna would join Her. In the course of time, the location of the *kunda* became lost. When Lord Caitanya traveled to Vrndavana, He discovered the location of Radha-kunda. It was just a small amount of water, but He bathed in it and declared that it was Radha-kunda. Since then, it has been excavated, and Radha-kunda and Syama-kunda are sizeable ponds. Radha-kunda is also the *bhajana* place of Raghunatha dasa Gosvami. Of Raghunatha dasa it is said that his *sadhana* or *bhajana* was like lines etched in a stone. In other words, it could not be erased. He was so steady. He slept only an hour and a half out of twenty-four and ate very little. He made *dandavats* to Vaisnavas many times, and he chanted a fixed quota of 100,000 names. He wrote valuable books like *Vilapa-kusumanjali*, and a book of prayers, *Stavavali*, and other writings. Raghunatha Gosvami's tomb is still at Radha-kunda, on the bank. A small group of *babajis* rotate and perform 24-hour *kirtana* by his memorial tomb. Radha-kunda is Raghunatha's place. Devotees take a few drops of Radha-kunda and sprinkle it on their heads. Others who are more adventuresome take a

dip in Radha-kunda or even swim there. Prabhupada's practice was just to take a few drops on his head. When he heard that a few of his disciples were sporting frivolously in the waters of Radha-kunda, he became angry. I have a small container of Radha-kunda that was given to me by a book-distributor *brahmacari*. When I think of it, I sprinkle some drops on my head and I feel I have accomplished the *tirtha*-going. You can go to Radha-kunda in your mind.

We are having angel-hair spaghetti and soft Italian bread for lunch today. It is offered up to all the Deities in the *ashrama*, and then we take. I wrote to a devotee who was worried about indulging in sense gratification while eating *prasadam*. I told her not to worry because once it is offered to the Lord, the prayer states, "Now let us take this *prasadam* to our full satisfaction." Lord Caitanya and His devotees ate *prasadam* sumptuously, and so did Krsna and His friends, either home at Nandagrama or having a picnic with the boys during the day while they were herding the cows. You can enjoy *prasadam*, but don't eat too much. I don't eat too much, but still I am overweight. Baladeva says it may be a thyroid issue that increases the weight.

I am repeating myself. I want to present something new for the devotees. Something fresh and innovative. But when I look into my

cupboard, I see only canned food. Let us offer something fresh and tasty.

Haryasva is in the house, but instead of meeting with him I'm doing this writing practice for the *Free Write Journal*. But I can't seem to do actual free writing. Free writing means you just write whatever comes to mind. You don't edit it or say you can't think of anything to say. Rather, we are advised, "Don't think. Just keep the hand moving." I'm willing to do that. I have taken a vow not to listen to any more jazz in this lifetime. It is a heavy *vrata*. It is a serious proposal because I want to have my mind clear to hear Krsna and Prabhupada at the time of my death, and not to have other music or thoughts in my mind. So I shall keep the *vrata*. I shipped all my jazz CDs to Sankirtana dasa (Sam Walker), who is a jazz guitarist. I asked him to try to sell some of them. He sent me a check for \$200, so I guess he made some sales.

One reason I can't do "wild-mind" free writing is that I'm avoiding *prajalpa*. But you have to risk that if you really want to write freely; you have to be confident that something good will come, that you will break through, even if for the time being you are not steering to Krsna. Take it in the zig-zag path--to truth. I am a servant of the servant of the servant of the Vaisnavas, a thousand times removed. I cannot say I am a devotee of Krsna or Radha but that I am a devotee of Their authentic devotees. I read an

article about loneliness. It said that many people are suffering from loneliness. I don't think I am. I see few people, Godbrothers or Godsisters, but I do not feel distressed, lonely. I like my own company, and I like to express my thoughts. I like it when it can come out Krsna conscious. I'm trying to do this by allowing myself to write freely. It is a little scary, like climbing up a pole.

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January 6, 2019

A diamond in the rough. I think of the pastime of the fruit vendor calling out her wares: "If anyone wants fruits, please come!" Child Krsna went forward with His hands filled with grains to barter with her, but by the time He reached her almost all of the grains had fallen out of His little hands. She was kind to Him and gave Him plenty of fruits. As a result, her basket became filled with jewels. So I'm thinking analogously that in my writing session I'm losing most of the grains in my hand, but the fruit vendor is kind to me and gives me a piece of fruit, and I take a single diamond out of the stash of jewels in her basket. Something like that. A diamond in the rough.

Today we're having guests for lunch: Ravindra Svarupa, Saudamani devi dasi, Ravindra's secretary, Sraddha devi dasi, and my disciple from Idaho, Upendra. Manohara is making ravioli and a traditional Indian sweet.

The lion usually kills the elephant. In a Gaudiya Math temple I saw a carving of a lion attacking an elephant. The lion was on the back of the elephant with its claws extended, drawing blood. The symbol is that the Vaisnavas are attacking the Mayavadi impersonalists. They attack with logical argument and *sastric* evidence. They cannot bear to hear the impersonalist description of the Absolute as having no form, and their goal being to merge into the impersonal effulgence. The Mayavadis are very influential in the world. But when they meet with the Vaisnava-lion, they are usually defeated.

Sanskrit knowledge is not required. Prabhupada used to say, "We want *sruti*, not *sanskriti*." He translated the Sanskrit *sastras* into modern English. In this way he unlocked the treasure which was buried in the Sanskrit language. Now his books are translated in many languages and his disciples are writing many books in English and other languages. Hare Krsna.

"Damn the torpedoes! Full speed ahead!" How reckless and daring

was that order! He didn't want to be afraid of the enemy's torpedoes, although if he was hit by one, his ship would be sunk and lives would be lost. But he was not afraid of the torpedoes and traveled full speed ahead. That is a famous battle cry.

I cry, "Damn the editors and censors, let me go full speed ahead, writing down whatever comes." Sure, I'd like to take shelter of Krsna's lotus feet, and I do so. But I want to write freely and follow my mind's dictation.

I don't want to dive into extensive non-Krsna conscious topics. But I want to be a cutting edge of honesty and truth. That is a humble way to go. Now let us praise famous men and women.

Kesava Bharati Maharaja described my preaching as "sprinkling pixie dust." I don't know exactly what he meant by that, but I don't think it was intended as an insult. I don't mind sprinkling pixie dust, as long as it's Krsna conscious. Pixie dust is something magical. When you sprinkle it, a little miracle occurs. The hearers are uplifted and nourished. It was Ms. Shruti Singh who wrote to me, "You humanize Krsna conscious philosophy." I was very encouraged by that estimation of my contribution.

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January 7, 2019

I explained to Manohara the difference between free writing and “steering to Krsna.” He was interested in free writing but didn’t know much about it and seemed to prefer I do steering to Krsna. My two volumes of *My Dear Lord Krsna* are all separate prayers to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. They are serious meditations. Jayadvaita Swami thought that they were “superexcellent,” and they are certainly all Krsna conscious. Now I am stuck somewhere different than that. I am trying to express myself spontaneously. I am not satisfied with always staying on a Krsna conscious topic, but I don’t want to waste my time.

My dear Lord Krsna, please give me the grace to write something for Your pleasure. Manohara just told me about Krsnadasa Kaviraja’s writing how Krsna has 24^{1/2} moons on His body. Visvanatha Cakravarti studied this section of *Caitanya-caritamrta* and couldn’t understand where the “half-moon” came from. It had to do with the *kama-gayatri* mantra. He’s going to show me some evidence that he researched from the scriptures. The story is that Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura was so perplexed over not being able to understand why Krsnadasa Kaviraja wrote about the half-

moon that he decided to give up his life. But Srimati Radharani came to him in a dream and referred him to a *sastric* book where he would find the explanation. Radharani told him to look into the book *Varnagama-Bhasvadi*. In that book it is stated, “The *ya* in ‘*kamadevaya*’ counts as a half-syllable because it is followed by the *vi* in ‘*vidmahe*.’ The *kama-gayatri* mantra has twenty-four and a half syllables.” He went to the book, where it is explained that the half-syllable is actually in the *kama-gayatri* mantra. She also told him that She, as well as Krsna, is alluded to in this mantra. Due to this dream, Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura was relieved and did not have to give up his life.