

Free Write Journal #67

Free Writes

Devotional Topics

The topic is the nine principles of devotional service: *sravanam*, *kirtanam*, *visnu-smaranam*, *pada-sevanam*, *arcanam*, *vandanam*, *dasyam*, *sakhyam* and *atma-nivedanam*. All of them or one of them can grant perfection. The topic is the five most important items in *bhakti*: chanting the holy names, reading *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, living in the holy *dhama*, worshiping the Deity, and associating with the Lord's devotees. The topic is the three stages in Krsna consciousness: *sambhanda* (developing a relationship), *abhideya* (engaging in activities) and *prayojana* (attaining the goal—love of Godhead). The topic is the progressive stages of devotional service:

adau sraddha tatah sadhu-

sango 'tha bhajana-kriya

tato 'nartha-nivrttih syat

tato nistha rucis tatah

athasaktis tato bhavas

tatah premabhyudancati

*sadhakanam ayam premnah
pradurbhave bhavet kramah*

(Cc. *Madhya* 23, 14-15)



“*Prakṛta-bhakta, madhyama-adhikari, uttama-adhikari*



“Stages of eternal relationship with Kṛṣṇa: *santa, dasya, sakhya, vatsalya, madhurya-rasa.*



“Forms of life and residences: animal species; human form; heavenly planets;



“Brahmaloka; impersonal *brahmajyoti*; Vaikuntha-lokas; Goloka Vrndavana.



“Stages of advancement: *karmi, jnani, yogi, mixed-bhakta, pure devotee.*



“Stages of persons from lowest to highest: *mleccha, sudra, vaisya, ksatriya, brahmana, Vaisnava.*

Dhamas

Vrndavana (Radha and Kṛṣṇa): *Jaya Radhe!*



Mayapura: Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu and associates.



Ekacakra: Lord Nityananda.



Jagannatha Puri: Jagannatha, Subhadra, Balarama. Lord Caitanya's holy places.



Mumbai: ISKCON Juhu, Chowpatti, Eco-village.



Tirupati: Balaji



Jaipur: Govindaji.



Dvaraka: Dvarakadisa.



Bhadarikasrama: Nara-Narayana.



Ayodhya: Lord Ramacandra and associates.



Udupi: Bala-Krsna (established by Madhvacarya).



Benares: Mayavadi stronghold; burning *ghats*.



Haridwar: the place where people go to put their ancestors' ashes before Visnu for the upliftment of their souls.



The Holy Rivers: Yamuna and Ganges



Allahabad: the place where the Kumbha-mela is held. Confluence of Yamuna, Ganga and Sarasvati rivers. Millions of pilgrims gather on the designated holy days.



Any ISKCON temple anywhere in the world: Prabhupada said these temples are not in London or New York or Los Angeles—they are in the spiritual world, transcendental to the material world.

Ocean

Kali-yuga is an ocean of vices. But there is one great thing: Lord Caitanya introduced the holy names of God—chanting the Hare Krsna mantra. Rupa Gosvami

wrote *Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu*, the “ocean of devotion,” divided into different waves. The main thing is devotional service, love of God, Krsna. The material ocean is vast and difficult to control. But from the mercy that comes from serving Krsna, that ocean is shrunk up to the size of a calf’s hoof, and one can easily cross over it. The ocean of devotion is full of bliss; it is eternal and full of knowledge. One gets to associate with Krsna as His servant, friend, parent or lover.

The Moon

When one looks up at the moon, one sees the impression of a rabbit. The Sanskrit word for moon even includes the word “rabbit.” Prabhupada asserts that the astronauts didn’t actually go to the moon. One can only go to the moon by performing pious activities. It is not a place of dust and rocks and no living entities. The moon is very opulent. The moon-god controls the mind. Its residents are devotees. The Yadu dynasty are descended from Soma, the moon-god. The Vedic literature states that the light from the sun is illuminating the moon.

The moon rays nourish vegetation on earth. If the moon is merely made up of dust and rocks, then how can its rays nourish the vegetables on earth? For so many reasons, the moon landing is invalidated by Vedic knowledge. Prabhupada opines that the astronauts may have landed on the malefic planet Rahu, which blocks the moon during an eclipse.

Maharaja Pariksit Cursed

The King was out on tour, but he became hungry and thirsty. He stopped at the cottage of the *brahmana* Samika Rsi and asked for a drink of water. The sage was deep in trance and did not respond to the King. It was unprecedented that Maharaja Pariksit should become harassed by thirst. He had tolerated the heat of the *brahmastra* while he was in the womb. It was also extraordinary that the King became angry and envious of the sage for ignoring him. Maharaja Pariksit draped a dead snake as a garland around Samika Rsi and left his cottage. When Samika Rsi's young son Sringeri heard what had happened, he became unnecessarily furious. He said to his playmates that the King, as a *ksatriya*, had no right to enter a superior *brahmana's* cottage. He called the King a watchdog and a crow. With his brahminical power, the boy cursed the King: "In seven days, a snake-bird will bite the King and he will die." When Samika Rsi heard about the curse, he greatly lamented. He told his son he had committed a great sin and offense. Sukadeva Gosvami explains that the only reason Maharaja Pariksit became thirsty and angry was that it was the will of the Lord to make the King detached and spend his last seven days hearing *Srimad-Bhagavatam* from Sukadeva Gosvami, for his liberation and the deliverance of the whole world.

Prayer, *Brahmacaris*

I asked my Godbrother what it actually meant when I pray to Prabhupada and Krsna for protection. He replied that they protect you from *maya*, and you pray that they always engage you in their service. Yes, and pray that I constantly remember

Krsna by reading *Srimad-Bhagavatam*.

I met with two young *brahmacaris* (21 and 25 years old) who are traveling in a van distributing Prabhupada's books. They said it's like being in the spiritual world when they talk about Krsna to a college student. Their diet is granola in the morning and *kichari* in the afternoon, same thing every day. One told me his spiritual master ordered him, "Be happy in Krsna consciousness and become an ISKCON *diksa-guru*." They are graduates of the Krsna House in Gainesville, Florida. Kalakantha is in charge, and he seems to be a genius. They said the Krsna House is happy and lighthearted.

From *Writing In Gratitude: Collected Poems, 1992-1994*

"After Reading, and After the Rain"

"We read together. The rain had just stopped
and was pouring down the eaves.

(Now as I write this, the toot
of the Radharani express, 5:00 P.M.)

While he read Prabhupada,

I was watching a hawk
partly concealed on a leafy branch.

He had orange feet and

kept fluffing his white plumage.

(Earlier I saw a brave chipmunk
teasing that hawk.)

“The Lord’s mercy comes in His Names
to whomever He decides to give it.

“We didn’t talk much. I
thought, ‘Whoever hears a tape of this reading will notice
the Vrndavana parrots and
the rain left over, pouring off the eaves.’

“As I write, I see my Godbrother
Kundali walking the long roof
chanting *japa* and probably thinking.
Maybe he sees me writing
this poem. Say it’s for him.”

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“Half-Moon”

“Parrots screech

‘Hooo!’ A man tries to lure
 the monkey on the wall.
 Don’t give up. The man is pacing
 the long roof, and I’m writing with
 attention to Vrndavana dusk.
 Pink in cloud.
 Last blue in sky.
 Parrots parrots parrots,
 the feedback in a P.A. system
 and babbling Hindi lectures.
 Don’t stop pacing,
 your heart is beating.
 in devotional service.”

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“Stumbling”

“In the cold,
 stumbling in the heavy sand-dirt,
 all dark. In the distance,
 a temple dome with a light on top.
 My thoughts are not a pure devotee’s.

Thinking Western thoughts
 while walking on Vraja ground.
 In the distance the road is blocked
 by an ox pulling a cart.
 We pass them in silence.
 Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna.

“Without some yearning,
 what is the use of staying
 in Vrndavana?
 O Vrndavana forest,
 please be kind to me.”

From Memory in the Service of Krsna

“Ajamila continued: ‘I am a shameless cheater who has killed his *brahminical* culture. Indeed, I am sin personified. Where am I in comparison to the all-auspicious chanting of the holy name of Lord Narayana? (*Srimad-Bhagavatam* 6.2.34):

“Those engaged in broadcasting the holy name of Narayana, Krsna, through the Krsna Consciousness

Movement should always consider what our position was before we came and what it is now. We had fallen into abominable lives as meat-eaters, drunkards and woman-hunters who performed all kinds of sinful activities, but now we have been given an opportunity to chant the Hare Krsna mantra. Therefore we should always appreciate this opportunity. . . . We must be conscious of the difference between our present and past conditions, and we should always be very careful not to fall from the most exalted life.”

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“I had returned to my parents’ home once again, although only for an overnight visit. They were not happy to see me with my long hair and scraggly beard and no job. I wasn’t happy with me either, but I also rejected their dreamland of middle class contentment. I had been trying for over a year to break away from their control by living on the Lower East Side of Manhattan ‘on my own.’ I had come to visit Mom and Dad because I had completely run out of money and didn’t know who else to turn to. I needed money for food, rent and intoxicants. I knew they would not support me, but I thought they would at least give me ten bucks; with that much, I could buy a few days’ food and then figure out what to do next.

“My year’s experiment in Bohemian living was exciting to me, but I had also learned some bitter disappointments. As my father remarked sarcastically, ‘You’re trying to act like a big cat in the jungle, but you’re just a pussycat.’ What he said seemed true, and it hurt. But at least I wasn’t like him, selling out to ‘the system.’

“I was so uneasy that night that I didn’t eat much at the supper table, although I was hungry. My mother must have known, and so while I was up in my room—the same boy’s room I had lived in as a child and as an adolescent—my mother came and brought me another plate of food, ‘just in case you’re hungry.’ I thanked her, and she left me alone.

“I was about to eat the warm, wholesome meal when I became overwhelmed with anger and grief. The meal represented my parents’ false idea of happiness. I revolted at the idea of eating it, and at the same time I very much wanted it. I was starving, but I couldn’t eat. I wanted food and I wanted love, but I couldn’t get it. Who could help me? I had already rejected a personal God, along with my faith in family and nation. So it was too late to turn to ‘Him.’ In a violent mood, I took the plate and threw it in the garbage pail. Then I knelt, gnashing my teeth and crying bitter tears. I faced a dead end.

“By the grace of Srila Prabhupada, I will never have to go through that again.”

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Truthfulness, the Last Leg of Religion (1989, Gita-nagari Press)

“Age of Hypocrisy”

“Psychologists cannot comprehend transcendental reality, but some of their analyses are applicable to devotees as well as nondevotees. The psychologist Kohlberg outlined stages of moral development which he conceived of as universal. He claimed there was no observable difference in moral behavior based on the fact that one belonged to a particular religion. In other words, young Christian boys were not more morally developed than were Buddhists, or vice-versa. What is of interest, for our purposes, in the moral development stages outlined by Kohlberg, is that they are similar to stages of development for a Vaisnava according to Rupa Gosvami. Researchers Malinowski and Smith describe Kohlberg's model as follows:

“In his cognitive developmental theory, Kohlberg postulates an invariant sequence of stages of moral development beginning with obedience to external rules and fear of punishment, and culminating in adherence to self-chosen universal principles of justice.’

“Is this not similar to the progress of a devotee from initial behavior based on the rules and regulations, followed by voluntary submission in love to Lord Krsna?”

“We should not be bewildered by the fact that there are moral discrepancies among aspiring Vaisnavas. Wrong behavior is never condoned, but the devotees are always optimistic about the benefits, spiritually and materially, that will be accrued by a steady following of the *bhakti-marga*.”

Writing Sessions

I titled this series of excerpts *Karttika Papers*, penned in four notepads, done in the Damodara month 1994 on pilgrimage to Mayapura. I call it “Papers” to indicate loose and unbound. The writing is done by one who is an ISKCON institutional *sannyasi* and a free write contemplative.

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“So, this is my India writing, begun three days before the day we are due to fly to Bombay. The van travel and ‘Travel Diary’ is over, and today starts Karttika, so I thought I’d begin again. Shall it be a series of writing sessions or a conglomerate of various genres? Will I find it too confining to call it a book? I thought of ‘Karttika Papers,’ which sounds a

bit self-important. But ‘Papers’ it is. At least ‘Papers’ (as in *Pickwick Papers*) avoids the use of words like ‘Notes,’ ‘Journal,’ ‘Diary,’ ‘Writing,’ etc., which I’ve used before.

“One reason I like the word ‘Papers’ is that it implies loose, unbound. A book is bound, confined to beginning, middle and end, and neat, thematic chapters. Papers are loose.

“William Carlos Williams wrote in his *Imaginations*, ‘I can write what I damn please when I damn please.’ I am not defiant toward my spiritual master or to Lord Krsna—at least I hope I’m not. My whole purpose is to find my fullest free self and surrender—give what I have—in loving service to the Lord and His pure devotee. But I need some defiance to others.

“I defy the sense of literary propriety which tells me, ‘You can’t write so much diary stuff; don’t write about specific ISKCON issues and controversies. Don’t put unrehearsed poems in here as if they matter. Such things have to be very carefully edited and rewritten. You must decide whether your ‘work’ will be a series of timed writing sessions or a story or a timed book or a synthesis of these genres.’

“I don’t have to conform to any of that. Neither do I have to feel, ‘You must do something you never did before—an experience to go beyond yourself.’

“Instead, I wrote myself this note: ‘Do what I like and what helps. As Krsna conscious as possible, but who I am.’”

(Notepad #1

pp. 9-10)

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“I write these words here to encourage myself to write as honestly as possible during this Karttika trip to India. I don’t need to be concerned with craft in the usual sense, with creation of drama and how to affect the reader, or with selling a piece on the writer’s market. My discipline is to tell the truth. I need to trust deeply that the life of attempting Krsna consciousness is very valuable, and the honest description of it is a valuable service to others. The ordinary or external description of it will not be as valuable as the very truthful one. I shouldn’t pinch myself into thinking I’ve gone as far as I can in honest expression. I could be guilty of indulgence if I hit a certain groove and then write along complacently, reporting on that level without attempting to go further.

“So I have to first write for myself, my confession before God and guru. I don’t however want to keep repeating, ‘I can’t chant well. Today again I didn’t chant well, I’m a nerd, etc.’ Anyway, there will be

repetition. I also know that I do write to communicate to readers as well as myself. I keep that in the assumed background.

“Face it: face yourself. Tell the little story, the big story. Feel it’s important. This isn’t barely the umpteenth time I’m going to India. It’s the edge of my life, my last chance before death to make as much progress as possible before going back to Godhead. Please, soul and mind and right hand, write freely and cut deeply into the true story of what Krsna is doing in your life. It’s not a story of only failed attempts. Neither is it one already written, already decided and shaped. Write, save yourself and make it as good as possible.”

*(Notepad #1,
pp. 12-13)*

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“Basho’s advice on writing haiku, while not explicitly Krsna conscious, can be applied in Krsna consciousness: ‘When composing a verse, let there be not a hair’s breadth separating your mind from what you write; composition of a poem must be done in an instant, like a woodcutter felling a huge tree, or a swordsman leaping at a dangerous enemy.’

“All right.”

(Notepad #1,
p. 13)

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“At the *Roma fattoria* of ISKCON, many large bags of wheat from their own crop, stacked under the porch roof, got their own wheat grinder . . . I spoke a lecture and thought, ‘Okay, serviceable, a Prabhupada man’s lecture, now let’s hear their questions.’ But they didn’t inspire me. One was too technical. I like a question which makes us all feel and think, ‘How can we improve?’, not ‘Which planets exactly are destroyed at the end of Brahma’s day, and how does that correspond with Maha-Visnu’s exhalation and inhalation?’ Ask for yourself. ‘Speak for yourself, John.’

“What about me? How will I go back to Godhead? (John Alden asked on behalf of Miles Standish: ‘Speak for yourself, John,’ said the Princess, who did like John, and he liked her. I don’t remember the outcome.)

“‘Didja have milk after one month fast?’

“‘Yessir!’

“‘Didja blink?’

“‘I did, sir, and I

noted he gave me old bread

when I would have preferred

new, hot porridge.’

‘What’s this got to do with

your salvation? Don’t you need

one hundred percent free of material desire?’

‘Yessir, I do have to be.’

‘And are you?’

“I am attached to too many comforts indeed. And say, showing my free pass awarded on a monthly basis to Staten Island commuters—

‘yukta vairagya. The train conductor nods. But then (in this fantasy) he returns to me and says, “This is not a back to Godhead pass, you know.’

“It’s good for this month, isn’t it?” I ask. He says, “Yes. But the month ends soon, so I’m just warning you to get a *BTG* pass before it’s too late.”

“And where can you get them?”

“In your heart.”

“I blabbed, ‘I said the right thing, but no one asked a good question, maybe knowing I couldn’t help them.’ I said, ‘We should be as determined as was Hiranyakasipu.’ He said, ‘I am eternal and time is eternal, so if I cannot get my heart’s desire in one life, I’ll get it in future lives—I’ll go on with my austerity.’ I said, ‘Let us go on with desire to attain the lotus feet of the Lord in ‘pure devotional service.’

(Notepad #1,
pp. 15-17)

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Writing Session

Karttika Papers (CONTINUED)

“Notepad #2”

“The verse for tomorrow is 1.10.9-10. It means *viraha* or separation from Lord Krsna as felt by the residents of Hastinapura when the Lord left from there to return to Dvaraka. In the purport, Prabhupada states that we forget Krsna only due to *maya* (‘the spell of the illusory energy’). The feeling of separation cannot be described, but it can simply be imagined by devotees only. After His separation from Vrndavana and the innocent rural cowherd boys, girls, ladies and others, they all felt shock throughout their lives, and the separation of Radharani, the most beloved Cowherd Girl, is beyond expression.

“It’s a juicy subject for a lecture, and may be relevant even in our neophyte condition. I’m thinking of an outline as follows:

1. Define and describe *viraha* and *vipralambha* (in connection with *sambhoga*)
2. Say how this is different than the ‘separation’ the forgetful conditioned soul feels from God.
3. We may start to feel a shadow of this as we practice Krsna consciousness and feel sorry that we are separated ourselves from Krsna.
4. We also feel it in relation to His pure devotee, Srila Prabhupada.
5. It’s expressed in *Siksastakam*, ‘Feeling Your separation, I am considering a moment to be like twelve years . . . *govinda-virahena me.*’
6. It’s felt in all Vrndavana (and other) *rasas* with Krsna.
7. Read *Krsna* book, Chapter 34: ‘Those who are in the disciplic succession of the Madhva-Gaudiya *sampradaya* should also feel the separation of Krsna.’
8. See *Krsna* book, Chapter 45: ‘Any book of *krsna-lila*, even this book *Krsna*, or our *TLC*, is actually solace for the devotees feeling the separation of Krsna.’
9. It can only be imagined. It is very sad, and yet it is a transcendental ecstasy.’

10 See *Krsna* book, Chapter 46, p. 385: ‘Lord Caitanya taught people in general the method of *vipralambha seva* . . . Absorption in Krsna consciousness by feeling separation is thus the quickest method for attainment of the lotus feet of Krsna.

“So it’s not only a very high and esoteric teaching but one recommended for all devotees in our *sampradaya*.”

(Notepad #2
pp.73-75)

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“Can you write a sonnet
on Govardhana-Puja or anything
at all you read? Sanatana
said, ‘Please bless me to write.’
And the Lord said, ‘Yes,
whatever you write,
by the grace of Krsna, will
come out of your heart and will
be accepted as you have requested.’

“Lord Caitanya then gave him notes like He dictated it, and

Sanatana either noted it down with a pen or mentally retained it, all the things he would write in *Hari-bhakti-vilasa* and other books. Yeah, it was like that.”

(Notepad #2,
p. 75)

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“As for the daily writing, I like the idea of doing writing sessions as I did last year’s in Vrndavana, really unbridled, improvised, like playing a jazz guitar . . . and break into line division and automatic writing, where you don’t think, and the hand moves, and you allow things to come out. In that sense, don’t expect neat impressions of Mayapura for a guidebook. It may turn out to be feelings churned that are not Mayapura per se, but it happens while you are in Mayapura.

“Let the junk come out, your inability, your feeling that you are being ruffled the wrong way, etc. I will accommodate your howl, your whimper, your irascible self.

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“Notepad #3, Mayapura”

“First Night in Mayapura”

“Tiny bugs, I don’t kill them but
they gather on the white marble desk.
More and more, I don’t kill them but
they die. Gather their corpses, then you
spill a cup of drinking water,
and the river floods
the tiny bugs under the hot
desk lamp.

People are dying, that nice old lady
in Vrndavana, and an AIDS-afflicted devotee
of Krsna in Italy, and I am all right.

“Yes, I am all right; I just arrived today
in Mayapura, had breakfast at the mango grove
where Prabhupada used to stop.

‘Prabhupada? Did he die? No. But
did he pass on? Did Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati
pass on?’ ‘Yes, long ago, 1935.’ ‘And Lord
Caitanya, didn’t He leave too? Doesn’t a
human being stay here only briefly,
even *avatars* nowadays?’

“And you? I told you, I’m fine.

Only a headache often and little

things—I don’t like *gur* in

my milk. I don’t like

to read so many letters from disciples whose
marriages have busted up.

“So this is the fact—that people die and

plan stays but the River Ganges moves, constantly moves,
constantly moves.

There’s a kind of music you can make now,

and it lasts and people can hear it later.

‘Jazz is now,’ said the jazz photographer.

“But next life . . .

This is my first day in Mayapura and I am not
perfect, not even aware of Lord Caitanya’s
personal presence. And yet the *dhama* is so
merciful, I get the benefit just to sleep here.

And *Navadvipa-mahatmya* says there is
no offense

even if you overeat. In Kali-yuga all
tirthas have diminished, but not Navadvipa.
 This is the benefit of living in the *dhama*.”

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Writing Sessions, done in Mayapura, 1994:

“God, You do exist.
 The world is full of doubt.
 But Prabhupada is not in
 the slightest and I am his *sisya*.
 Walking with him in Hyderabad in 1974.
 When he said the world is full
 of doubt but following him I swallow it,
 I now living to the bottom of
 this page. Glad the devotees are
 in this world and let the world notice them even
 if they are often superficial.
 Good night,
 good night, Green Ink Stain,
 I’m sorry about that please forgive me.
 Tomorrow I’ll try.”

(Notepad #3,
p. 118)

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“Bell.

Bird lands on a branch night-

flying. Bzzz. A clack of

window blinds against the wall

means death. Lecturer said, ‘We talk of

thinking of Krsna at death

but don’t take it seriously.’

I thought, ‘Let’s

not keep talking of death, let’s

find an old jazz ballad like

“Ruby, My Dear” by T. Monk.

Let’s . . .

rhubarb pie

Let’s sty in the eye can ruin your fun.’

“Death ain’t so bad if you

see it in the right perspective. As O’Neill

wrote wittily for

his gravestone, ‘There’s
something to be said
for being dead.’

(Notepad #3,
pp. 120-121)

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“The infinite spirit is also infinitesimal. The small part is us and should be dovetailed in service to the Supreme. The nature of islands and ice cream in *gelateria*. I better get more serious. Some make quips even up to death. But its no joke, unless you consider humorous to see yourself go and suffer running on a hot copper plain and thrust into airtight bag in the womb of next mother. All stories, you say? Hinduism? As you like it, go take a chance.

“Sadaputa
newcomers, I tell you
they will be able to conduct
this Krsna consciousness Movement even
after I’m gone.
The old guy who wrote
Prabhupada’s biography

will shuffle off the stage
 in his worn-down bed slippers.
 Dig his jive,
 his avid-for-reading fanned
 him with *camara*
 while he fell asleep and
 everyone took advantage
 sinking his U.S.S. Sheffield
 with a single missile inside
 that hit his brain.
 Quick
 what was you thinkin' of
 at the time of Death?

“No teeth/Pilot pen/business class/a last laugh/ Kennedy Space
 Center, space suit/ last conversations of Therese of Lisieux. One of her
 hands holds the other. She says, ‘I want to go to God and pray. I want
 Him to be happy, want to bless all souls to love Him as I do!’ Such an
 ecstatic girl even in suffering. But Srila Prabhupada in Hyderabad said
 the Bible has only a little love of God, a little info. Some saints took it a
 long way.”

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“Poems in Mayapura—Wouldn’t It Be Nice?”

“When I turn a desk lamp on,
tiny bugs shower from nowhere onto
pages, hand, desktop, more and more
like snow falling so you can turn the light
off.

“Mayapura. Letters keep coming to my desk.
‘I usually don’t tell you the details of my
life, but . . .’ Twelve pages, seven pages, ten pages . . .
Our *parikrama* is planned. I told Maharaja I
will have to come back early, can’t hack it,
eight, ten hours a day as he’s planned.

“He tells me he’s planning a film
on Prabhupada.

He’s also sorry how splinter groups take

advantage of ISKCON. I listen without
 blinking, but my mind goes now to the
 new typewriter—Canon Typestar a devotee
 brought from America. I’m thinking,

“Let me carry it like a ‘Deity’—no
 machine isn’t a divine *murti* but it’s my
 holy *bhajana* for praising Gaura-Nitai,
 holy name and the ravings.’

Quotes the raving, ‘Nevermore.’

Keep on writing wherever you go and
 carry it in your bulky bag.

“*Parikrama* sounds great. My Godbrother

is from

Bengal and learned and loves the *lilas*. I’ll be

along to say ‘Chant Hare Krsna,’

and ‘Prabhupada said,’

and adjust my ankle brace and

‘head aids’ and digestive aids and checking my

relaxation pulse in head and the scorpion

and tender feet.

“I like that opening poem in *Pictures from Brueghel* by W.C.W. It’s a self-portrait of Brueghel and ends with a three-liner: ‘Blond beard half-trimmed no time for any-thing but his painting.’ Poems like that in Krsna consciousness, portraits of Vaisnavas, *parikramas* with that observing eye and clean, elegant lines divided at the right point by a poet who knows what he’s doing. Wouldn’t it be nice?”

(Notepad #3)

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To Friends and Disciples of Satsvarupa dasa Goswami:

I assume many of you have written nice entries for the upcoming Vyasa-Puja book. However, anyone who has been reading the weekly Free Write Journal should realize how much SDG appreciates feedback on his writing. I know that almost every time I have commented, he notes it with appreciation. Nothing is worse for a writer than not being read, and almost as bad, I think, is if you are reading and he does not know it. So please send a word now and then.

—Anonymous