

Free Write Journal #70

Free Writes

Bhurijana

He is sending me videos of a seminar he and his wife Jagattarini held in Melbourne, Australia. His subject was “The Day King Kamsa Died,” and he wrote me that his wife did a “tasteful” presentation of “the beautiful *rasa* dance.” (I am especially fascinated to hear that one.) Bhurijana and Jagattarini spend half the year in Vrndavana and half in Perth, Australia. In Vrindavan, they and Sacinandana Maharaja conduct the “Govardhana Retreat.” They have been doing it for many years. They have large attendance, and now they have their own building. In Vrndavana Bhurijana makes his own videos of the *dhama*, focusing on the simple rural life and contrasting it with the built-up, heavy speed traffic of today. He writes the scripts, sometimes in poetic form, and with excellent filming brings you right close to being in Vrndavana, cows, farmers, cowherd men and women and schoolchildren. Bhurijana is completing a complete overview of *Srimad-Bhagavatam* in many volumes. He includes *acaryas*’ commentaries and his own realizations. When the work is completed it will take its place as a major contribution to ISKCON Vaisnava literature.

Prabhupada's Analogies

Prabhupada's analogies will never be out of date. He tells of a man with jaundice. The cure for jaundice is to take raw rock candy, but at first the jaundice patient doesn't taste the candy as sweet. He is advised to go on eating rock candy. As he does so, eventually the taste is sweet and his jaundice subsides. This analogy can be applied to a devotee who is chanting but doesn't feel that it's sweet. He should be advised to go on chanting (taking the rock candy) and eventually he will feel the nectar of the holy name.

In another analogy, an apprentice to an animal doctor watched while the doctor hit the swollen neck of a horse with a hammer, and they watched the swelling go down. The apprentice then took this observation and went around hitting other animals with swollen parts with a hammer, but most of those animals died. When the doctor caught up to the apprentice, he demanded, "What do you think you're doing?" The apprentice said, "I just followed what I saw you do with that horse." The doctor told him, "That was a special exception. That horse had a watermelon stuck in his throat, and by hitting him I broke up the watermelon and he was relieved. It is not a method that you should use in all cases, you fool!" The point of this analogy is that we should not imitate the actions of the spiritual master or an advanced Vaisnava. The scriptures say no one can understand the mind of a Vaisnava. One should receive direct instructions in how to act and not just copy externally what the spiritual master does in a particular case.

Another analogy is the "half-a-hen" logic. A keeper of hens was pleased to see

the eggs come out from the bottom of the hen's body. But he wanted to keep his costs down in keeping the hen. He foolishly thought that if he cut the hen's head off he would not have to feed her, and she would just benefit by taking the eggs out from the bottom of the hen. But of course, once the hen's head was cut off, she stopped giving eggs. This logic can be applied to those who whimsically pick out teachings from the *Bhagavad-gita* without keeping the whole purport intent. If one follows *karma-yoga*, *hatha-yoga*, *jnana-yoga*, etc. but doesn't come to the conclusion of Bhagavan Sri Krsna, he is like the person who wanted to get the eggs by cutting off the neck of the hen.

Another analogy is about the illusion of taking a rope to be a snake. They look alike, and one may conclude that a rope is a snake. To avoid falling into illusion like this, one should consult with the spiritual master and do as he says. He may say, "It is not a snake, it is a rope." Or on another occasion he may say, "It is not a rope, it is actually a snake." One should consult the bona-fide spiritual master and do as he says, and avoid illusion and trouble.

Bala

Baladeva from Trinidad has crashed out. He has a high fever and has taken to bed with aches and pains. For weeks and months he has been phoning devotees—especially my disciples from the Caribbean who are living in the USA—and begging them to attend the Vyasa-puja. Last year 90 came, and this year 150 arrived—as a result of Bala's calling them. When they gathered, he busily engaged in giving them

service. He took the role of the master of ceremonies of the proceedings and announced each part of the schedule. Some guests stayed a few days after the Vyasa-puja, and he entertained them. He is fragile and in weak health since his serious operation, but he works as he is capable. (For two weeks a year he manages the Ratha-yatra in Trinidad, down the main street of Port of Spain.) He is very dear to me.

My Free Write Journal

I like the varied subjects, free writes, dictionary selections, excerpts from my books. I am enlivened by the recent use of “writing sessions” from the 1990s. The “writing session” excerpts are the most spontaneous writing I have done. I hope they are not too wild and that they have enough Krsna conscious content. I am grateful that I have regular readers who appreciate the weekly *Journal*. The *Free Write Journal* is the best way to keep in touch with ISKCON devotees. It is the most important (daily) writing I am doing, aside from the twice-a-year books I am publishing as “Meditations and Poems.” I write it early in the morning and speak it onto the Dictaphone. I send it to a typist, who types it up until he has approximately twenty-six pages. Then he sends it to two proofreaders, Krishna-Kripa dasa and Jan Potemkin, then on to my two websites, who post it every Friday and keep it posted for a week. Then they come out with a new one. We also keep archives so devotees can read past issues they may have missed. Although I cannot walk, I am content to

do my writing and reading in Srila Prabhupada's books. I find solace in this *seva*, even though it is sedentary.

Internet

Jan Potemkin visited and said he doesn't know—doesn't *want* to know—about the guru mishaps after Srila Prabhupada. Bhakti Vijnana advises devotees not to read the Internet because there is so much negative propaganda posted by vicious outsiders to ISKCON. I post my weekly *Free Write Journal* on the Internet, and I have a positive response from readers. But I'm sorry I gave my doctor my Internet address. One has to be careful of what one reads and avoid the negative criticism. I'm told that *any* Internet posting has negative comments by inimical outsiders. In using Internet one has to be careful to avoid things like pornography which pop up and are easy to access. Not use the Internet at all? No, I want my readers to tune in to my *Free Write Journal* and other Krsna conscious sites. But you should just be *very careful* not to look at negative trash.

From *Prabhupada Nectar*

This book was published after *Srila Prabhupada-lilamrta*. It is made up of interviews and diary excerpts.

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“In the evening, Tamal Krishna Maharaja came in and discussed with Srila Prabhupada about organizing book sales in India. He reported to Srila Prabhupada that actually, if they organized correctly, they could probably sell at least 100,000 books a month, and with the five *lakhs* that Srila Prabhupada had promised, they would spend two and a half *lakhs* each on Hindi and Bengali publications. Srila Prabhupada was very pleased and told him, ‘Yes, organize this. You have got experience. Now show them how to do it. Make arrangements with your good brain. This is good business. Sell books, print more with profit, and support the temple.’ Prabhupada then told a story how one man wanted to go from Bengal to the Ratha-yatra in Jagannatha Puri, but he wanted to make money at the same time. So he took some bananas, sat on the roadside where the Ratha-yatra cart was due to pass, saw the *ratha*, and sold all his bananas. ‘In this way,’ said Srila Prabhupada, ‘he combined business with pleasure. We should also do.’”

(Hari Sauri dasa diary entry,

February 16, 1977)

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“In September 1976 a circus magician visited the Krishna-Balaram Mandir in Vrindavan and showed Prabhupada and the devotees his repertoire of tricks. Hearing that Prabhupada had agreed to see the

magician, Prabhupada's friend Bhagatji hurried to the *gurukula* to gather all the students and teachers. Within minutes, most of the temple leaders, teachers, and *gurukula* boys gathered in Prabhupada's room to see the fun. Prabhupada sat pleasantly behind his desk and asked the magician what he could do. The magician placed a coin in Prabhupada's hand. When the magician commanded 'Go,' the coin somehow slipped out of Prabhupada's hand.

“Can you make the money come?’ Prabhupada joked.

“No,’ the magician replied.

“You can only make the money go,’ Srila Prabhupada said. The magician then produced boxes in which different colors suddenly appeared in different slots. He also had games with feathers. He would take a white feather, rub it, pull it with his fingers, and it would turn into many different colors. Several times he asked Srila Prabhupada to help him with the tricks. Coins appeared from Prabhupada's ears and Prabhupada laughed at the illusion, but some of the devotees felt uneasy that their spiritual master was being made the object of the mystification and tricks. Srila Prabhupada seemed to enjoy it, but after a while he deliberately changed the mood.

“What about the miseries of life?’ Prabhupada asked the magician.

‘Can you make these disappear? Birth, death, disease, and old age?’

“The magician replied submissively, ‘No, that I cannot.’ At these words the magician sat down and Srila Prabhupada took the superior position.

“‘But I can make these things disappear,’ Srila Prabhupada said. ‘That is the real magic.’ The magic show ended and Srila Prabhupada spoke his realized, transcendental wisdom to the magician and all the assembled devotees. Srila Prabhupada then gave the magician a garland and distributed sweets to everyone in the room.”

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“In the days when there was no Ratha-yatra held in Los Angeles, the devotees used to travel en masse to San Francisco to attend the Ratha-yatra there. One morning, when Prabhupada came down to the temple at his usual time, there were only a handful of devotees remaining, since most of them had already gone to San Francisco. (Srila Prabhupada was to leave later that day by plane.) Earlier that morning someone had thrown a pipe bomb into the temple room through the back door. The bomb had exploded, shaken the building, and a few devotees had been cut with small pieces of shrapnel.

“Prabhupada sat on the *vyasasana* and said he was now going to teach them a new mantra. He then taught the devotees the Nrsimhadeva

mantras, beginning with the words *namas te narasimhaya*. He went over the words with them several times and then they sang it together.

“Prabhupada remarked on this occasion that as his Movement was now growing, the demons were becoming more envious. He said that as the Krsna consciousness movement grew, there would be attacks, but the devotees should not be afraid, and they should not stop from pushing on. They should chant these mantras to Lord Nrsimhadeva. ‘Lord Nrsimhadeva will always protect us,’ said Prabhupada. Prabhupada also approved that these mantras be sent out to all his ISKCON centers for the devotees to chant.”

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“I don't know how I ever cooked under such austere conditions for Prabhupada. In Bhubanesvar and different places I would cook in a little shack in the fields. I was covered with black from the wood smoke, and I was full of smoke, and my eyes would be bloodshot red, constantly tearing, and I couldn't open the door because all sorts of Indians were constantly coming. If I opened the door, they would just stand there and watch me cook, and I couldn't do that. It was Prabhupada's offering. So every once in a while, I'd suddenly get up, I would hardly be able to breathe, and all of a sudden you'd hear me because I just crash out of the door. The door would fly open, and I'd just stand out there and pant,

pant. I would try to get air, just enough to go back in and cook. Krsna empowered me to do that at that time because I could never do such a thing again and I don't know how I ever did it.

“I would just go to any place where Prabhupada was, even if there were no facilities, and I would set up and cook for him. It is Prabhupada's association. It does something that is completely beyond this material world. And I didn't mind it, I loved it the whole time. I would go on like this, cooking for him all morning long. When it came time for me to serve him, my white *sari* would be black. My face would have soot over it, my eyes bloodshot, puffy and swollen from crying. But when I went into Prabhupada's room with his plate, he wouldn't even blink an eyelash. It didn't phase him. It was just as though I was there in the best of silk saris or something. It didn't matter what things would go on, Prabhupada would be in his transcendental position, equipoised.”

(Palika devi dasi)

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“PRABHUPADA TELLS A STORY”

“Srla Prabhupada would speak from a large repertoire of traditional stories and apply them in different ways. His use of the story about the *brahmana* who lost his caste illustrates this nicely.

“In India, there is a custom that Hindus never take their meals in the house of a Mohammadan or Christian or anyone other than a Hindu *brahmana*. But one *brahmana* was very hungry, and he went to a little-known acquaintance and asked for some food. The man supplied the *brahmana* with a little foodstuff, but still his hunger was not satisfied. When the *brahmana* asked the man for more food, the man said that he was sorry but he had no more.

“‘Oh,’ said the *brahmana*, disappointed. Then he asked, ‘Sir, which caste do you belong to?’

“‘I am Mohammadan,’ the man replied.

“Then the hungry man lamented, ‘Oh, I have lost my caste, and still I am hungry!’

“Srila Prabhupada told this story on one occasion to a devotee-artist. She had suggested to Prabhupada that she should improve her artistic craftsmanship by painting and selling non-devotional pictures, and then, after becoming talented and famous, she could better paint for Krsna. Srila Prabhupada replied that to come to the point of being a reputed artist would take a long time, but a devotee's time is short—and is only for serving Krsna. As for fame, Prabhupada said, according to *Caitanya-caritamrta* a man is famous who is known as a great devotee of Krsna. So, if she insisted on becoming a great artist, she would be like the *brahmana* who lost his caste but his belly remained unfilled.

“Another time Prabhupada applied the same story when a devotee, at Prabhupada's suggestion, tried to get Prabhupada a teaching position on a college faculty. The salary they offered him was very low, so Prabhupada rejected it. The devotee then thought that he had insulted Prabhupada by even asking such a thing. Prabhupada wrote back assuring the disciple that there was no offense, but that the offer was useless. He related the story about the caste *brahmana*, then commented, ‘The idea is that if we have to ask some service, there must be proper remuneration. So I thought that since I required some money for my book fund, I might gather some money in this way, but this does not satisfy my hunger. So forget this incident.’”

From Memory in the Service of Krsna

This book was published in 1990. It consists of memories of my life in Krsna consciousness. Here is one entitled “We Are Completely Dependent on Your Mercy”:

“As early as 3:00 A.M. when you woke, you thought that they might expect you to lead the singing at *mangala-arati* that morning. You’d love to do it, but—what if you forgot the words of the *mangala-arati* song? The best thing was not to worry about it. After all, you’d been singing that song daily for over twenty years; surely you had it memorized by now. So you put aside the thought that something like

amnesia could occur, and you went down to take your shower. But an hour later, as you walked downstairs to join a hundred other devotees in the temple hall, the mind gave its demoralizing hint, ‘You’re going to have trouble remembering.’

“It had happened before that you forgot a word or two, or even a line, while leading the singing. You analyzed what had happened. A part of your mind began to watch too closely the mental connections which call forth memories. Memories seem to work like other ‘unconscious’ functions, the beating of the heart, breathing, and circulation. Better not to think about memory so much. Just let it happen by nature, as allowed by God. But the perverse mental signal, ‘You’re going to have trouble,’ made you nervous and insecure. If it happened again, it would be extremely embarrassing. And it *could* happen; you could break down. The prayer ‘*Samsara dava*’ had eight stanzas of four lines each, and if there was even a second’s delay, they would notice. Then it could get worse; you could forget a whole line. Because it was Sanskrit, the intellect could not come to your aid, but everything depended on rote impressions being called forth from their storage, one after another. You considered deferring from singing if they asked you. You could say, ‘I have throat trouble.’ But no, it was a wonderful opportunity to lead the singing before the Deities and the devotees. Don’t succumb out of fear; don’t let it lick you.

“Just before the curtains opened to begin the ceremony, the temple president approached and asked if you would like to lead the singing. You replied, “Yes.” Then the curtains opened, and the pujaris blew the conch shells with three long blasts. You stood up from your prostrated obeisances and beheld with eager devotion the bright forms of Gaura-Nitai and Radha-Krsna. And then you began, keeping rhythm with the *karatalas*.

“*Samsara-dava-nala-lidha-loka . . .*’

“So far, so good. Just take one line at a time and don’t speed up. Everything depends on Krsna for success.”

“With the first stanza finished, that meant seven more to go. Your mind warned you there was still plenty of occasion for mistake, but you tried to be positive. Although you were depending on a storehouse of fragile memory, you could aid yourself with little tips. The second stanza was actually about Lord Caitanya and the *kirtana*, and therefore it began, ‘*Mahaprabo kirtana-nrtya-gita . . .*’ That meant that the spiritual master is always chanting *kirtana*, dancing and playing on instruments.

“You began the third stanza, so far without a hitch, ‘*Sri-
vighraharadhana-nitya-nana . . .*’ This was about Deity worship, the *vighraha*, which the spiritual master performs along with his disciples, dressing the Deities and cleaning the temples. Although you tried to remain calm, the perverse side of your mind surged forward with

threats. You could feel a burning secretion in your solar plexus. There might be trouble. You felt your whole body and consciousness become very humble. You worshiped the feet of the nearby devotees and you worshiped the temple floor and cast your eyes there. You closed your eyes as an aid to concentration.

“*Catur-vidha-sri-bhagavat-prasada . . .*’ Now you were on the fourth stanza, which was about the spiritual master’s offering Krsna four kinds of food and being happy to see the devotees eating *bhagavata-prasadam*. It occurred to you that you simply had to relax and it would be all right. It was something like the ‘zen’ of archery, where the archer is advised not to concentrate *too much*, but just to relax, and in an almost offhand way, release the arrows at the target—be natural and ordinary.

“On the fifth stanza, you again thought there might be trouble, and then it happened.

“The third line of that stanza was similar to the third line of the first stanza; they both began with the letter ‘P.’ You knew the possible difficulty but waited for the memory bank to distinguish and supply the desired word. But it was slow in coming. A beat of music passed while you remained silent. Gurukula boy turned to look up at you. The secretion came to your gut again, and perspiration started all over. Then the memory produced the words, ‘*pratiksanasvadana-lolupasya*’ and order was restored.

“The sixth stanza, which is sometimes a troublemaker, came nicely. You recalled how Visnujana Swami used to sing and pronounce it, ‘*Nikunja yuno rati keli siddhyai . . .*’ Of course, some of your Sanskrit pronunciation was imperfect, but that didn’t matter, as long as you kept going with approximate words.

“As you entered the home stretch, the seventh stanza, you felt more confidence and took the time to ask yourself, ‘Why does this happen? What’s at the bottom of this?’ You had heard of things like amnesia and even premature senility. It was also obvious that the trouble was due to an overactive mind. But you knew there was more to it. Your intelligence flashed the answer, ‘Can’t you see? It’s God, Krsna. It’s up to Him.’

“‘*Yasya prasada bhagavat prasado . . .*’ By the mercy of the spiritual master, one receives the benediction of Krsna; if you don’t please the spiritual master, your whereabouts are unknown. You knew it was true, and you had not forgotten to pray. You were praying the whole time. Memory comes from Krsna. He even says it in the *Bhagavad-gita*: ‘I am seated in everyone’s heart, and from Me come remembrance, knowledge and forgetfulness.’ (Bg. 15.15) You can’t do anything on your own.

“As you finished the *Samsara* prayers successfully, you breathed a big sigh of relief. But there was no guarantee that you would remember

even the Panca-tattva mantra, or even the Hare Krsna mantra! You cannot cease praying to Krsna. You need Him at every moment. On your own, you are nothing; there is no guarantee. You must always pray and be dependent. That was the humiliating lesson of the bout with amnesia.”

WRITING SESSIONS

Karttika Papers

For art’s sake, I really do like to do poems, even though they are not as popular (or as accessible) as other forms. I said to devotees, “We have to find our inclination by self-examination, and also by some consultation with others. And when, after years of search, we finally decide, “This is it,” then we may be embarrassed by it, and others may think it odd—but we should do our best then to purify it and perfect it.” In the back of my mind I was thinking of my own case. What I want to declare is, ‘I am a poet.’ I didn’t think of that specifically when I was facing the devotees, but I kept thinking of the story of Robert Frost as a child, and the story I did want to tell was on the tip of my tongue, but I refrained from it. I would have said it like this:

Robert Frost was a world-class American poet. When he was a child, I think about fifteen years old, he wrote a

poem which won a prize and was published. He then became very interested in being a poet. His father was worried about such an unprofitable career for his son, and he took what he thought was a clever strategy: he said to his son, “You can try being a poet for two years.” Robert Frost blurted back, “Give me fifty!”

As a poet, I need to write the crazy lines, the loping cat, the jazz play, the mad career, looking at American writers (because that is my mother tongue and culture, and I will carry its sound with me even into ISKCON over twenty-seven years, where much of what I speak is also American sourced). I try to speak the honest core, coming out with my actual state of Krsna consciousness, or lack of Krsna consciousness, to whom can I tell this except the private page and the readers who are willing to share it with me? I am a poet.”

*(Notepad #6,
pp. 204-205)*

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Quip quip
the lizard click-click
confirms the truth.

A White Light is
 only The Impersonal Ray
 “Have you contacted Aurobindo?”
 “No, why should I contact
 him?” Prabhupada is in contact
 with Lord Krsna
 and that’s good enough!
 So why am I in contact with
 James Ebenezer Scrooge
 McDuck and Alvin and Tubby
 and the fire hydrant in front of
 our house in Great Kills? Is it because you are not
 In touch with Krsna?
 “Prabhupada,” said an homage-speaker
 “was not like Thomas Merton
 shopping for ideas by going to
 hear from Buddhists.” Maybe I need to stay in touch
 with Prabhupada and Krsna.

If you were a pure devotee, all you need is the Lord in His
 form and *rasas*.

But since you are a garbageman

then I ask you to cast it and dump it
 where the crows hover over
 and you return, refreshed
 with a shower and go up-
 stairs and speak like a new man
 of Lord Gaura's grace as if
 it's all you know and don't tell the folks all
 the jive and junk you go through or even how you live in
 your head.

And what's a heart? Is it
 like an artichoke in layers?)

Go upstairs and eliminate
 all excess stream of consciousness
 and say
 Ladies and gents, it's been
 swell. I thank the Swami
 and management on behalf of
 my disciples who went with them on *parikrama* while I
 stayed
 back twiddling my notes (confirmed by the chick-chick
 of the lizard this night).

(Notepad #5,
pp. 208-210)

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Sing, perform
your Prabhupada is
singing *Govinda jaya*
and recorded so we
can hear many years later
the ecstatic sound. When
electric power cuts off you
hear birds whistle and
feel the Vaikuntha breezes.
Hari, please attract me
to Your Names
Krsna, please pull my mind to You.

(Notepad #5,
pp. 222-223)

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From Mayapur, Disciples' Meetings

“Here are some *japa* meditations, Maharaja,
 compiled by Sanatana Gosvami and others but
 don’t tell your audience that you
 got it from me lest pride and arrogance
 swell up in me. Please don’t tell.”

Well, I won’t like it (I did tonight)

When they asked where did you
 get that meditation from Bhaktivinode Thakura?

I’ll tell them . . . heave chest and pose with
 garland for flash photos.

When you step into the wrong shoes, someone says, “They
 are getting special mercy.” My sacred feet.

That’s how it is, and you get two suites.

you get these benefits and . . .

This song . . . this life is ending.

“Give us a reference, please, of the verse
 you just quoted.” A Godbrother sits back
 and monitors my presentation as I field
 questions on how to improve
japa. A sad joke, a sad

bloke when it's his turn to chant.

I read and chanted and ended one-and-a-half
hour session with triumphant sailors shout,
“Chanting Hare Krsna mantra and reading
Srimad-Bhagavatam, ki jaya!” I said it –
the simple message pulled into One,
repeated,
driven home.

Let it rest with them and live with
me. Dear Prabhupada I take this
next retreat not to Do Nothing
in a lonely place, but to
gain practice and conviction for the
next round of meetings in snow-
bound Gita-nagari.

All you can get from the personal
meeting with Krsna you can find
in the pages of *Srimad-Bhagavatam* and
in chanting,
in chanting. Good night Mayapura suites while

they're chanting *Damodarastakam* and I'm
getting ready to turn in,
five days left in Heaven.

(Notepad #5,
pp. 224-226)

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Holy Name

Beware

Forget

the old past, jute jukebox,

don't name it now, put

your finger over your lips and

say, "Shhh." Let it pass and wait to see Krsna

in Vrndavana

from the vantage of Mayapur.

"Shhh." Be here now,

Mayapur crickets move you

alone . . . too soon trucks

again, and people who are

not devotees of Krsna.

But you have seen Lord Nrsimha

and can call His names,
 “Please protect me from demons,
 please kill my own demons
 in the heart.”

You have seen the picture of the *kirtana* of Gauranga,
 you have stood on this ground
 and missed most of it, but
 a little.

A little. A day here is worth
 millions somewhere else says
Navadvipa-dhama-mahatmya.

Bumpkin returns to the
 West with stars in eyes and
 plan. He’ll be a
 Prabhupada-Gauranga man.

*(Notepad #5,
 pp. 228-229)*

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“The most that can be said—
 dimmed lights of Indian electrical system
 and his lined face, Spanish accent

asks me

why I write, my struggles in Krsna

consciousness if I'm supposed to be guru.

That old pop fly high up. I

get under it to catch it again.

“What can I say? You should accept

guru as perfect blah, blah.”

Don't you know by now I write

that way until death?

Besides, maybe I'm a midget sort

of guru, you know, a castor tree.

The cherry pie hunks, who made them?

“It's *maha-prasadam*.”

I carefully gave out

each piece. Me laughing in laughable

comedian of . . . *Bhagavatam* purports.

Sweating in the last half-hour

of a one-and-a-half hour

lecture, come to the end and leave

once again, laughing to be light with

The ladies,
alas, Stefan, I too used to
be called Stephen and sooner or later
you have to get a spiritual name,
maybe one that really counts and you
want it and someone must give it to
you (the lizard confirms)

So Mayapur black night now, no fountain
no folks walking around the *maha-mantra*
stones, but loud kirtan from the temple and
maybe I'll ask for a little piece of that
pie but actually
you don't need it—could do some
extra, sweet chanting, just as you
profess to them—
sorry is not much better, sorry
and glad to, my hand wants
to chant and write
Lord, as You will,
we operate

as You allow and as You desire
 You favor someone.

(Notepad #6,
 pp. 235-237)

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No one can know what a sweet
 group it is, although we have our
 individual troubles,
 overweight, sore ankles, bad
 teeth, or none at all, and this
 one is too young to know,
 these speak only Russian or
 Italian with no translator.
 I can't begin to tell you but
 since I'm writing—here!

He asked, "Is our *rasa* shown in present
 service?" I said, "I promised not to make any
 more GBC jokes, but here's one more."
 He said is our relationship with Krsna and
 you unique? I was aware of the *rasika*

fan clubs, big chunks of cheesecake to
give out—I did.

I began with a small headache but it
went away, partly because I
loved what I was doing and
they didn't exert pressure on me.
I could have stopped when I wanted.

I spoke of bhakti as a science. I read
my notes on struggling japa. We chanted a
round together. Now less than three days
left. It will be sweet sorrow parting
with a promise to come back next year.

And Prabhupada writes, "To avoid unlawful
desires, don't make plans."

Krsna loves all *rasas*. Chip-chip-chip the
lizard confirms all that I just said.

Up here, I hear

kirtana over

he makes an announcement in

Bengali, they applaud. It's 7:00 PM. That means now the *darsana* will begin and ghee wicks distributed in clay pots and they will offer them to Yasoda and Damodara.

I'm not there because I'm up here but I've seen the blackish Boy not so afraid, plump, His mother with a rope.

In the morning I'll rise to chant, my patient, my patient bad attempt again.

Only Krsna can save me.

*(Notepad #6,
pp. 240-241)*

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Hare Krsna Hare Krsna
the uh guru (call him) sat
skinny upright and they trusted him.
I can't read their minds but almost
all trusted him to
represent Prabhupada and Krsna.

I took it seriously when he asked.

Do you talk too much of Prabhupada
and not enough of Krsna?

After the meeting in which I expressed
sorrow at my imperfection and yet
defended myself, he walked with
me to the door and said, "I'm sorry if
I was too heavy." I put my arm around
because he's a man and dear
to Prabhupada, distributor of books. Once
a guy punched him on the jaw, yet
he went on selling them.

Most people admire him, stern,
big-chested, best of all Puerto Ricans.
Head was banging, gave out
big balls like laddus baby Krsna holds.
We're trying to be happy.

I said the teacher has responsibility
to free his dependents from death.
They want to cheer me up.

Let's read about *japa* leading to

our chanting one round together.”

Be positive. Jananivasa told me to be
satisfied with whatever mercy I get.

Rare mercy is rare. Don't be dissatisfied
or how can you be a peaceful devotee?

When the *japa* died out last voices it
sounded better than the *kirtana*.

Some things I couldn't say, like how Prabhupada

is so dear to Krsna because he wants everyone
to accept original Krsna as the Supreme.

I groped, forgot what I wanted to say—
could find no more, fell silent and
called it a night. Give what you can.

*(Notepad #6,
pp. 246-247)*

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I need to surrender, we all do. But how. It seems I have to do it
gently, gradually. Writing will help me. I'm already looking forward to
the roominess of the writing sessions and the chance to say what's really
on my mind without fear of how it will look in print or be

misunderstood.

Let your guard down. Let voices speak. Then apply full consciousness of your spiritual master to your own life.

*(Notepad #6,
p. 249)*

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Prabhupada's Room

I want to surrender to the holy names, the Hare Krsna mantra.

Dear master, I too am growing older. I hope to serve you loyally and do what Krsna wants me to do. A disciple feels helpless before the spiritual master. I don't want to bluff and make false claims.

You know my weakness and inability. Still you maintain me. You once said I do whatever you say (although I wasn't a good manager). I want to live up to that statement.

I am pinning all hope on attaining a surrendered state by reading your books and encouraging devotees in chanting and hearing.”

*(Notepad #6,
p. 250)*