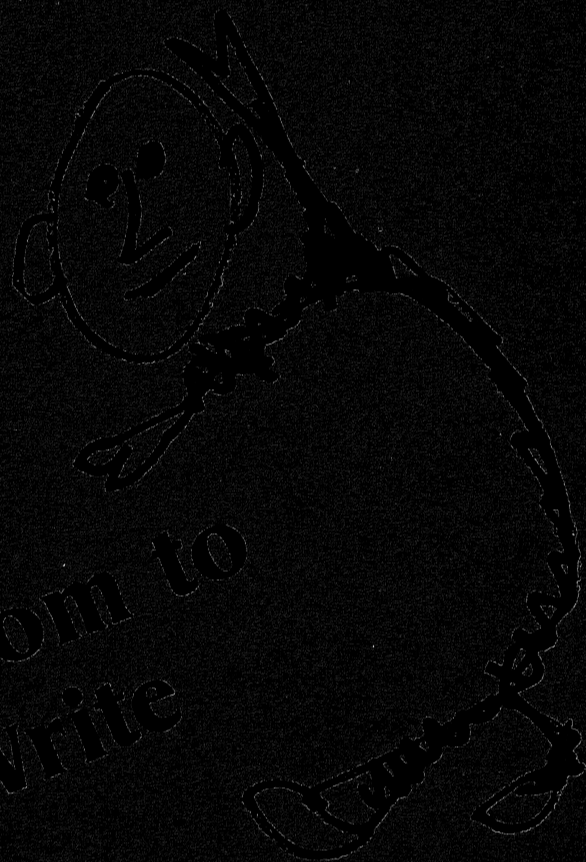
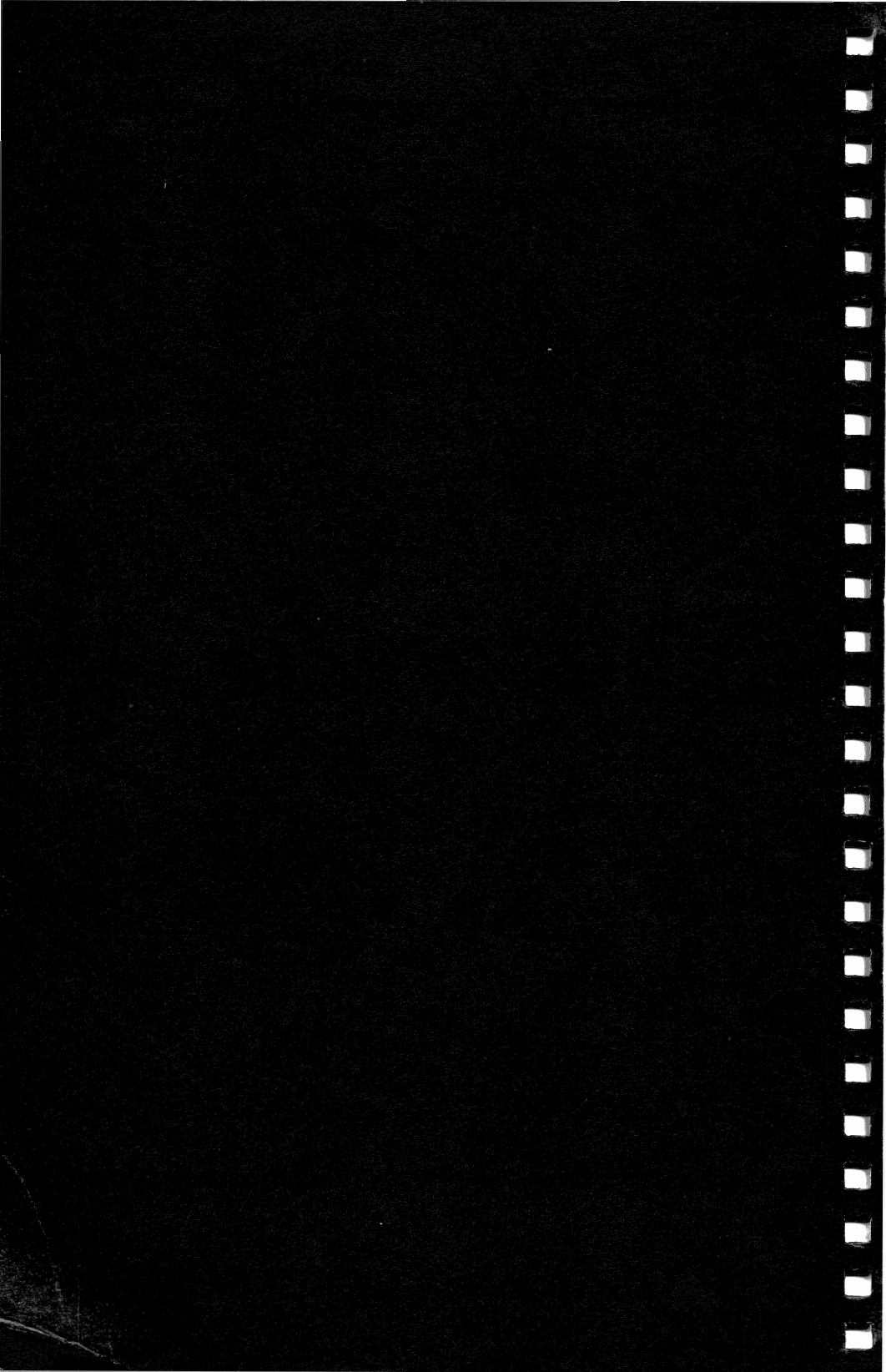


# Upstate

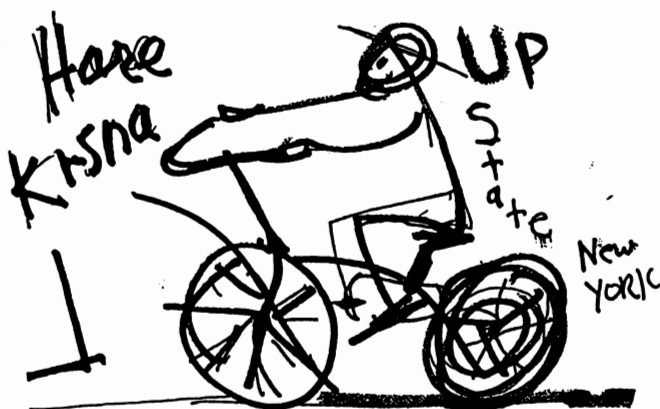


Room to  
Write

satsvarupa dasa Goswami



# Upstate: Room to Write



Satsvarūpa dāsa Goswami  
GN Press, Inc.

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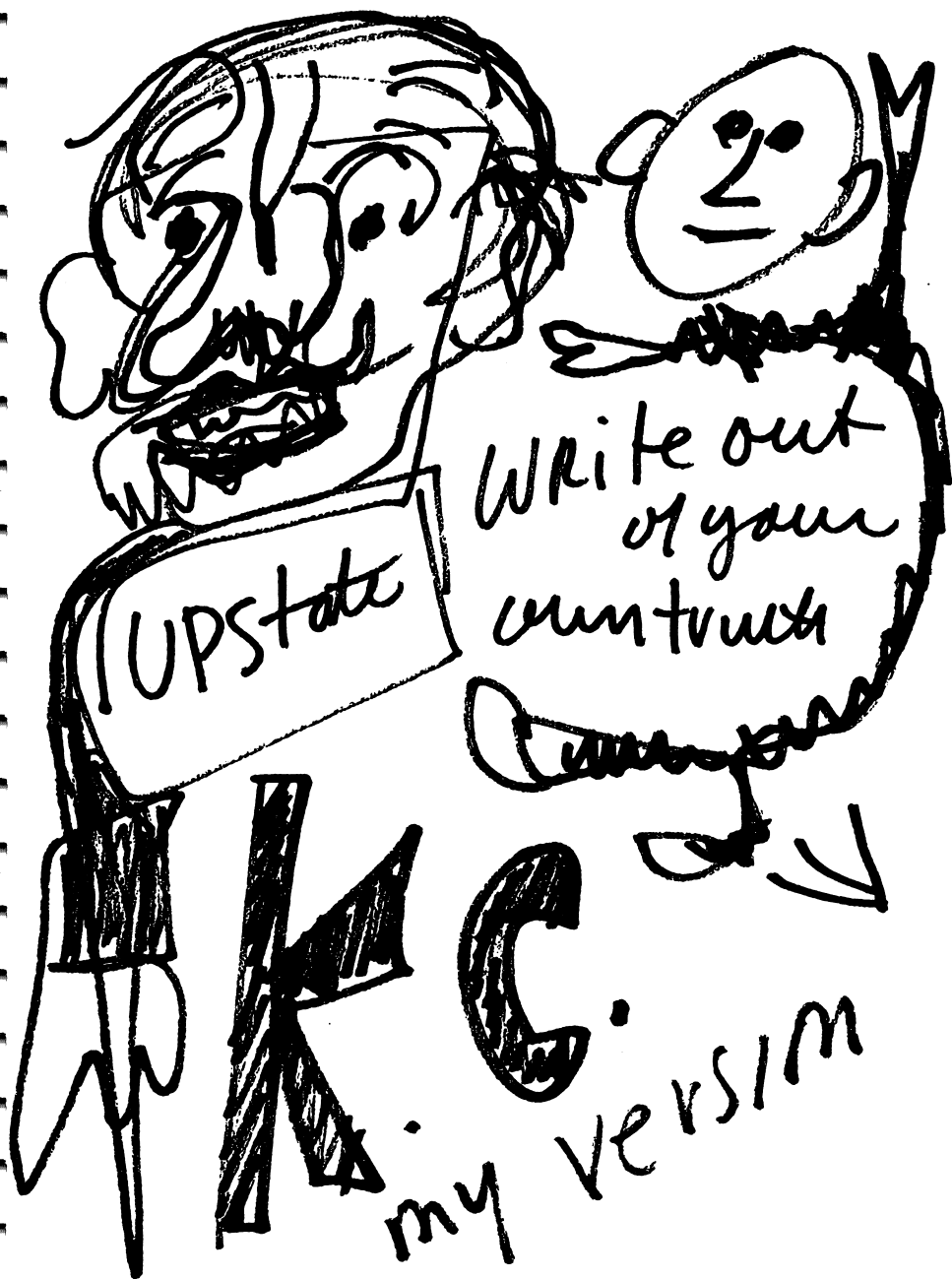
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## **Introduction, May 21 1996, Boston**

I seek assurance that what I am doing is important. I just read in the *ISKCON World Review* of devotees chanting in Sarajevo and being attacked by a gang with knives. Certainly the devotees think it's important to chant and give out food there. In the same IWR I read of the important one hour long TV show put on by ISKCON scientists and how they sold many books and stirred controversies against Darwin's theory. That is obviously important preaching, bolstered by quotes from Prabhupāda who said Bhaktivedanta Institute was most important. I know my books have some effect on readers. As for this bridge I start now, I can't be sure. It may be just a little rope-bridge over a creek or it could turn out to be something longer. I begged for something much longer, a life's work (in *Vṛndāvana*, January 1996) and I got it, *A Poor Man Reads the Bhāgavatam*. After 1400 pages, almost three volumes of that, I'm taking a break from it. Doing what comes to me. So

far it has been a collection of sessions I called *May apples* and then another diary, *Basic Sketch Book*. Each one lasts for not much more than a week. Now again I get restless and start off.

The main thing is not to try to judge importance in the external sense, but burrow into the process as deeply as you can. (Yes, like a mole in the earth, with his little nose and sharp teeth and claws, pushing aside the earth as fast as he can, a little bit at a time, in his subways.)

To penetrate, to ask the questions, not to be afraid. To look for art and to sometimes throw off art. To make writing important in my own life. And then to realize that I can't go back to Godhead by force of my pen. I need to read books of His Divine Grace and call to Kṛṣṇa as Prahllāda Mahārāja does, "When will you call me back to Your lotus feet?" Keep going, mole. You've got a couple of busy days here in Boston and you haven't even finished your *Basic Sketch Book*. After that you've got five days in Saratoga, New York and then there will be a big break in mood as you go to New York and catch the British Airways flight that takes you to Ireland (and out of the summer of North American festivals).

So whatever I can get going in Saratoga will probably be interrupted and I'll have to start a new one in Ireland. That will be June. All June to write there, an Ireland-based timed book of one who is writer in residence.

(A day later)

—Assurance that what I do is important. You have to pray. I just received a letter from a devotee here asking me to help her “concentrate and become more internal while doing book distribution.” She says, “Certainly *saṅkīrtana* cannot be done just automatically.” She wants to know how to pray, and not only when on *saṅkīrtana*, “but at every step of my life, because it is essential to feel helpless and dependent on the Lord’s mercy.”

How to pray? Does she think I know how to do it at every moment? Do I have a reputation for talking about that? Dear little sister, you do it like this, you interject the “Kṛṣṇa prayer” at every step, at every moment say Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa and when not out loud then in your mind. And when I write . . .

You say you want assurance it’s important. That might sound terribly puffed-up but I don’t mean it that way. Make a humble offering, pray at every step that your offering is acceptable, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa. You could pray by always reciting the *mahā-mantra*. Increase your rounds. Chant mentally. People are trying things like. But if I have decided to spend so much time writing then I must learn how to “chant Hare Kṛṣṇa” while other words come onto the page. I tried writing the *mantra* over and over, called it *Japa with Pen*. But it felt mechanical. Someone said it looked like the punishment teachers gave kids in school, to write something over and over.

I want to be aloof from strife, from problems. Run away from it? Paul Valery was criticized for writing poems in France during World War 2. (Did they want him to engage in politics in the resistance movement?) In reply he said that he was certainly unhappy, but that he had to go on in his duty of practicing art. Did you hear the latest? Nārāyana Mahārāja is angry with ISKCON and preaching in the west and some devotees from ISKCON have defected to him. Did you hear the latest? What, you don't have e-mail to monitor it and take part? Well, you may be called into action, drafted for military service.

I want to go alone Upstate and write. But what will you write about if you are tuned out from the latest? I can write: Dear Self, dear Diary, I have come to a quiet meadow overlooking a lake. Or I may say: Dear Self, I have come to a room where there is a large dog barking next door and my secretary just said, "I have to pass on this information to you." But in spite of it, I am writing—the search for authentic self. What?

To pursue the self for . . . to write the words that come. Play surreal games. Imitate poet-masters who are not devotees. Listen friends, I say to you I have come Upstate for five days to write and to read my master's books. I want to read his books and reassure myself that I am satisfied here. To learn methods once again, each day of how to do it. In one book on the artists Bonnard and Matisse, the editor said they loved art but that they

weren't trying to achieve great paintings but to practice art everyday as a religious vocation. He said that art is "grim", something you have to face everyday.





## Upstate: Room to Write

Upstate (for want of a better title). It tells where I am externally. Away from the city. Out of touch with the center of the world, Manhattan?

Now in just a brief conversation with Madhu in the kitchen I may have found the method for solving my dilemma. Dilemma: I know *A Poor Man Reads the Bhāgavatam* is a valuable work and should be continued. Its structure, however, makes me feel I am not able to stretch out in free writing, exploring at more length (because you always have to soon bring yourself to the next verse and keep its themes in mind).

So why not do both kind of writings? Do at least one PMRB a day, but when you have extra time, do writing outside of that project, not aimed at making the Product (and don't worry about "completing" the *Bhāgavatam*).

"For the first time in his professional life he stopped worrying about results" and as a consequence the terms "success" and "failure"

had suddenly lost their meaning for him. The true purpose of art was not to create beautiful objects, he discovered. It was a method of understanding, a way of penetrating the world and finding one's place in it, and whatever aesthetic qualities an individual canvas might have were almost an incidental by-product of the effort to engage oneself in this struggle, to enter into the thick of things . . ." (From *Fifty Days of Solitude*, Doris Grumbach)

I remember he wore a T-shirt and pants. I heard little boys playing basketball. The basketball is not even regulation size, smaller. They can't dribble the ball well. Two or three of them practicing shots with the hoop and back board in the front yard here in Saratoga Springs. We're on a dead end street. K.R. has given us a house to ourselves for five days. (The residents just moved out so he was able to rent it.) Ideal. A State Park nearby to walk in. But only five days. Not much time.

I remember solace and words like that. I want to read Śrīla Prabhupāda and Kṛṣṇa. Take time for it but now let yourself range out, please.

There's time to do what you want and to relax too.

## May 25

There's no theme but important big or little things to say. Diving. Keep going, look at it later. Fuzzy ink on page. Book lust. Book lust. Music, Handel, fruitive search for lost ring.

Maybe he said in another life I could hug and love a women. But in this life I see it for what it is. Don't get entangled in that illusion.

Philosopher is wise. Fools rush in where angels fear to tread, but wise men never fall in love, so how are they to know? —Sings someone like Johnny Mathis, another fool.

Be a fool for Kṛṣṇa.

Fuzz your ink on page in His cause.

God, you don't reveal yourself to me and thus you see me roaming in various areas like one who hasn't received a higher taste. You are testing me and perhaps I'm not passing the test so well. But I wish You to bring me to you. Prahlaḍa prayed, "When will that moment come when You may call

me to Your lotus feet?" Once going to Kṛṣṇaloka one never returns here. So are you going to do it?

It's up to me, we say.

So it is.

I didn't make the baseball team. I didn't become a guitarist, it was too hard. And algebra was too hard. I dropped the course. Listen, it's up to me.

But Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa is the goal and not this plethora of other objects. Here is *A Directory of American Poetry Books* with 950 poets listed as publishing books in the last two years. So many and not one is a Kṛṣṇa conscious poet. I'm not listed.

Weight listed. List, list to tort. Here's a list:

Khargone days are gone perhaps forever.

Host didn't like that I kept to myself. His little son should be able to walk into my room and find me friendly, like an older brother to all, member of the family.

You and your amenities.

Poet of franchise. Branch Rickey figured Jackie Robinson could take the pressure and so he became the first black man in major league baseball, the Brookes.

He did fine.

I'm broadcasting a separate unit.

Do you think we will be all right?

Walking in the Saratoga State Park. They say that the American Indians regarded this place as sacred. Lots of flowing water. One spring is

gushing out of a fountain and you can come and drink it but the sign says it has so much radium in it, it might not be good for your health if you drink it constantly. It's still so cold that the fingers are tingling as we are walking fast. But heavenly green everywhere and not only evergreen trees but other varieties.

So why have you come here? To take a walk, exercise the body. I mean, why have you come to this Upstate for a few days? To write and now some of the same things I always do. I collect poetry books and dubious habit like listening to jazz and then have to clear them away. I take on some weight and then I realize it's not the best and I throw it off. I look for Kṛṣṇa everywhere and wish that Kṛṣṇa would bring me to Him.

But here we are and all these waters are flowing in Saratoga. I can't just live in Vṛndāvana all the time, at least at this point in my life I am not fit for it and everywhere I go in the institution, there's undesirable socializing and controversies. So I have to find my Vṛndāvana wherever I go. Anyway, I'm writing here. Words are my trade, words are our way of worship. You spread out and just say what comes and read it later, hope that it will purify you or make something clear and provide some interesting reading. But just give to the process please, more than the product.

Saratoga Spa State Park. Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Again and again Śrīla Prabhupāda is making the point that Kṛṣṇa's body is spiritual and so are all the bodies of the *gopīs*. Their sexual attraction for one another is purely spiritual. We make a great mistake when we think Kṛṣṇa's "lust" is like ours. We are covered over by matter, in material bodies and false ego.

We can't know Kṛṣṇa until we become purified, detached of all material desire.

But do I want to write a lot and therefore need extra space, more than permitted me in TMRB? Do I want to make a record of my five day story in Upstate? Why?

You resort to your little life. Hear the basketball being bounced on the asphalt in the neighbors' driveway.

I was reading through *Moment's Notice*, jazz and poetry and prose, as quickly as I could so I could put it aside. Then I'll not desire to hear the music. Or at least not enough desire to act on, and no further temptation. Clear the way so I can hear Kṛṣṇa's flute play Kāma Gāyatrī.

The only obstacle to creative writing is lack of faith manifest as fear and self judgment.

Fear that the world doesn't need my diary and free-write.

Maybe . . . waybey.

Walked in the woods from one pavilion to another. Finally wound up at the stadium for performing arts. Everything was open for us to

inspect alone at 6 A.M. No one on stage, no one at the ticket booth or merchandise stand or anywhere. Open but closed. We walked in chill air. I prefer to see the world that way.

No, at least you are writing. This is not a free-write to accompany a verse. But Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa is in the heart. The names of jazz giants I'm reading again and again and letting it go, Charlie Parker, Benny Olson (made that one up; I don't owe reality anything), Clifford Brown, Bud Powell, Miles, Monk, Train, black blues . . . I let it go. Not the same as chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa which you never tire of.



*What book is he  
reading?  
And why?*

So the image of myself listening to jazz and the image of myself chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa is not the same. I do have the image (dream) that I will chant and enter Kṛṣṇa's pastimes in my mind. That I want. Śrīla Prabhupāda's language, Śrīla Prabhupāda's man is I.

Here is an anecdote from *Moment's Notice*. It's about Coleman Hawkins recording "Body and Soul" in 1939. It captures what I feel about not feeling satisfied to stay all the time writing PMRB. It tells why I want to turn to writing here. At least it reminds me of what I am going through. The author of the anecdote first tells us other big things going on in the year 1939 (also the year I was born), the beginning of the war, the New York City World fair etc. And then:

It's equally fair to imagine Coleman Hawkins in that crowded year. In October, the Golden Gate Bridge closed down for repairs while on the eleventh day of that same month. Hawkins, just back from a rewarding stay in war-hungry Europe, prepared to the RCA Victor New York studios with some musical friends and cut "Body and Soul"—just like that, in the shadow of the Empire State Building.

You can even picture him, slouched in front of one of those weighty old condenser boom mikes, surrounded by smoke, suspended and hatted, thinking something like: "Well, let's see how what I'm feeling's gunna come out sounding this time, so we can get this session wrapped up and get back to the gig and really do some blowing." After the take he probably remembered how he'd performed this wee hours ballad better a hundred times before. "I'll get it down yet, 'he told himself,' but this will have to do for now." And, children, that was that.

When the record came out, saxophonists all over the world, hearing it and sensing that things would never



be the same, started wood shedding Hawkins' impassioned licks in their closets and on the stand. Why'd he have to go and do that? Of course everybody fell in love with it. My father would play it, tick it off, play something else then put it back on.

But this is my gig, *Upstate*. I barely have the gumption to write in the few hours in between other events and the little life. I will turn to other books. Finished with *Moment's Notice*, I now nose through *Fifty Days of Solitude*. Okay, I know what no one knows and plenty know what I don't know. The snows are not here, it's almost June, it's the big weekend, kids playing in nearby field.

Grumbach in her Maine solitude wants everything as quiet as possible and gets startled by noises of any kind, crows in the feeder etc. Mail comes telling miseries of the world, death of friends . . . and she reads books. Doesn't talk much to people. Good, I like her points. I want to live and write for five days with not so much talk with friends here. M. allows me that space. Usually he doesn't initiate talks.

But he just told me somewhat sheepishly that he has gone ahead and accepted the invitation to get a computer and be hooked up to it. Of course it will be a private thing and will not open us to the world of Link, Com, Internet etc. If that happens we will just turn the thing back in. Don't stay connected.

Spring jing, you are on your own. Kṛṣṇa is protecting you.

My writing is by force and discipline still.  
Meander, get lost, bring yourself back to where you  
should be.



I'm also reading C.c. sometimes. My spirit is to relax and do what I want. When I read C out of this motive, it's good. Śrīla Prabhupāda writes about being liberated within the material world. It's a technical science, *ihā yasya harer dāsyē . . .* Bhaktivinode Thākura considers the *brahma-bhūta* stage in two divisions, *svarūpa gatā* and *vastu gatā*. "When one has understood Kṛṣṇa in truth, but is still maintaining some material connection, he is know to be situated in his *svarūpa*, his original consciousness. When that original consciousness is completely spiritual it is called Kṛṣṇa consciousness. One who lives in such

consciousness is actually living in Vṛndāvana. He may live anywhere; material location doesn't matter." (*Madhya* 8.131, purport)

So I'm clearly not in that *vastu gatā* stage. Should I even claim that I'm in the *svarūpa gatā* stage? No. I think of other things regularly besides Kṛṣṇa in truth. Prabhupāda says, "One is not usually attracted by Kṛṣṇa in the material world, but as soon as one is liberated from material conditioning, he is naturally attracted." Clean the heart and it will come.

11:40 A.M.

This is my gig. Kids across the street have theirs (little ones in orange shirts). I have so little to convey.

Present

(he blows whistle to round up the 8 year olds)

Did massage and the bathed Śrīla Prabhupāda and put on his newest set of clothes, heavy rough silk. Keeping the world out. Played CD of "Rādhā Kṛṣṇa Temple," London, singing 1970 "Hare Kṛṣṇa Mantra"

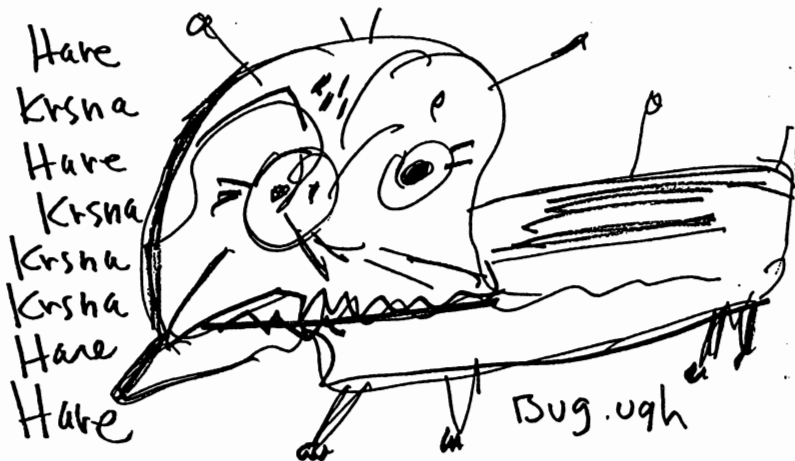
And

I don't remember when I was so blank. I don't recall the names of people in my class, or when I had a pen that fully satisfied me. I don't remember you or me. I try not to remember sex acts, no good for me to do so.

Yeah, things I prefer not to recall. All those collages. The art retreat in Italy last summer. I do

recall some of it and I recall being with Jayadeva some years ago. But it doesn't seem profitable. Doesn't seem I made best use of my time when I was trying to figure out what to do, whether to lead a life prayer. That was daring I suppose, to contemplate such dropping out. I don't dare think that way now. Neither am I attracted to it.

Got my scene, my niche worked out if I can keep it up—take lots of retreats for writing time but show up at right times for seminars and temple visits.



We'll have to see. But you need faith when you take writing time, that you've got a program you like to do.

Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa

and in slow increments he went on, adding to PMRB but now smaller and larger timed books kept coming.

His way of expressing.

Can it be?

This is me in my summer suit. This is lunch in Carolina. He'll let us know of change in plans. Oh Hare Kṛṣṇa, there's no way around it. Be a good boy. Let words just come along. I remember and don't.

Want best behavior of Vaiṣṇava. Get ready for respectable but human end. But if before then you could do something very helpful for the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, please do. And find ways to come closer to your S.M. Some way like reading his book and you listening—he says they're all *mūḍhās* and rascals who don't accept Kṛṣṇa. Agitates. It may not be soft language he says. And—if I say this, it may not be favorable. (He called democracy demon-crazy) but we speak from *śāstra*.

4:09 P.M.

I don't remember any special time I fell in love with words so don't ask me to remember that. Words. Words. Maybe I had some phony thing. Always pretending to impress people. At a certain stage I tried impressing people that I was intelligent and sensitive. I gave up trying as an athlete. No chance there. Try words. Be a poet. Beat poet. No, No.

Something else maybe. I can't recall any really gut strong romance with words. You used them to convey your point. Oh I remembered some lines from Romantic poets or pop songs. Maybe pop songs. Pop goes the weasel. Funny little games. Toby tie—"fot" for fart. We kids had our private meanings for words and it seemed hysterically funny to us. Until the grown-ups snapped you out of it.

We thought the word Toby, as a name for a boy, depicted a sissy. A toby tie was a neck tie unstylishly short. Fot was our kid comprehension of one of the first naughty or dirty words to enter our vocabularies.

Those dirty words still have the power, even shit and piss. In Kṛṣṇa consciousness our speech is sanitized. We say pass urine and pass stool. The Anglo Saxon words are stronger. But why join league with the nondevotees?

I do care about words. But not so much play and lining them up. Words like grass or tree. Any word. Eat. Drink. Take *prasādam*. And when you are shy and stutter a little, that's a magic too. You falter to say a word. L-L-love Kṛṣṇa.

Oh, we use the words over and over and get tired of the same combinations. I am trying to use them (Kṛṣṇa conscious *siddhānta* words) in a slightly different context, trying to liberate them and free the mind.

Be fresh.

Words lie when used by liars. They sell "air freshner" in aerosol can. The whole world becomes false in words.

Hey, momma!

You watch your tongue, sonny. Don't start spoutin' those bad words

Kṛṣṇa

Kṛṣṇa

is best

but don't say it in vain as a cuss word.

I wish I never heard blasphemies but Kṛṣṇa will help me to forget them and put good words forward, active in His service.

All words come alive naturally when you turn on the light—as in hand writ automatic words in a list.

Or telling a dream.

Don't fudge. Pay for the words.

List of some words maybe that occurred to you as revealing power and magic of words:

1) firecracker, cherry bomb.

2) taboo: cocksucker, muff diver, Mother fucker.

3) Pole star. Barbara Pole.

4) Drafted into the army. Vietnam. 1-A, 4-F, 1-D.

5) Navy, navy, U.S. navy. Get the fuck out. Short timer.

6) Sensitive soul poet. Rilke, Sandesh, man eat.

The more I think of it, I'm drawn to profane and obscene—power of forbidden.

Explode.

Rage, rage, against the dying of the night.

*Kīrtana*, the death of the cult.

The apostate

the jury rigged.

The mobster knifed.

The thugs entered,

Punched

Broke face

gouged eyes—violence and torture words are hurtful. You want to avoid them. Wors hurt, blasphemies, threats of violence, when I hear thugs use low words I cringe. Especially mocking words against devotees as from a passing car or hurled at the temple or when on *saṅkīrtana*, “Fags! Commies! Bald heads. Skirts.”

Skinhead, bikers, tough guys, gangs, knives, coming to get us. Break in. Felony.

What’s in a word? Nṛsiṃha! Chant Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Exercise: write the worst stuff you can muster and then throw it in the trash along with your sense of failure.

I don’t like to do that. It will all get maybe lost anyway. Yeah, I like to save what I write. I don’t get heart failure if it gets lost but why deliberately throw it out?

Okay here’s bad stuff:

The mortal element in prose is that the worst guys, the demons, have to be eliminated. Let’s beat the hell out of them and take their money. Women are less intelligent. Devotees who don’t distribute



books are wimps. GBC men are best devotees. Fags should be put in prison or shot.

Or—the gay revolution is nice and ISKCON shouldn't be so uptight. Make way for Jesus, the only son of God. But this is bad thinking, not necessarily bad writing.

Oh you are so good at writing you don't know how to write bad?

I didn't say that. I just say I don't need this exercise "write junk and throw it away along with your concept of failure". I know we can't fail when we keep trying to serve Kṛṣṇa.

"I was once a poet," said Montage.

"Oh you are still," said Sally Mc Dally. And they held hands on the rampart overlooking the Saratoga Spa Stadium. They were supposed to be selling stickers to support the Amhurst preaching center. But now they were in love. True love.

I am not able to write bad because I'm such a good boy. I'm so clean my naval has no lint. I got all A's on essays. I never have a bad thought. I work hard for guru and fall at his feet. On his Vyāsa-pūjā day I gave a \$1008 and he patted me on the head. The money went to the BBT.

Envious skunk.

Died and his skull stayed around on the earth. Gave orders to burn it. Keep it as an ash tray.

Now we are getting somewhere. Write junk alunk. Too long and boring dogma—dog and Ma.

Rāmānanda Rāya explained to Lord Caitanya that the summit of transcendental life is the conjugal love of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. He sings songs of *Prema vivārta bilāsa*. Lord Caitanya stopped the mouth of Rāmānanda Rāya with his hand because the talks are confidential and should only be heard by pure hearted devotees (not *prākṛta-sahajiyās* or materialist scholars). Next Rāmānanda Rāya explains the means of approaching the Divine Couple which is to follow in the footsteps of the *gopīs* (*sakhi bhāva*). All this is translated and commented on by Śrīla Prabhupāda.

I have this book, *Room to Write*, by Bonni Goldberg. (Sounds like a sister in more ways than one to Natalie Goldberg). Anyway, it's got exercises and I'm doing some. Some of them I resist. The next one says: write a whole page about snot. I don't have to. The point is to write taboo subjects and little ones like belching, which is impolite. It will help you see how you censor your writing.

Snot comes out the nose. I don't experience it much. I think using the neti pot helps me to avoid mucus build up and also common colds. I usually sneeze a big sneeze after using the neti pot in each nostril. You pour the water into one nostril and it comes out the other.

Snot. Is not. S'not. Is not such a bad thing if it's your snot, you could even take it down from your nostril into your mouth. It's yours. But someone else's snot looks disgusting. Scott Peck writes

about sobbing in a group therapy session, so much that snot starting running down his nostrils. He was embarrassed but could not stop his cathartic sobbing.

It's a bodily function. Obnoxious, bad smelling functions such as farts and feces and puss and danger of bleeding to death or lacerations etc., all these bodily dreads don't exist in the spiritual body.

We are therefore not so interested in the material body. We don't think it's the only body we have. Even materially, we have had bodies before and will get a new one when this one becomes incapable. The body should be cared for while the soul is within—so that we can use the body and soul in devotional service.

Snot runs out your nose when you blow it and you are glad to get rid of it into your tissue. Dried snot can be yellow or little blood pieces that get caught up in nostril hair. Doctors know all about this and don't think of it as disgusting. It's the body's way. Blow out a good ball of snot and you have gained. Be glad for it, go on chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Now take rest and see you tomorrow after you do your first stint with PMRB. Saratoga was a scene of battles in the revolutionary war. America defeated Britain in two crucial battles here in the autumn of 1777. Much later, Ulysses S. Grant stayed in a cabin and wrote his memoirs shortly

before his death in 1885. Not much happened since then of that sort. Now there are spas, natural waters, guises, the parks, performing arts, museums for horse racing etc.

Saratoga. What about the ships, the USS Saratogas? I used to give lectures to sailors newly arriving on the Sara CVA-60. She's dead now. The soul never dies. It changes from one body to another.

## May 26

Walking in the park by 5:15 A.M. Some van parked near the forest and I walked past it a little fearful. The engine was running but I couldn't see anyone there. Thought about how somebody could kill you and all they would get off my body was a used Sony dictaphone and a set of *japa* beads which would be useless to them. How valuable is my life anyway? I saw an interesting line in a poem by Miloz when he's recalling his youth and how a particular river was very nice but as he recalls it he remembers all the garbage heaped on the bank. He said it is good to remember like that as a caution against trying to find an ideal place on the earth. From the Kṛṣṇa conscious point of view we know there's no ideal because no place is eternal, full of bliss and knowledge. Also many of the paradises we seek are kingdoms of God without God. Just know I'm on a knoll looking down at powerful flow of water down a waterfall and into a small lake surrounded by rocks. It's nature's "violence" but

thrilling. And you could be peaceful there sitting on a ledge. I see a raft also. But if it all produces a kind of raw sense grat. and forgetfulness of Kṛṣṇa of Vṛndāvana, what's the use?

Look at it a while and turn my back. Start walking and chanting or talking this *Upstate* in search of a devotee writing life.

Squirrel running along the low wooden fence. Limp American flag on a pole with a silver ball on top. Outdoor barbecue stands. Only me in the park because it's so early. Puff balls of dandelions. Left-over picnic litter from yesterday and here is the "Orenda Spring . . . a naturally carbonated, saline alkaline mineral water. This is a highly mineralized water and contains radium. Its continuous or excessive use may be harmful to your health." It's arranged like a shrine. You approach it and the water is pouring down out of a little rock-built shelter into a stone fountain. Just where the water is coming out the rock is red. It reminds me of the tongue of Kṛṣṇa at Govardhana. But there's no personal worship of God involved unless you already bring it with you.

Now into deeper forest area where the floor is earth. Thick tree trunks of deciduous trees. All around, you see the tall columns reminding you of temple architecture. And the earth floor is covered with pine needles and other mulch. Valley, old rotting wood. Reminds you of a spot like this in Gītā-nāgarī woods. But you can't walk far because your foot hurts and anyway you're soon at the edge

of the deep woods and into another part of the Saratoga Spa.

When I have physical pain my world shrinks up to the body but this should be a training time to try to see beyond the body and don't just feel the pain sensations. At least keep chanting as you limp along. Pain relief isn't everything.

White Birch trees. Pale golden palm weeds by the side of the road. Beautiful blue enamel sky with white wisps in front of it, painted by the Artist. Many shades of green in the leaves and grass. I'm on my sixteenth round and still a lot of the day is ahead.

Kṛṣṇa's love for the *gopīs* is pure and their love for Him is purely transcendental. One can understand it only by following the path of the *gopīs*. "One has to practice living in Vṛndāvana by hearing about the talks of the *gopīs* with Kṛṣṇa. However, one should not consider himself a *gopī*, for this is offensive." (C.c. *Madhya* 8.205, purport)

The *gopīs* find their greatest pleasure not by directly meeting with Kṛṣṇa but in uniting Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

I read some in C.c. although still drowsy, even after resting. Head hangs down on neck, like a big flower on a stem. Now I will write of other things although some may find the mixture jarring. It is my actual life to sometimes read esoteric passages in Śrīla Prabhupāda's books and then do something

else. This is not necessarily offensive. It is the actual of life.

It is quite cold in the morning, so much so that we wear gloves on our morning walk. But gradually the morning warms up and you may remove Śrīla Prabhupāda's knit cap and open a window. Be aware of these changes and don't get left behind.

All right. Funny words and puns are always peeking out. But I don't have to notice them. Try to find Kṛṣṇa in the mess of this organization. That's the best idea.

Novels, crafts, poems, plays, Cadillacs, peas, lunch for breakfast, gliders, turtles, mishes, mashes, and more turtles. And sprained pained foot feels better later. Nothing is permanent in this world. The soul is permanent, however, and takes one body after another. This is the law. Your stiff neck doesn't change that law—you are eternal and the body will pass.

Blue Jay calls. My childhood pangs. The Red Maples bloom dark, dark wine in end of May. Bloomers and pajamas are still in fashion in the cold.

He said it gets "chilly" here in winter "but if you come then we will keep you warm."

I told him I am writing two things at once. They are kind to feed and house us.

I won't tell all the things that occur. There was, however, a contest he saw by which you were



invited to write an essay "What I would do on my first day in my cottage in Ireland." The prize winning essayist would be awarded a cottage in Ireland. How about that? And he brought me a flimsy walking stick, just like the one I used in Ireland. It would be better to have a traditionally shaped cane to lean on, when you sprain and strain in the New York forest of performing arts.

Be aware O' Hare  
airport isn't the only  
and money can come in  
a window.

"A poem must rhyme,"  
said a silly serious girl and  
I lectured to her on the history  
of English poems but had no  
time  
or inclination to  
tell her of T.S. Eliot and  
Father Williams but said  
poets got tired of the shackles  
of rhyming and meter and  
wanted to make poems more  
like human speech.

Speaking to such an innocent, second generation Hare Kṛṣṇa child, I myself questioned, "Why is it so important or valuable to approximate valuable speech?" But anyway I much prefer the vers libre and so tried to convince her it is best this way.

Oh hey  
Oh Harey  
The airport got its name  
and fame  
when Tripurari and his troupers  
did the change up there  
like a bear  
he growled his way  
into his spiritual master's heart  
and I can't condemn it  
as they risked their lives.  
But it could of been  
honester is all we  
may say.



I mentioned that book, *Room to Write* by Bonni Goldberg. Well it's got assignments in it that would take you all day to write. Take a Biblical or literary story and pick another character who appears in the story and tell it through his or her eyes. Too much. I did something like that with a school friend of Prahlāda's—his friend's father was the main character in *Am I a Demon or a Vaiṣṇava?* Take my own life from the view point of someone else. The person who makes us write and get up in the morning. No, there is no one else, really.

I will not therefore submit, at least for now, to such coaches' suggestion. It's enough to open the window bit by bit as long as it doesn't get too cold.



St. Francis' story told by his mother. Worries about his health. Maybe she'd have liked it if he married Clare and became an ordinary son of a

Frenchwoman in Italy. But that husband—I mean Francis' father—he was destined to play the evil role and drove the young saint out of the household. The archetype boor father for all future young sons going to join or start a religion.

Yeah

Yeah stardust.

Now the Bonnie says "Trust me". Why? Trust me and write three pages using the word "game" and whatever comes. She's trying to prove something she calls clay. You write and expect to discard most of it. You are just preparing clay for the sculpture which will come later. Be prepared to not use anything at all in what you write but then try it again and again. You will find some gems sometimes, this way.

I told you I feel differently about it. I don't want a head shrink of writers to tell me what I'm doing is avoiding by my own modus operandi. Anyway, I've got my structure in PMRB. This one is for—fun,

own's sake

travel diary

pissoir

the serious side, the story of Coleman Hawkins and how and what he really wanted to play even while he was recording "Body and Soul" in the RCA studio.

If you try to reach us by fax or internet just push the buttons under the code sssdddggg zzzz. He's

asleep in there. Saw large but young fawn-deer just a block away from this house. Be glad to tell you more about it, awkward youngster at 6 A.M. in suburbs.

You don't even yearn anymore to be living in Vṛndāvana. It doesn't seem at all possible for social, institutional, austerity reasons. I don't fit in there. I'm doing what I can out here in this orbit. Peer and try to see through the fog and barriers.

I'm out here circling,  
coming down from fixed  
formation in the sky.



---

Upstate airlines. Kṛṣṇa, I am seeking Thee in the transference of thought into release energy. I am writing this in free hours before I go for daily giving of massage to my master. This fresh apple I offer. (Told him a prefer raspberries and blueberries to dates. Don't you?)

Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana. That's the best subject. Unless you want to say Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana. But you know what I mean. The scene in Vṛndāvana is open only to pure devotees and to those they wish to confer it on. You have to be qualified. Break through to fresh, real utterances where you say what you mean and feel.

I feel mean. I feel pretty. I don't feel anything. I feel her thigh. I am creating, making up things. But you said *Why Not Fiction?* In Erice you said no more of that Conrad stuff. Yeah, but for half a line I may indulge.

Here's the story: Mercy and Dercy met at the racetrack and they found a Kṛṣṇa conscious book and started chanting.

"Old stories, old stories, whatever you tell," said the *gopī* to the bumblebee. We don't want to hear about that blackish boy. He is cruel and was so in his past lives.

Rāma Rāya's embarrassed shy smile, out of character for him who never makes temple announcements. But now he's expected to do it sometimes since he's a senior temple member. And then him running barefoot fast and shouting after our car as we pulled out from the temple. We'd forgotten the bag with our breakfast *prasādam* and so Rāma Rāya ran down Com. Ave at 5 A.M., through street lights and traffic lights flashing in that city, shouting, shouting, "Wait! Wait!" like some kind of streaker in Vṛndāvana, saffron *brahmacārī*—running after the Lord. I wish I

was so uninhibited and desirous to give someone their breakfast before they run away in their Masda.

I wish, I wish a wishbone wish that you may grow up and die and before that become a pure devotee who chants his rounds and doesn't think after the bare sixteen, "Okay that's all for today." And he reads more and more out of his own interest in the book of his spiritual master. The *gopīs* are pure, their love is pure, their interest in Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā is pure. Hear more about it in what you have read before.

Blue-gray paint job on houses in suburbs . . .  
Acch, Acch.

The long weekend of Memorial day. We too take advantage of it in quiet retreat. We are not at a festival, just a little festival of words like raspberries. We produce so let them come. Please Lord, direct us to Your lotus feet. The Lord is more delicious than any berries. His service is the tastiest. I have tasted it sometimes.

Read, read the IWR and the Catholic News about persecution around the world and when it comes to own your family naturally you are concerned. Read of what you can buy and sell. Read and use those newspaper pages to draw on with crayons. It seems the right things to do.

This is the way to go, O Moe, O ancient rhymer, you are about to give me the ditch and I am about to receive critch. Oh we have forgotten what we wanted to see. Good. Let someone else do the

writing, the fawn or N. or the car or the day. It's best if it comes by chance to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. We are improving, we are on the track, he wrote his mamma alphabet in the soup. No more when she's dead and that means the son has to die too and bless everyone around him, not like that dancer who had Aids and didn't think of God. Oh am I better? No, I don't say that.

But certainly lucky and I am pushing that. Maybe I am not pushing it, but right here in my own way I am pushing as much as Sataputa did on the TV with Charlton Hesston. I say my own way. Four thousand people are not going to write in to order my book but in my own way I do want to thoroughly expose a Kṛṣṇa conscious enduring way of life to the people of this here world. Not by kicking Darwin, which also has to be done, but by kicking the habit of dullness. And being relaxed on Memorial Day weekend writing as much as you can, three pages using the word "game" and ready to discard it as a lump of clay and then begin.

Game. Monopoly. Game of persons, game in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. That's interesting, whether Kṛṣṇa consciousness is a game. Sure I don't claim all I write is architecture. It's clay. But you can also leave it that way. This is the clay session. Clay of the earth, red clay stone, red sand stone I saw this morning, the red of Govardhana tongue.

It's a game. You pick a structure and fill it in. That's a game. Ha, it's not the real thing. But the



real thing is also a game. Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa play games like break the heart, see you in the *kuñja*, go to another *gopī*, I am angry with you. And they play chess too. And they play games when the elders come by and interrupt them.

As I write this, I see three young kids around eight years old. Two of them are white and one is chocolate. They have a big glider airplane. It belongs to the colored kid. Looks like a Guyana Airlines plane. They are making up a game, they don't know what it is. I'm going to have to close the window. Damned kids, the old man can't write his serious game.

Games when you are bored or there are dangerous games like cat and mouse, where someone is being cruel with another. I want to concentrate on my Kṛṣṇa consciousness. You could say chanting is a game. It's not, but I mean it is a structure. You take a circle of 108 beads and every time you go around once you start again. There is structure in everything and even in chaos. (Enrico said) observe the patterns and be confident that all that you do and wherever you may possibly range, it is all within forms of patterns.

(They have taken the wings off the plane. They are playing in the grass. I just hope they don't get cruel with each other. Not my business anyway.)

Games big businessmen play and of course sex partners, even friends in Kṛṣṇa consciousness play little internal trips and trips on one another. You can't avoid it. Therefore you cannot say absolutely

that, "I shall play no games because they are frivolous and I'm a grave Kṛṣṇa conscious person." But I may try to be kind to people while playing an inevitable game. Don't play so hard. But in the game you set yourself, that I shall write these books and try to express Kṛṣṇa consciousness in it, in that game you may play hard. It's a game to throw out a net and to catch the nondevotees with the interest of the human feeling in this sort of writing. I am playing that game in earnest.

The net is up, the net is down. We are playing the game in the big leagues, in the no leagues. We are in *paramparā*. It is not a game. But it is something with rules and regs. It's a reality of structure, a relationship of guru and disciple and laws, laws. You don't think of the government as playing a game with the citizens but it's law and order so people have got to follow it and live within it or else. And when they work in the system they can get personal results and they won't be a disturbance to the nation. Similarly in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the thing is to please the Lord and the *ācāryas* have it figured out. They have given you lessons and if you follow them it will churn up the original love of God that's in you. That's the way it is.

This is my clay, Bonni. I am not going back over it to pick out some gem and start from there. I am leaving what you call the whole mess out there. I feel the pleasure of wet hands and shaping clay and there is a nose on it and a foot or two and *tilaka* I

must put on my figures. Here it is, not Miss America, not the pure devotee, not a game like Monopoly on windy hill but plain Alf Sassafras playing around footsie ego claim that I'm good enough to write what comes and leave it at that. Sincere, the breezes sport and as long as you don't claim it's great, we will let it go.

Bonni says destiny is a Big Subject. Write about it in your own handwriting for two pages. Not a puzzle. Karma is the answer. We have free will and when we plug it into the material nature, *māyā* in three modes works it out for us. Man is the architect of his own fortune and misfortune. Man proposes, God disposes. Both aphorisms are correct. I don't have to speculate on destiny.

It's all worked out in the stars. Devotees' interest in astrology seems to lean too heavily on destiny. Everything ordained by karma. I'm going through a blue period; don't try any poems for the next three years. Watch out for trucks and mucks. Don't dish it out. You'll need a stranger bearing myrrh. Your Christian birth, your momma's curse on you. Beware. Don't pronounce your guru's name. Put ghee in your nostril from a golden lota on full moon in April and your headaches will vanish. "Phee-ew" sang the bird that warns of the tiger's coming.

But sir, are you saying destiny doesn't act on you. No, I say it does. I'm limited by my past. These impressions have formed me. But I'm a pure

spirit soul and Hare Kṛṣṇa comes straight from Kṛṣṇaloka.

But maybe you are destined not to chant purely in this life time, especially when Mars and Rahu are in the fifth house with the rising star of Rohini. You are debilitated then.

Hmm. Got to go to my astrologer to get a take on that. He (she) figures it all out on a computer. It's pure math who I am.

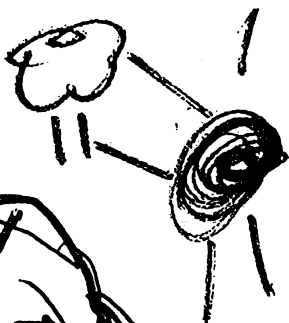
Destiny tiger. Tygr. The way you look tonight. I avoided listening to jazz, Tadds' delight, because who am I? A tiny, tiniest integer who tries to write, "I'm a guy whose got to dance, don't know the reason why." Well . . .

Well. You are the mystery lurch. I can't read C.c. deeply right now even if I tried. Wait until 11:59 when the planets change positions.

Keep trying, little one, to make your effort and raise your song. This afternoon we will comment on PMRB verse 1.5.37. Who can stop us if Kṛṣṇa is on our side?

MARS ☆	Leo ☆
Rohini	LIBRA 2:47

Hokey  
-Chart



## May 27

I think I've finished with that book by Bonni Goldberg. The exercises are too demanding, seem aimed at fiction writers, not for devotees, and much of it seems stolen from other writing books I've studied. So go on your own now. Or rather, go with your spiritual master and Kṛṣṇa, God-given abilities. The Robins and other birds are calling us to go out for our walk. Upstate words.

In patterns

can't find shoes to protect my feet.

Can't find a better way.

Break your silence in the woods. Got something to say? This writing is for yourself so don't be afraid of failure. You want to read it later like you're reading your retreat diary from last October and enjoying it. So if you enjoy it, seems there's a good chance others will also. It is as simple as that. Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare.

And what do I enjoy when I read my writing, or other writing? Well, I enjoy it when it's probing, good honest discussion of philosophy. And when there's freedom allowed. I like it when the same *parampārā* philosophy is expressed with new terms and words. I like it when I break through things that are blocking me and troubling me and you can see it on the page.

I like it when I out-trick myself and somehow just some plain Kṛṣṇa consciousness goes down on the page and I find myself reading it, such as some words from *Bhagavad-gītā* and before you know it you're getting the *darśana* of Kṛṣṇa in your own book. That's nice. And you give some quote from something you've heard Prabhupāda say. Your own book is nourishing, you and Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

It gives me good company and makes me think I should do more like this. And it may give me a clue to this mystery that I never solve once and for all—which way is best for me to write, what is the structure, what is the metaphor? Maybe it will lead me to a way to put all these different tendencies together. Guru-sevā remarked that when I started doing larger collages it seemed I was putting together all the different art expressions I had done to date. There was room for my little black and white drawings, room for direct bold writing and figures right on the poster board, and a place for literary illusions, cut out pictures, and rapidly done splashy face paint done in tempera ink, spray paints, oil based sticks and so on. They all

came together not exactly in prim or “organized” manner. But they were all there, joss, jostling and running around on a double poster board.

So maybe by repeated free writing I’ll build up my repertoires and learn a way to put them together. I don’t like anyone telling me how to do it. I haven’t found anybody else’s published book that is just to my liking and so writing whatever comes in repeated attempts is my own kind of discipline, it’s my way of writing first drafts and second drafts. And it’s a way to do Kṛṣṇa *bhajana*. So don’t give it up or be disgusted with it. But try to improve it with Kṛṣṇa conscious content and honesty.

8:30 A.M.

He has nothing to say. There is nothing to say. A grant to live in Ireland. U.S. grant in a cabin, writing the rugged memoirs and then he died. Exonerate yourself. He goes down in history as a very determined army general, sacrificed thousands of men to win battles of Fredricksburg, Richmond, hang in there and keep sending more young men to the front for carnage. Then he went to appomatox court house to accept surrender of General Robert E. Lee who was better dressed and taller than Grant. Grant was an alcoholic of sorts or say he drank a lot. Cussed, smoked cigars, read books when he could get a minute to compose his mind. Then he became president of the U.S.



Last days. No use reading of his life. I could attempt to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa in *bhajana kuṭir* but Śrīla Prabhupāda says you can't do it. So I accept that I cannot do it. I could build up to 64 rounds. I've done that before, for a week. But then you go down again. And when you are up to 64 you are mostly just counting, counting to reach it. I mean I have very limited boundaries on all sides. What can you do? Write this and that, lecture, travel, see some persons, offer council, answer mail. Get on a horse and write. Get in airplane and fly.

Śrīla Prabhupāda said (as example) we are very happy on third floor of our new building but then the mosquitoes come, sent by Fear personified, and everything is ruined, so much that we don't wish to live anymore in this building (Māyāpur). No place where Māyā cannot enter to disturb your peace. That Durga who gives fear to all is afraid of Kṛṣṇa. But Kṛṣṇa is afraid of mother Yasoda. When I think of this, say Queen Kuntī, I become bewildered.

You are a reasonable creature.

You are not—many things and no sense saying them: “not this, not this”, not a red garter, a photo book on Saratoga etc.

You say these to create surprise and interest. Not this.

Blue T-shirt and shorts jogging girl goes by. Bird whistles. Hold on, universe, don't split apart. (It won't; Kṛṣṇa is in charge).

We are only the most recent bunch of living entities to live here, occupy space and breathe and defecate etc. Live by laws. They say the Adirandeck bank is the corner stone of buildings in the town of Saratoga. In 1980 or so they went to a new building. Maybe as late as 1989. It was designed by a NYC architect in "post modern" style. Has something like bas-relief columns. Simple and classical. Replaces the old bank building that was in the same spot.

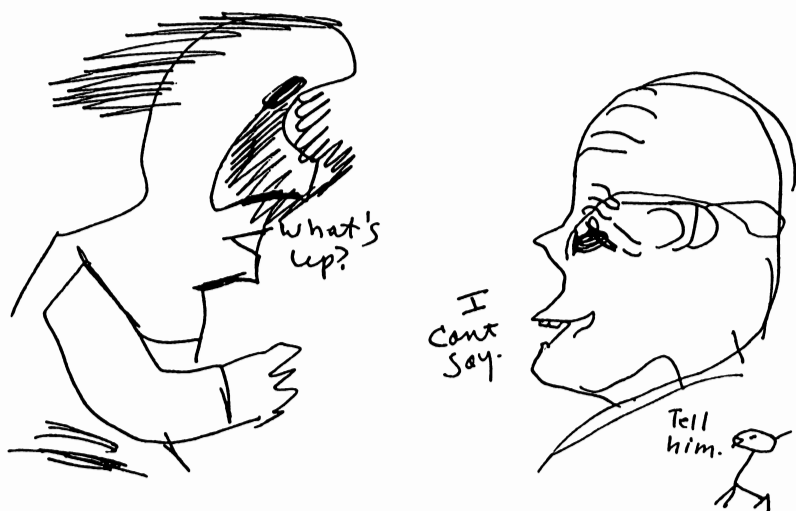
F.D.R. came here many times in early years in a big car you'd find now only in a museum. He's dead. Nelson Rockefeller helped develop the area. He's dead too, shamefully. Dead, they died in a last act. Grant, I already said, was writing the memoirs.

We are the current batch of insects. I use this word because Śrīla Prabhupāda was talking of insects at Māyāpur which come and live and die only in a single night. It's relative. He said we live a life time or single night and die and when you are dead nobody can tell whether the body (in Calcutta riots) was Hindu or Muslim. Heaps of bodies disposed by the municipal clean-up workers.

This is on the mind. And now N.M. is in England and some devotees of ISKCON, we heard, have gone to him. If you go and take him as guru then you have to leave ISKCON and not be allowed in their temples. Still some went, defected. Jadurani went and travels with him. This is juicy, frightening, demanding news. You could try to tune in and get blow by blow reports on it, the way

karmīs hear every sneeze and fart of the presidential candidates this year. But you are refraining. But then I have “nothing” to talk with M. about. I don’t ask for that news. Neither do I ask him about his phone calls to Irish embassy or Baltimore docks (where our van is stuck waiting for a trans Atlantic boat). So if not that news—then what?

How about the news of *Bhagavad-gītā*? How about the beginning of ninth chapter where the purport says it is very potent to hear talk about Kṛṣṇa among devotees. Yes, but you have to concentrate and pray.



Wasted much of the morning in heavy drowsiness. Whatever I attempted turned into falling unconsciousness. I don't know why.

That news.

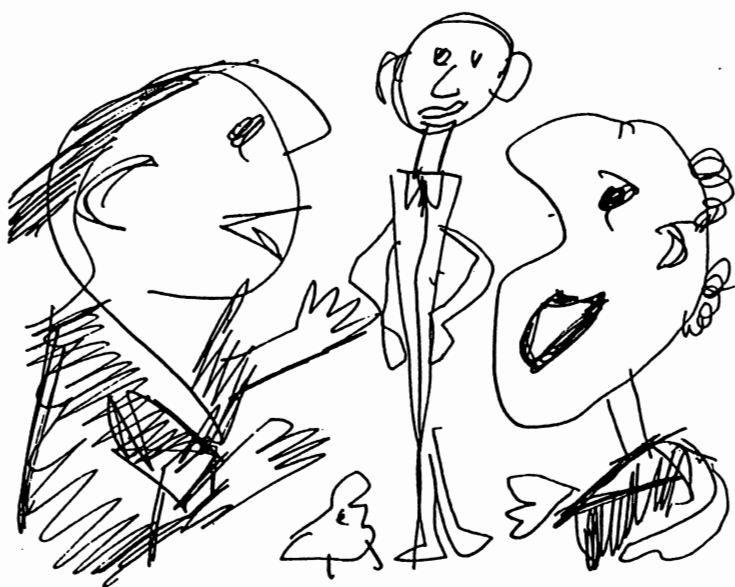
That news of the St. Helens volcano is very old and the case is closed until further notice. It's like Mt. Vesuvies' story. Or another war about to happen. You are not tuned in.

You float in space.

Then Kṛṣṇa got on his horse and rode into the forest to find the Syamantaka jewel.

I won't tell stuff on my mind, but then there's ab-so-lootely nothing to say. I've been relieved of superficial and pressing duties just to say what occurs, but it's hard now that I'm removed from that. You could rhumba the tumba but you are too grave for that. Here's the weather report, told by a stylish gal shapely in her suit, standing dumb in front of U.S. map of highs and lows. The best weather in the world. A dozen TV screens and she's in one. And you have to hear what's on the TV unless you put earplugs in. I have to hear the gentle nonsense on this street or stay too warm with all windows closed. The boys come out to play. A lady sauces her candles. I.S. chewed, working on plot and character of a novel or short story. Be real. Pilot your ace. But double talk is allowed in doses.

Raspberries were good mixed with hot milk, cream of rice cereal and maple syrup offered to your S.M.



Keep at it. That silver pen costs more but gets clogged. This cheap one flows. Birchenstock shoes worked better than yesterday's. Pṛthu dāsa Prabhu criticizes this kind of writing and others would criticize just because it's me. You can't please everyone, so don't try or worry about it. I think why I don't write in the other forms and it keeps coming back to this. People have written like me but not exactly. I don't philosophize, speculate like Henry David Thoreau. Don't write of streets like a street guy. Prostitutes journal. Gang warfare. I missed my chance to get the journal of a navy guy during the war. I'll pick up what I consider an authentic diary. Guy living sick. But mine are beyond diary too.

Sickness. Wellness. Ying and Yang. 99.9% of books published are not relevant for us. They omit Kṛṣṇa. Sometimes there is a prayer for God as in the end of that Machado poem. He described various people on a train during an April moon lit night and then his last stanza:

“I remember fields under snow,  
and Pine trees of other mountains.  
And You, Lord, through Whom we all  
have eyes, and Who sees souls,  
tell us if we all one  
day will see Your face.”

But even that is not about Kṛṣṇa. Red car goes by on Mem. Day. And I writing haikus embedded in the prose like raisons and nuts in bread. Offer it, offer, this is the end of another notebook.

Where you left off. Kṛṣṇa is teaching. I could leave this and see what He's saying. I gave you some stuff for today.

*Rāja-vidyā* verse.

M. moving upstairs and I think it's my mother up there. So ingrained that movements in the house are my mother.

*Rāja-vidyā* verse. Second chapter is confidential—there is a soul different from the body; it's imperishable. But that doesn't give us positive information about the soul's form and activities in the spiritual world or constitute the most confidential part of spiritual knowledge. This is

“screaming” (not the word I want) to be known, but is unknown in the world. People don’t accept it.

O Hare Kṛṣṇa. I wrote to a friend. O Hare Kṛṣṇa. They will never accept, not so many. Śrīla Prabhupāda says you can’t expect everyone to become a *brāhmaṇa*. So many *śūdras*. But the world could be led by Kṛṣṇa conscious persons. They don’t like to take political posts.

“Don’t disturb me,” signaled Gaurakiśora dāsa Bābājī. He sat by municipal latrine so the bad odor would keep people away. Undisturbed by fools asking for *darśana* and blessings he could go on with his own *bhajana*, deep in separation from Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa.



I don’t know anything about that. Then you have his disciple, Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī preaching boldly and constructing temples, printing books,

giving initiations. But he grew disgusted when his followers quarreled over the use of the marble building in Calcutta. He said to our Śrīla Prabhupāda—it would have been better to have printed books with that money. If you ever get money, print books.

Śrīla Prabhupāda wrote to me in 1969: give money to help print my books. If you ever get money, print books.

Purest knowledge. Padma Purana tells us we commit sins in a chain—and get chain reactions. Seed sown grows into a tree. For those engaged in devotional service, all stages of sin reactions are wiped away. Therefore devotional service is most pure.

Check each quality of the verse. Believe it, recite it. You could talk of *gopīs* joking and Kṛṣṇa grabbing at their *sārīs* and *gopīs* protesting and tears of *keli kincīt*. But here you are reading 9.2, that devotional service is purifying you of sin. The topmost philosophy is indicated by the term “confidential”. You don’t have to spell it out and generally you don’t.

12:09 noon

What need for more writing from me? Don’t ask. Just write. You walked, you walked, you lived, that’s reason enough. You read something in the *śāstra*. This is maybe your best remaining time.





Hi I'm  
a KC  
person  
giving out  
these  
books  
today.  
They tell  
of —  
Please  
take one &  
give a  
little  
donation

They say you go down hill faster and faster in old age. Been going down hill since you were about sixteen years old in this body. Faster means you can't see and think so well. Maybe, I don't know. Śrīla Prabhupāda got better and better in his seventies and eighties, didn't slow down his spiritual functions or his strength to push on he Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement and govern his devotees. Kept writing too, until it really began to shut down in the last month. His purports in the tenth canto regarding Mother Yasoda and Kāṁsa are all very fine and lengthy too.

There are reasons to scatter the seeds and grow the trees in your orchard. You need to keep producing. Or say it another way—writing helps you to clear the fog. Without it you go astray quickly. Write.

Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa *mantra* is coming out of the mouth and being heard by the ear . . . The talks of Lord Caitanya and Rāmānanda Rāya end in *sakhī bhāva*. He doesn't specifically mention *mañjarī bhāva*. That comes in the fourth chapter of *Ādi līlā*. At least you know it's all there.

In the last talks of Rāmānanda Rāya and Lord Caitanya, Rāmānanda Rāya says that you must follow the path of the *gopīs* and that is the only way to serve Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in the spiritual world. The purport talks of *rāgānuga* beyond rules and regulations. It may appear that he is not following the rules but he is. He is spontaneous now. He is serving Kṛṣṇa. And then it mentions the *rasas* and

the chief servitor in those *rasas*, like Raktaka and Patri among servants, Śrīdhāma and Sudhāma among friends, and Mother Yasoda and Nanda among parents. The chief *gopīs* are not mentioned here, but elsewhere we know something of them. Follow the eternal residents of Vṛndāvana.

It is comforting to see it there in print, so no one can say that Prabhupāda didn't write about it or didn't know it as the ultimate goal. But it is far beyond us. It is attained by pure service. So if you attain pure service to your guru he can reveal this to you. I remember when I accepted N.M. as my guru, he taught that it is not enough to serve the guru's mission in this world and expect that will bring you to the highest stage. You have to specifically think about *sakhī bhāva*. Then sometimes he backed away from that and said it was not possible for us. But for him, he thought of it and wanted to speak of it and he wrote of it. So that's why they are attracted to him. He gives them that hope. But Śrīla Prabhupāda said it would be revealed automatically by serving the guru's mission, by attaining the pure state of selfless service. And preaching was the quickest way to catch Kṛṣṇa's attention.

N.M. said unusual things about what preaching actually was. We were able to recognize his teachings in Prabhupāda's teachings. But the fact was that we had to interpret whatever Śrīla Prabhupāda said through the screen of N.M., our latest teacher, our teacher for higher truths. It was

a minimization of the position of Śrīla Prabhupāda. I see that now. So I want to follow Śrīla Prabhupāda and be assured that he can take me all the way up to *gopī bhāva*, *mañjarī bhāva* etc. by real qualification. Also, not only was our Prabhupāda resedent to teach of *mañjarī bhāva* but so is Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī.

It will go on, discussion and controversy about this. But you have to choose and ISKCON GBC makes it very heavy, either/or. I can't avoid their rule in my life. I don't even find it obnoxious the way they draw the line, provided they don't be offensive to N.M. I want to keep out of the fray and rifts. I can't stop them from doing what they are doing. If N.M. is mad at them and they are mad at him, I keep aloof from it as much as I can.

This is Upstate writing retreat. Just a short one. I hope that it will give me momentum for going on to Ireland.

4:14 P.M.

Coming to the end of volume three of PMRB. Just one more verse and comment. I'll start it tonight and finish in early A.M. Then go on to do a preface for volume four.

But I've still got the doubts about it. That gives room for this sort of writing project done for myself—with hopes someone else can read it as something honest.

But bit by bit as I hack away at PMRB . . . I don't intend to quit. It's substantial. You are moving now

more like a turtle in it, whereas you started like the hare.

Hare Kṛṣṇa.

O hair, oh hell I don't want to waste your time.



Performing hearts  
of Saratoga does  
stay here in summer and  
tonight we'll  
perform "the end of a volume"—

A quiet moment of music heard by no one—even while bigger affairs are cooking and the pavilions reserved and filled up with campers barbecuing on the lawns and in ISKCON land pure festival with vegetarian feasts and senior devotees espousing faith and knowledge.

Nārada said—I just wrote it over there—he accomplished first transcendental knowledge, then yogic *siddhis* and finally love of Kṛṣṇa (*bhāva* to *prema*) just by hearing and chanting.

Motorcycle man, please pass me by. I'm ready for my turtle-feed if they'll give me something at 5 P.M. I open my mouth and receive it like a holy wafer—chomp.

## May 28

“Who is the greatest capitalist?” asked Lord Caitanya. Rāmānanda Rāya replied that the richest person is one who has love for Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. The greatest distress is to be separated from the devotees. The most auspicious activity is to be with the devotees of Kṛṣṇa. (*Kṛṣṇa bhakta sanga*). And so the perfect questions and answers continue, with reference to the highest truths, devotion for Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

Now ask yourself some simple questions. Why do you write this? I write it out of a penchant, out of a desire to do it.

Answer better than that.

But this is the immediate answer. I feel a need to do it. I don’t want to write only an important book but also an unimportant diary of sorts, to come out with whatever I can. I can’t really answer that question. I just need to do it. And then I make it in line with my commitment to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. You see, this is maybe my greatest

drive, this yen to create something with words and allow it to come to life. Since I am deeply committed to Kṛṣṇa consciousness (afraid of the loss of heaven and the pains of hell) I make the writing into something Kṛṣṇa conscious. That's an answer. Try to accept it.

But if writing is what you want to do, why don't you write in a more orderly fashion?

Because this is truer. Or maybe because I am too lazy to do the other. No, I think it is because that doesn't give me pleasure to do it with too much structure and rewrites. Also I learnt this hip method and I like it, to write what comes. I like books in this way. Hope to be lucky enough to come out so natural that a reader is compelled to go through it and they hear Kṛṣṇa along the way.

Today is the next to last day here. A shorty of a writing retreat. Early this morning I finished volume 3 of PMRB and did the preface too to the next volume, in which I said I will now proceed like the turtle in it, slow but sure. Maybe this program is one I can continue as we go to Ireland. Turtle pace steady on *Poor Man* and something else going on at the same time, a free form, and accumulation. Be alert and see what you want to do and what is best to do. Don't neglect regular reading and of course, chanting.

Upstate was the place in five days where I got back on a track.

I'll be dedicated to writing always. But if Kṛṣṇa says, "Give it up", that's a different thing.

Now go walk but not as quickly as the other day. The old man is not able to prance around. Down the hill, up the hill, the turns in the road, the green life, the morning and little fear too. But altogether he's doing okay, a half hour walk and back for a poem and breakfast. This is all right, and add to the writing. Maybe you'll be able to discover something.

Get out there early just as the dawn lights are coming up, before a sun yellow. But the theater of sky is light. The car is only a thousand feet away from the entrance to the big parking lot. Madhu lets me out to run alone, with my walking stick. Go for it, but if you can't think of much to say outdoors, say "Hello". Say Hare Kṛṣṇa, I'm chanting fourteen and thinking this morning of baseball. So much gunk. Go beyond that. Be simple. I am. Please Lord, give me just a drop of devotion. And because I don't have devotion, allow me to cry for it. Open my eyes, let me be awake to the reality. Time is going by and routines are certainly all right, but beyond routine you want to call out Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa. While chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa we want to have the presence of mind to remember and pay attention to Kṛṣṇa's holy names. And when we can't do it, at least don't indulge in these long trains of thought so that the chanting just . . .



## Morning walk

K.R. invited us to stay here longer if we liked. He heard that there was a delay in our shipping the van to Europe. But we can't stay longer. We want to get over to Ireland/Europe. One reason is to get out of America before all the big festivals get underway. New York City ISKCON's celebrations begin June 2 and they go for a week including Ratha-yātrās. On June 9 they have something called World Holy Name Day and they are going to celebrate it at Tompkins Square Park. Imagine my being in the city at that time, hiding out at Rasarāja's apartment and not attending the function. Unheard of. They'd think I'm queer indeed. How could I explain it to them? Real Tompkins Square Park exists in my mind in memories where you cherish Prabhupāda there. Of course you can do it outwardly too . . . But not me.

So we want to move on. But coming here has a special function. I was hoping K.R. could come up with some quotes by New York Upstaters about their particular attitude. I seem to recall that the poets and writers of this region describe affection for the land as is typical of any region. They like the deep forests and the fact that it's not New York city. Because they are part of New York state but not the city, that's part of their regional pride. The land is spread out here. In New York city you have fourteen million people hovering around Manhattan like bees after the "honey". But Upstate so fewer people and spread out. Surely their

mentality is different. I figure that somehow there was some parallel to this in my own coming here rather than in the intensity of devotee association available around Brooklyn and New York city. Materially speaking I am not an Upstater, that's why I don't even know much about it. But I've pretty much left New York city as a devotee although I joined there. Prabhupāda said he also joined in New York city. We like to go there and visit now. But I have no base and so it's time to move, catch a plane across the ocean, start a new book over there.

Outdoors Upstate. No animals in this park except squirrels and crows and many other chirping birds. Other animals have been driven or scared away. In one zoo, after you see all the different beasts in their cages, you come to a place where there's a full-size mirror, and you look into it and then you see yourself and then at the bottom it says, "Thithincropiserectis. You are looking at the most dangerous animal in the world". The human being. He doesn't stand the tallest or the broadest, doesn't have the biggest teeth and claws, but he's got the *duskritina* brain to ruin it for himself and everybody else. These animals stalk the city jungles with hand guns, ready to gouge out each other and start big wars with atomic weapons. And when they're not actually in war, then they are enjoying in such a way as to foul up the air and the water. All this is cliché now.

Everybody knows it but no one does anything.

Ant hills at my feet. Miniature replicas of the human life. Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare. Nārada ends the fifth chapter of the Bhāgavatam saying to Vyāsa that you please broadcast the glories of Kṛṣṇa, the almighty Lord. This will be very pleasing to learned persons and it will give relief to the common mass of people who are suffering so many miseries and have no other relief. He has that conviction that hearing about Kṛṣṇa will really remove trouble, but we are so into it now, into Kali-yuga, it doesn't seem like you can turn it the other way. But Prabhupāda has said there is a period, a Golden Age possible now, so we work for that. Hare Kṛṣṇa, make some contribution so the Golden Age can come about, give a library of books, written by somebody who was among the first recruited, meet up with Prabhupāda but at a time when the Golden Age seemed highly unlikely. Because now thirty years after Prabhupāda came here our organization is operating with plenty of laws and is improving itself financially, but there's a certain lack of love and unity. With so much of this you wonder how could the organization "take over" the world? How can we deliver peace and harmony to the whole world when we can't even achieve it on the minuscule level of direct followers of Prabhupāda? That's the big question, again something of a cliché. But it's a question that no one can really answer to our satisfaction. So you make a contribution some way, not in a negative

mood, not in a tear-down mood. Yet you can't help but compare yourself to Prabhupāda who lived at a time when his spiritual master's movement was in complete disarray so he had to start something new. We don't start a new movement, but we make a contribution that doesn't depend only on the authorities and laws of the institution. We go to the heart of what Prabhupada did, and try to contribute something that will continue and not be revised or rejected either by the ISKCON official body, or by the grass roots force of devotees now and in the future. Calculate in that way, what will really last and make your individual contribution. It's a sort of quiet revolution without having to resort to open rebellion. One wants to live as a citizen in the movement as it is and yet point to something better.

Rāmānanda Rāya and Lord Caitanya, I read in a rocking chair. M. receives a computer from a courier company and walks upstairs with the two boxes. He was chanting *japa* before but now he's quiet, reading the directions and hooking it up. A new world. I go on reading. It's been cloudy skies so I position the chair to catch the outdoor life. Lord Caitanya and Rāmānanda Rāya.

Rāmānanda Rāya said, "I have one doubt. I see You as a cowherd boy, blackish; You are the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa. But I also see You as a golden form."

Lord Caitanya replied seriously that Rāmānanda Rāya was a *mahā-bhāgavata* and therefore saw everything moving and stationary as Kṛṣṇa, or reminding him of Kṛṣṇa.

“Give up these serious talks,” said Rāmānanda Rāya. “Why are you deceiving me?”

Then Lord Caitanya showed Rāmānanda Rāya His combined form as Lord Caitanya—Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. Lord Caitanya and Kṛṣṇa are not two separate persons. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is Kṛṣṇa but He has become golden by mixing with the form and mood of Rādhārāṇī.

“And now everything confidential is revealed to you,” said Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. “But don’t tell this to others or they would think we are crazy.”

Reading, reading, why doesn’t it open my heart? It does me good, I know. I come here to note some of it down. Think of my book *From Copper to Touchstone*, which will contain this and other favorite selections of *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. With some nice drawings by Guru-sevā.

Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare.

Played out. K.R. gone all the way up to the Adirondex, then back down here. Three different courts in one day, and then back to his office for more work. He’s a self employed lawyer. Chant

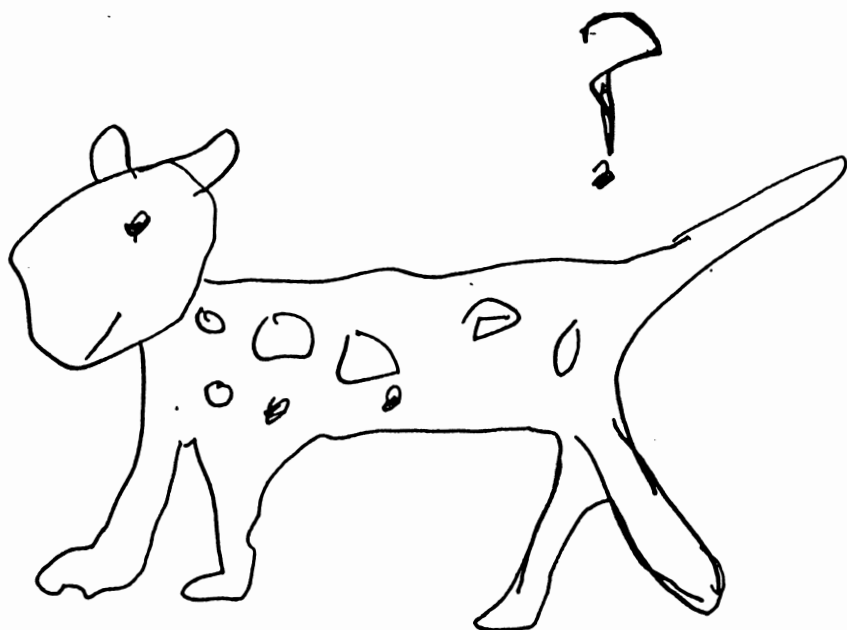
sixteen rounds as you drive, my boy? It must be hard to get them done otherwise.

My life is comparatively easy, sitting here and looking out at that very dark red Maple tree in full foliage, leaves trembling in spring breeze. Summers on the way.

*Nirjala Ekādaśī* today but I ate buckwheat pancakes and drank milk. No stopping me. Eat the house.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa appeared in this world in many incarnations. Sometimes you think if you go to India and stay in the *dhāmas* it will be different. And it is different when you go there. But I don't even attempt to stay more than three months. Some Americans have managed to live there permanently, by the grace of Rādhā, they say. What is the best price to live, abandoning all other places, asked Lord Caitanya. And Rāmānanda Rāya replied, "The holy place known as Vṛndāvana or Vrajabhūmi, where the Lord performed His *rasa* dance." Let me become one of the herbs and creepers there . . .

I've discussed why I don't live there. Maybe one day I'll feel I've discussed everything I needed to and will fall silent. No more pen on page. No more need for it? Not even doodles and colors? Not to say—the orange, black and white cat is nosing around outside. Her colors remind me of playing marbles of that color combination. Nature's odd ways.



No water even, no cat or mouse or grass or neighbors' boys playing basketball, smack, smack, smack. No computer. (I wouldn't give up my truth of moment seeking writing and turn to message by e-mail.)

Silence is golden  
The cat's got your tongue  
In a rung  
the b-ball clanged.

The rattle is a pencil vibrating as I cause vibration of the desk with my writing hand and arm. And the soft crackle you hear is heat coming up in the low radiator. Can't hear heart thump or Death's distant (?) approach.

A pious Christian was dying. Her friends told her an eagle has landed on the roof. She said, "Tell him to stay. That's my ride."

Little did she know. Garuda . . .

Yeah the day could well come when I admit I am played out. Then? You just read and say things you've read to others. You will talk, won't you? Talk and chant Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantras*.

But don't sleep and eat excessively.

And don't play with glider airplane.

Or go back to management affairs.

What about answering mail? That's a form of writing or talking. Don't increase it. I mean if you stop writing it seems only fair that you stop the other stuff too. But why?

No reason.

It's like day dreaming, "Maybe I'll slow down my heart beat and bring it to a stop. It has beaten enough for all these years. The same old thump, thump. Nothing new. Let's call it quits." Stopping writing might be like that?

You don't want to do it prematurely.

As for writing only in a perfectionist-editor mode and cutting out the small talk, no thanks, please. I don't need it. Let other guys writes such essays and chapters. That's not my contribution, the one I want to make.

Don't tell anyone what I have revealed to you. You and I are mad men. Ordinary people would think the subjects of discussion by Lord Caitanya and Rāmānanda Rāya were crazy talks. They prefer



to talk of the world and their power trips and speculations.

Button your lip, Rāya.

O Lord Caitanya, I will seek You out again at Jagannātha Purī. Once again, stay at a hotel and write there my notes, my oats. It's bound to be a little different. Is that your point of doubt? That you've covered the ground again and again as best you could and there's nothing new?

First of all that's not true.

But even if you say it is, you may try to write "the same thing" (a trip to Jagannātha Purī, what it's like at Siddha Bakula, Gambira, the beach etc.) and do it better than before. Do it again.

Only one spare ink cartridge left. No need to replace it. Just today and tomorrow. This notebook is more than enough. I didn't get "anywhere" in this *Upstate* but said something on my walk this morning.

That I am "Upstate" in relation to the NYC center of activities in ISKCON.

That I have a contribution to make. Won't repeat that here.

Walked and didn't hurt my ankle or foot. The springs of natural water. All alone in the State Park. Even the stadium is all yours if you would like to go on stage and do a quick ballet or applaud from the balcony. For only a few moments, before the parkies come to work.

Yeah, I didn't get anywhere, but claimed it's a momentum of what I hope to continue, a program of how to spend the day when you have it to yourself:

Midnight—2 A.M.—on PMRB

After that you write as you like in some free write collection especially late morning until time to worship Prabhupāda *murti*. (11 A.M.)

Then after lunch and rest, from then on you prepare another PMRB. While here I've been doing a whole verse that is question and answer and free write and then I set up a second one by 7 P.M. before I take rest.

And a poem when you come back from morning walk.

So you've got two or three things going at once. PMRB is a steady (slow but steady) factor. And some time for reading. None of the projects leap ahead, but all move along. You are always writing or reading in variety. This combination occurred only here at Upstate and if I like to continue then it is a good thing I learned here. M. gave me a hint of it. Kṛṣṇa supplied the ability. And He wrote SB by His agency as Vyāsa and Śrīla Prabhupāda wrote the purports.

12:14 noon

Won't take a snack at 5 P.M. today. M. smiles and laughs as I enter the room and see him for the first time in front of the computer screen. He's hooked. He says it's incredible, internet . . . and

breaking news. Of course he will do only a few simple functions . . . He mentions that Jagadīśa Mahārāja gave up the computer to live more simply. GN Press in computerized but I am left out of it. Feed in my hand written and dictated notes on Sony pages.

What have you got to say with all the speed and modems and phone hook-ups. What is the news that's breaking. I already know Bob Dole is running for president and goes around the country crashing on other peoples' big crowds and speaking at them, just outside the football stadium. Now I am writing without accuracy. That's okay, just say how you feel. If you feel like saying football stadium in June, go ahead and say it.

I feel like saying there is a word I can't think of that has bird's wings. "If they are romantic, we sell them *Dear Sky*," wrote Mark Shmults to me. We have our plans and God has providence as His plans. See if the computer can tell you that. It can't. It can't read the providence factor. It can't deliver you back to Godhead. Can't chant rounds for you. Best to do them on ancient wooden beads.

For hundreds of thousands of years, devotees have been worshiping Hanuman, Śrīla Prabhupāda wrote. Lord Caitanya visited a Hanuman temple on His tour of the south. Śrīla Prabhupāda says wherever the Lord went everyone was converted to *vaiṣṇavism*. Then he says our ISKCON preachers are almost as potent. Wherever they go people chant Hare Kṛṣṇa and become devotees. But I

thought, we have such a small effect in the cities where we preach for many years. People regard us as odd and very, very few become devotees. But you could look at it another way. Almost everyone does hear Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* at one time or another. In that sense we get them to chant. But you could hardly say we converted them to Vaiṣṇavas. Was Śrīla Prabhupāda exaggerating? No, he may have had bigger hopes at that time in 1973 when he was writing C.c. But Kṛṣṇa consciousness is spreading. Think of Russia. Don't be dour. My thoughts ran that way and then I thought how I'm not such an outward preacher. Maybe a fired up preacher thinks that way and only a critic thinks otherwise. But then I saved myself and said, well you are preaching too. People write to you and depend on you. One wrote and asked me how I measure up to the fifth and sixth verses of Guru-astaka. I initiated him, but he has been doing heavy drugs and gone for eight years. This is the first letter to me in all that time. He asks if I am measuring up to the fifth and sixth verse. I said, "Let's get to know one another again before you put me on the witness stand as if in court, 'Do you assist the *gopīs* in the *kuñjas* Vṛndāvana and if not why are you sitting on the *vyāsāsana*?' " I told him to read the first chapter of *Ādi C.c.* for *guru tattva* and said that the guru is humble but his disciple sees him as a direct representative of Kṛṣṇa.

4 P.M.

One might say these casual timed books are for when I'm not inspired enough to do PMRB. I want to be "up" for that. I can do it once or twice in a day, but there are more hours when I still want to write. So I talk over the back fence. Or I pray to God. Casually? Just who I am.

Also I could push out the purport and free write to another PMRB as duty, but that doesn't seem right. If I don't feel like doing it, don't do it as drudgery. But *Upstate* is never quite drudgery, because I speak at whatever level I am capable of.

Lord Caitanya's travels. We are getting in our own travel mode. I spent time gathering belongings this afternoon and gave them to M. for his suitcase. This is a big one—leaving the USA for the year. Carrying four big suitcases plus carry ons. Hare Kṛṣṇa.

## May 29

Get it together man. Know what these timed books are about. I remember getting warmed up and happy while in Guyana, about the timed book I would begin in Ireland. It was *The Best I Could Do*. Where is it now? Sunk in the sand? Will it ever be published? Those are not my main concerns, strange as that may sound. If I did write honestly then it will come out in one way or another. It was not all that I hoped it would be. I lacked a central theme. So now you have a book that proceeds with structure, *A Poor Man Reads the Bhāgavatam*. At the same time, I have books like this little one. It is more the matches. I mean it is for the boy scout drive, for the girl scout cookie drive. Come to your door and ask, "Do you have any old newspapers for the Salvation Army?" Do you have any . . . old timed books?

Yes, we have quite a few stored in a steel trunk in Irish attic. Go there and check them out. Hare Kṛṣṇa, you are the emblem of peace. You rattle and

ramble and bounce along. When will you get into your Ford van in Ireland legally and sufficiently? That's what M. wants to know. I try to hang back and act detached from it all. Doesn't matter to me. One way or another we will get around. All my secrets come out. Feeble depths.

A mother (my daughter) wrote me and asked me on behalf of her kids about the dinosaur bones. She said her son speculated that they were the bones of demons. What did I think? She said she heard that our master said there are sea monsters but we can't see them because they go so deep and what did I think of that. I made no comment in response but addressed more salient points such as her going to see a Christian psychiatrist and I won't tell the rest here. This is the Upstate mode, the free mouth, the kid away from the bullies, the old man who wants peace and quiet.

This is the latest news. We are puffed up about the way we write. We can't stand to hear the so-called truth from a critic who says it is no good and should be re-written. We don't have to hear it from him. We will get disciplined in another way. Make sure you write down the holy words such as Kṛṣṇa and Caitanya and they should appear enough times. Then it is acceptable writing. That's the criteria of Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī. He would print articles as long as the holy words occurred frequently. Then it would be *viplava*, revolutionary. Śrīla Prabhupāda speaks of this humbly, saying that he is not a great scholar or sanskritist and there may be

mistakes, “but we are trying” and professors and librarians like the books. His own disciples distributed them mightily. Prabhupāda inspired us to do that, his books made us devotees, therefore they are potent.

It creates a revolution. The materialists want to become devotees of Kṛṣṇa.

Wrote this morning, serious on theme of Vyāsa inquiring about his spiritual master. I said in the free write section of *Poor Man* I don't have to cavort and do automatic writing and stray off the subject. I may continue to write seriously the whole time. Wonder why that just occurred to me only after 1005 pages. It may be that I am allowing myself to let off steam separately. This is the kind of thing we are considering Upstate.

The word is revolutionary, *vip̣lva* in sanskrit. There are some words that cannot be translated like *keli kincit* or *rāsa*. You have to go by what you learn in the Kṛṣṇa conscious class, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa. I should use the holy words frequently and then my book will be valid. If Kṛṣṇa is pleased you are saved, if Kṛṣṇa's not pleased—but even if He is not pleased and yet He takes the time to kick you, that is a blessing too. But I don't want to be kicked. I want the guru to be pleased with me and Kṛṣṇa to reveal to me a tiny drop of the sweetness of the holy name. Not always forever dry chanting. I can't control the mind but He can bless me if he wants and then I can control it. Go walk now and look for clarity and enter it and speak.



One maxim for writing practice is that you should go ahead and write what you're afraid to say. It won't kill you. Yesterday I was talking with M., making comments on my letters from Śrīla Prabhupāda and I was talking in some pretty safe area about how householders that don't live in the temples are still part of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. They're not under the control of the temple president and their service may not be dictated to them in that way, or how they spend their money. But still they can surrender to Kṛṣṇa and Prabhupāda. Madhu remarked that when you give this example you always speak of the *gṛhastha* but what about a *sannyāsī* or *vānaprastha*. Is it possible that they could also do their service and live outside the temple. Here he was starting to get on sensitive ground. I said I sure hope that it's true that they can make a contribution while not living in the temple. I started to sketch a theoretical example of a person who was renounced enough not to be married but for one reason or another did not want to live in a temple, or could not live in a temple. Aside from theoretical models what's my position?

I think I'm in a post-institutional phase. I've read of someone like Matthew Fox who's now a post-denominational priest. Well I'm not like that. At least I hope not. Somebody in ISKCON may say that I am that, but that's just his opinion. But I'm not living in the temples, at least not now. It's

conceivable that I could change and again become a temple resident. But it doesn't appeal to me. I move from place to place. I'm most happy when I can follow my own morning schedule. The prospect of having to permanently follow the temple schedule is hard for me to face now. I think it's a privilege of old age and seniority to carve out your own morning program, especially if it begins at midnight and you're hard working. You just don't want to take out all that time for group liturgy.

So it wasn't so frightening to face after all, was it? Maybe there are some things that I didn't face that I just scooped the top of. For example, what if the GBC got down on you and said you had to live in a temple? What if they strongly disapprove your moving around? I think I could swallow it if it came to that. I'd pick out a place where I could live with a stream-lined morning program, where they appreciated me, and I'd make my writing schedule around it. I'd learn to write poems about being at *maṅgala-ārati*. I'd make a game out of it, a way to survive. Anything is possible. But as long as you've got the freedom then go for it?

This is my last morning walk Upstate. Got the whole park to myself, all the lanes and walks and pavilions. Just me and the crows and chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa and the squirrels and the water and the rocks and the dirt and the green, bright chlorophyll dune is here. So closing out this *Upstate*. Driving tomorrow down to the city.

Looking forward to starting a new timed book, something about living in Ireland? Something to go along with the turtle pace of *Poor Man Reads the Bhāgavatam* now in the sixth chapter of first canto, the fourth volume. Haribol.

You want to say more about living in temples? Just a couple of quickies. I recommend it for youngsters. The temple is a good place to visit . . .

This is not the deepest thing for me to talk about. You've been given some time to write outside the temple life. But now what will you write? What does it mean to go deep? Often you write about death but it's just a sort of an exercise, like a child walking to the edge of the ocean, going as far as he dares and then running back.

I'm a writer and my message is already chalked out. That's not unusual for writers. Some are always fancy in that they're blazing new trails, finding new forms, new ideas. But other writers settle with a form and try to develop it and make it better. I'm a Prabhupāda messenger. I'm teaching Kṛṣṇa's *upadeśa*. Just finding new ways to say it and to also tell the personal story of my *Śaraṇāgati*. For me there's no question of finding a new guru or new philosophy in my later years. That's all settled. But still, there are exciting prospects of how to write and what to write. It's a daily practice, a vocation. I like that line of thought where he says that writing (or painting or any art) is not primarily for creating a beautiful object, but

its purpose is to work at the vocation, to worship God through that medium. If non theist or vaguely theist artists can ascribe to that program, how much more so can I claim because we're in the service of Lord Gaurāṅga and his pure devotees?

Then why not go and live in Gaurāṅga's holy land Māyāpur or Vṛndāvana? Yes, yes. I'm going. . . in two days . . . to Ireland, writing what Prabhupāda has said, following his footsteps. He did not live in Vṛndāvana and Māyāpur, but kept a consciousness of serving Kṛṣṇa and Gaurāṅga while he traveled around the world.

Today Upstate, tomorrow New York City, the next day Ireland.

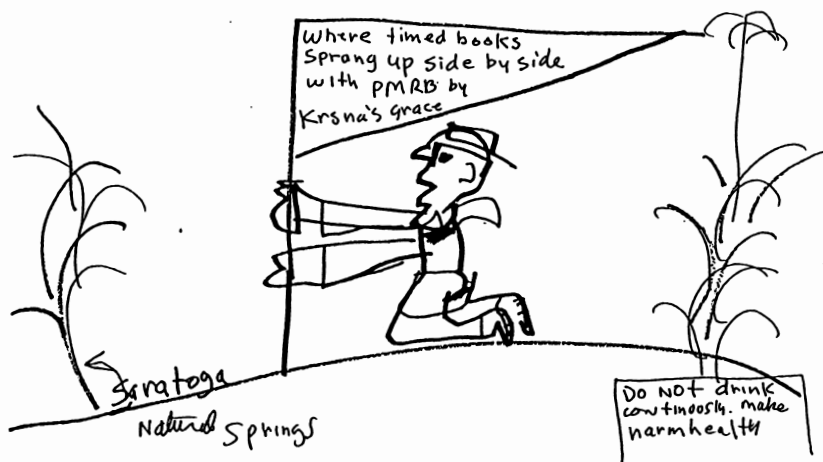
10:35 A.M.

Close up this little one. A vacation of sorts, that walk for only a half hour in State Park . . . It's an illusion. You don't want to be all alone, do you? In the spiritual world Kṛṣṇa is with His devotees.

The mystics say "Alone with the Alone". But Kṛṣṇa is not alone. He's with Rādhā and *gopīs* and *gopas* and parents and friends. Get used to that conception as superior. Alone is negative reaction against material socializing. It has its place, and works for you.

Going to Ireland now. Can you explain yourself? You want to stick a flag on the moon of Saratoga, five days and say "I did something here". This is it.

Eye twinge on horizon. But you have medication. Heck, even the president of the U.S. and his biggest rival use that sort of thing. These bodies can't last forever. Use it while you can.



May all moorings be safe and secure. Wave good-bye to the people, to the memory of two disastrous fires in Saratoga and F.D.R.'s many visits and Thomas Dewey's mustache and the little league baseball team of 1955 and the girls now grown old and died—

yes, I'm sorry about that  
but the Algonquin bank reigns supreme

I

I

was here too and hope springs up the Orenda Spring and other springs sacred to Native American. I'm from this soil, but only two generations back by forefathers who were from Italy and Ireland. I'll go there now, to Inish Rath.

Long face, your mug  
ain't proper.

Shave it up. Smile. You are sagging all over. And  
added weight doesn't help your niche. Smile



Dopey  
loves his  
self

Hoping to improve and love all beings by loving  
Kṛṣṇa

who is *param īśvaraḥ*

Lord of all *yogīs*

Friend of special devotees

and knowing Him is not an easy job.

Okay, sign off.

Kṛṣṇa-love is the beat

up tempo combo

Kṛṣṇa Love

I'll meet you in the next place. Saratoga was  
quiet and I said it enough. A little re-start here.  
Down on knees now. Worship spiritual master  
happily.



