

ELECTRIONIC BOOK

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Originally published by

GN Press Inc. USA

Every Day, Just Write

Volume 29

Going on

Holidays

August 7 - 31, 1998

Also by Satsvarupa dasa Goswami

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August 7, 1998, 12.10 a.m.

Reading *Krishna* book. It doesn't matter how *much* I read if I can only read one word well.

And chant Hare Krishna purely.

"The exact word used here is *tat-priyartham*, which means the demigods should appear on the earth in order to please the Lord." Pleasing the Lord "we should each ask ourselves whether we are doing that.

Just got a letter from a disciple who wants to debate with me about the origin of the living entity and other issues. He's not satisfied with my point of view but feels I'm being unfair with him, since my viewpoint so much resembles the ISKCON stance. I feel he's being unfair too. Let me dump a little of that here "as if it might help.

Living in this movement and being with one another requires so much faith. We have to have faith in our gurus, faith in our friends, faith in the holy name, faith in the general direction of the institution, and even faith in the importance of our own service. All that before we even discover our faith in Krishna. We find an easier faith in our own bodies, although they constantly let us down, and in the material world, although we see the suffering. Why is it so hard to develop faith in those things that are worthy?

Here's a jig, a polka, a reel "I don't know one
from the other.

Here's a gerund, a participle, a prostate gland but
where's the serotonin?

Tat-priyartham? How to please
the Lord?

Lord Krishna doesn't come alone. He is always accompanied by all His Visnu incarnations and "the external potency of Visnu (*maya*), with whom all the conditioned souls are enamored." The *Krishna* book tells us that Maya appears just to fulfill the Lord's purpose.

Is this the same old thing? How many times have I read, "Once upon a time, Vasudeva, the son of Surasena, just after marrying Devaki, was going home on his chariot with Devaki, his newly married wife"? Oh, to get past my own superficiality! The *Krishna* book account is not the same old stuff. I simply have to go deeper.

Bebop-a-roo
how deep are you?
Can you dive into nectar
with a pious head? Is
your *ruci* dead? Do you
have *anistha*
instead? Clemency
a *bhakta* begs
saddened by his own efforts
but hopeful
going into old age.

Think of Krishna now. He appeared like the sun at a time when the world was overcome by military force. Isn't that now? That means the Lord could appear today. It means He *has* appeared "in the chanting of His holy names. O Krishna, please . . .

We will celebrate Janmastami on the island, and I will also hold an initiation ceremony. I'll try my best to say something useful and to give good names.

But sometimes the stories are so strange when we look around the world and see what we now consider reality. "So Vasudeva brought home another two hundred beautiful girls along with his wife, Devaki." Two hundred beautiful girls? Where did they all live? Those times were different than the times we have with us now. That doesn't make them fictitious.

I took a day off yesterday. No big deal. I didn't transform into the Java man. My heart is still on the left side of my chest, still tight, still burning.

These eyes that have seen the glory are now a bit worn out. Noticed that book critics publishing in the *New York Times Book review* know how to go for the author's jugular. "These overwrought essays . . . So much drivel has been written on male bonding that there should be a moratorium." "This guy has a long way to go before he can bewitch us with his novel."

O Krishna, Vasudeva and Devaki and their two hundred beautiful girls were proceeding along "very pleasingly," when suddenly a voice from the sky called Kamsa a fool: "You are driving the chariot of your sister and your brother-in-law, but you do not know that the eighth child of this sister will kill you." (*Krishna*, p. 16)

* * *

Dreamt a few of us wanted to get together and live in an apartment in the city. We wound up spending our time trying to support ourselves with a full-time job. What was the purpose of our life? To be artists? Writers? Devotees? Lovers? Hari Sauri was there, and he showed us around the apartment we would rent, noting how little privacy it actually had. He also told us that we couldn't expect much more, so we accepted his advice and moved in.

* * *

4:24 a.m.

I'm thinking of taking closer stock of my life. What should I do with the remainder of my life? Is there something I haven't considered? Should I go back to traveling and lecturing in the temples, and take a chance that the meds will eventually kill me? Because I'll have to take so much of the stuff just to survive. Or should I continue to live the way I'm living but try a different kind of writing? Nothing compelling me to change. Seeing my Godbrothers breaking down from too much management, too much pushing to preach. Perhaps I'm not doing so much, but I'm still alive in spiritual life.

And I know I can't go to the other extreme, living a *babaji's* life in Vrndavana. Our times influence each of us. ISKCON is full of scandals and politics, and we're being attacked by critics both within and without. None of us can live without that touching us. We can't pretend it's not happening to us. We have to learn to face our reactions to

ISKCON's state, and to respond with Krishna consciousness. Then we have to encourage each other.

I write out sheets like the ocean "so many from this little guy. I shouldn't stop, because there's no other way to get deeper. I have to keep digging and then give what I find to Krishna. That's all I want "to find myself, then be myself, then give myself. No miracles required. I have to start by accepting my current low state and then hope.

* * *

Yeah well, I intend to take a little walk before I count up my pages. We're fasting until noon today (not my idea "it's Balarama's appearance day). The universe is in order.

Govinda, You are standing on my altar. Your peacock feather is a bit askew, so delicately balanced that a slight breeze could blow it over. Let me fix it. I forgot to put You in bed last night, although I dressed You in Your night clothes. O Krishna. I was chanting extra *japa*, living through the dance of time, a bit slowed down.

Sameness. Go out and walk and talk.

And chant.

Krishna, Krishna "a crash pilot
making an effort
but I can't do much. Let me
find something different
each time.

Friends, let's flow
minds and bodies
and Krishna conscious intelligence
and turn to Krishna. relax
into love of God.

* * *

5:30 a.m.

Heavy fog this morning "I could hardly see out there. It's getting darker by the day. Have to think of adjusting my schedule.

* * *

5:55 a.m.

I shouldn't have to stimulate myself in order to write. My vein cords are blue; they show through my skinny forearms. O dear body, you are not my self. You are almost no different than my dirty laundry. Fog thickens. I need to rest.

* * *

Dreamt I was watching a film about all the adventures we never had with Prabhupada, including one scene where Prabhupada had a pistol and was preparing to shoot a villain.

In the film he had a heart attack, but after some hours of watching over him, Prabhupada woke up and was fine.

Following that dream, I had another dream of Prabhupada. He was saying something interesting, and I was trying to grasp it and apply it to my life. Then he saw my false teeth. Later, I was crossing a river with Brahmananda. Prabhupada was leaving, so we were going to the city. We planned to meet Tamal Krishna Maharaja and the *harinama* party. I was in pain and wanted to go home. My Godbrothers told me that I was not surrendered to Prabhupada. In the dream I stood up for myself.

* * *

8:34 a.m.

Pause before you read, then read in a prayerful spirit. Vasudeva spoke just as Kamsa was about to kill Devaki. Vasudeva spoke "with great reason and confidence." Despite the situation he maintained his cool. "Why are you about to kill your sister? Why should you be so afraid of death?"

I just read a letter from a man who was visiting an elderly woman in a hospital. The woman was religious "a Catholic, a Quaker, and a Hare Krishna devotee "but she was on the verge of death. He told me she had lapsed into a coma then come out of it again. He told me she wasn't afraid of death. When I heard it I thought, "So it is possible."

Because death is inevitable. Can we feel that truth? Whether we can or not, death is with us from the moment of our birth. We cannot avoid it.

So why should we be so afraid if it "so afraid that we would be willing to do something abominable to save ourselves? Death is simply the annihilator of the present body. As soon as we pass through death, our souls will move to another body. If we can feel confident that this is the truth, we needn't be afraid. Higher authorities will decide upon which body we will receive next. All we can do now is to think of Krishna as much as possible, and to learn to feel devotion for Him. That should be our real anxiety, not whether we'll decay into dust.

"This body is exactly like one of the bodies which we always see in dreams."

All right, stop now. This section is important, the foundation of our practice of *bhakti*. Beyond facing the truth of our own death, Krishna promises in *Bhagavad-gita*, "And whoever, at the end of his life, quits his body, remembering Me alone, at once attains My nature. Of this there is no doubt." (Bg. 8.5) A little discourse on death and on proper remembrance.

* * *

9:50 a.m.

Hang in there. The hand fell asleep along with the wrist. Circulation cut off. Smack the friendly limb, the symbolic dancer.

He looked in through the window. I didn't want to be part of such a worldly scene. I want my soul to be transported to Krishna. Make a ballet of *that*. Show the *anartha* of faultfinding fleeing my heart along with the desire to be honored, fear going up in smoke and vanishing.

And he became a compassionate Vaisnava. We will do that one day, but how long will it take us? Be brave.

Hare Krishna. I don't like to think that I am so underachieving that I have wasted this precious gift of human life. I will send something out to the world, but they already have what I have written and will decide: a collection of my books.

Trust me, because I will not become a victim of *maya*.

How can you guarantee that? How do we know you are not cheating us (and haven't been all along)? What's up the sleeve?

Nothing. I'm wearing a T-shirt. I can't make such hard confessions of unworthiness. It all becomes a flurry of doubt. Hare Krishna.

* * *

10:20 a.m.

With all them gurus falling down and cheating, I thought you might too.

No, no. Standing at the bus stop this person (let's say it's me, Willie the Stormer) is windswept, wishing this other voice hadn't shown up to harass me.

"Where are you going, Guruji, and how come your servant isn't with you?"

"He had to go to a festival. I'm on my way . . . I better not tell you. It's private. Oh, I know . . . I'm on my way to a doctor, a headache specialist."

"Ain't a woman, is it Guruji?"

"No, it's a bisexual biped. It's a rubber plant queue-toad. A real man over sixty-five (as far as I know)."

"Guru, do you talk like that, that double-talk and juggled words, to cover the truth? Is that what you call sowing your wild poetry oats?"

"Yes, but honestly, I'm going to a doctor. I just didn't like your insinuation, so I played with words. I actually would like to have a devotee companion. If you can spare the time, could you accompany me when the bus comes? Then you'll see for yourself where I'm going."

The other guy hesitates, then says, "I've got to go call on my girl. I don't claim to be no devotee ready for initiation yet. But at least I don't put on airs."

Reminds me of the peasant who said to St. Francis, "So you are the famous saint everyone talks about. You had better not betray the trust they have in you." Francis bowed at his feet, so I make humble obeisances on the pavement to this devotee.

Then the bus came. I boarded and went to the Jazz Club, ordered a Pernod and a pack of cigarettes. A house woman (what do they call them?) came and sat beside me.

She said, "You look like Sidney Bechet." I said, "Ma'am, the resemblance is purely coincidental. You look like Pope John Paul yourself." Then the place exploded in fire and light, like that Explorer spacecraft fifteen seconds after take off.

This is a harsh exploration of the myth genre. The chance of doubt and fear and madness. Don't tell others you have such a sore. It could be a disease sprouting from forty years ago. But who would believe *that*? You had better watch your left and right. I believe for every drop of rain that falls . . . there is God and He is Krishna. He is all-pervading and He plays in the cowherd fields. As long as I am pain-free, I will be happy to listen to *Krishna* book when I massage Srila Prabhupada.

* * *

With all them gurus falling down "Part Two:
Grubber and doubt, crumble and grout
something went silent.

I had better stay in this lonely place and write my careful odes. I have declared to myself that it's no longer important or necessary for me to write twenty pages a day. That was an artificial quota I placed on myself. But now that I have released it, do I still have the impetus to write at all?

I hope so. Will it mean smaller books? I don't know. Maybe I'll write the same amount anyway, but without the pressure. release pressure. If I do one fifth less, what will it matter? Maybe what I do will even be better. I don't know, I can't figure these things out.

We are not in a big, old-time movie theater smelling of popcorn. We are on the road to Toopkey Tu. I have a good navigator and feel relaxed enough to trust that I won't fall down today. A *sannyasi* can really practice *sannyasa* his whole life and never fall down. It does happen. It's not such a high-wire balancing act. You just have to walk a normal path without harboring illicit desires. I think it would be nice if I died all in one piece, and afterwards, no one finds any contraband "just Esgics and Sumatriptans and some poetry books and perhaps a relaxation tape or two to aid my meditation during pain. Oh, and some books on writing technique. No big scandals.

Of course, such avoidance of scandal is all outward. What is going on in my mind? In yours? How do I appear in mind to God? It's possible that those people who have had falldowns have had to dig deeper and face more than any intact devotee, and thus despite their mistakes, have become dearer to God. Krishna consciousness is not only about careful adherence to rules and regs. Consider that.

The troops came down the mountain and wanted their breakfast and lunch, some ammo and second initiation "whatever I could give them. One young man is outdoing me. He lives in Mayapur and reads Srila Prabhupada's books nine or ten hours a day with concentration. He also chants thirty-two rounds a day. He outstrips me, so I encourage him as best I can. He says his major project is to be able to pay attention while chanting. What can I say to that? He wants to know if he can do half an hour of yoga a day, and what do I think of a certain book on the *gayatri-mantra*.

* * *

4:15 p.m.

Took a feverfew tablet at 3:00 p.m. No dramatic change, but I feel a little better. What do I want out of life, and out of my Krishna consciousness? What can I give to attain it? Walk around the house. Long quiet highway. I know I'm writing a long book that no one can read.

Life is a short trip for all of us. Before we were born, we were unmanifest. Now we are manifest. After death, we will again be unmanifest. Why grieve for any of these stages, Lord Krishna asks Arjuna. Why worry if anyone steps on your blue suede shoes?

We suffer so much. We don't want people to say nice things about those we consider enemies (of a sort). We have our lists of don'ts and dos, and if people want to be dear to us, they better keep our rules.

* * *

5:12 p.m.

Great, man, great. You have a lonely head pain, and your goose neck and shoulders stoop forward while peevish pull at your sleeves.

This guy gave a lecture on Jesus and Krishna and thought it a sensitive topic, those two divine persons. I don't want to be told how to think of them, although it is important. I'll try to think only of Krishna, although I can't. Open the window and let the flies buzz right out.

I'm not going to try to read *Krishna* book right now because my head is pressured and Vasudeva's speech requires that I home in with a fine sense of appreciation.

August 8, 12:05 a.m.

I may feel that I am not doing as much as other ISKCON elders and leaders. I don't move in with a committee when there is an emergency, or manage my own project; I don't live with devotees through preaching triumphs and setbacks. I stay here and suffer through each day "but not without my own kind of enjoyment "on my own. I'm a migraineur "another designation. But it's honestly who I am. Whether I use more medication or less, I live with pain. All I can do is cope from one headache to the next and with all the pain in between. From out of this life of pain, or near-pain, or anticipated pain, or even of no pain, I try to communicate to other *jivas*. And I worship Lord Krishna, read and chant, praying always to serve my spiritual master, if he'll accept me.

In *Krishna* book, Vasudeva is preaching to Kamsa: "The nature of the mind is flickering." This is not only about what we experience in this life; it determines what body we will get in the next. We choose a body (by what the mind dwells on), and the material nature supplies it. Unless we have a particular type of body, we can't fulfill our particular desires. Once we achieve a body with which we thoroughly identify, we are free to become agitated or peaceful according to our new body's movements through the material world.

But we don't have a permanent connection with the body. The Vedic philosopher would say that we have *no* connection with the body, and only imagine we do because we are so illusioned. For example, Jada Bharata preached that way to Maharaja Rahugana. Identifying ourselves as a particular type of human, an American or a white or black, a male or female, causes us to take another body. (Srla Prabhupada speaks of the irony of being born next life as an American, but an American cow.) Whatever body we attain, we become easily satisfied with it. Or, if we think it should have been better, we try to improve it, but not in the sense of liberation from the material condition. One example of that is when Indra was cursed to become a pig and didn't want to give up that identity.

Vasudeva asked Kamsa not to be envious of his newly married sister. Envy or enmity toward others will cause fear when we are judged by Yamaraja.

* * *

Dear diary mode, we are preparing to go to Inis rath for two weeks. All those little decisions "what kind of lighting to bring, which pens, paper, etc. "assume I'll always be alive. We're always assuming so many things. But everything is in Krishna's hands. We have no control over His decisions.

I don't have present plans to go to Vrndavana, India. If I had a sign that I was about to die, I suppose I'd seriously consider shifting to India, because of the great benefit (the *sastras* say and Srila Prabhupada set the example in his own life) of dying in Vrndavana. In the meantime, I am moving along with my benign handicap here in Ireland. Don't be ashamed or self-conscious about this little life. It is what it is.

* * *

I'm making progress on my outline for the Janmastami lecture. Focus on the state of *vasudeva-Sudda-sattva*, what it takes for God to appear in each of us. I'll have to read that section in *Srimad-Bhagavatam* and the part in *Caitanya-caritamrta* where Lord Caitanya appears in Jagannatha MiSra, then goes from the mind of Jagannatha MiSra to the heart of Mother Saci. I have some material from Eckhart on his view of how God becomes born in us. It might be helpful in expressing this in a Krishna conscious way (no Mayavadi unity). So don't be shy.

* * *

4:25 a.m.

No shirt on, no socks. The room is overheated. New *brahmana* thread, white with six strands. Put it on and come and sing in the chair. Is there a way to go beyond? Not beyond God, not beyond Krishna and the *gopis*, and certainly not falling back beyond into the Brahmajyoti or the Viraja river. rise up, spirit soul, and get beyond yourself.

I say I want a servant (valet) and that M. isn't such a good one anymore. He's always going out and singing and playing music, all of which I fully support, but he doesn't do the dishes or wash the floors or even do the laundry anymore. The house is getting dirty.

We's happy. This party of two is underrated.

Here's a man wailing he used
to write poems like this
scribble them wash them
he used to open up valves
talk in tongues he used to
go out and preach to nuts
without breaking his head.

* * *

Hey, can you write your *Poor*
Man reads The Bhagavatam? No.
I told you I can't do it
anymore it's
too much work and I need
a more relaxed atmosphere.
I am here on duty at least
in my sentinel booth and
each hour that comes I say
"Wait! Stop here and write
your name and number before you
go by." I'm the *garda*
for that.

Krishna said, "I'll go and get the Sankhacuda. I want the jewel from his turban. Dear Balarama, You stay here and protect the *gopis*." The Lord followed the Yaksa, who fled for his life, It wasn't long before Krishna caught and killed him with a smash of His fist. Heard it while dressing Their Lordships in white with pink and gold trim. Hold still for me, O Lord, and receive this imperfect attempt. You are kind to come to me in this form.

Heard the cows bellowing. Made me smile. I feel high today with happiness. Why is that? Just a little patch of physical well-being? Glad you got your diplomas from high school and college and your honorable discharge from the Navy? Yes, but more than that . . . it's something about now.

Krishna's on top of every situation. I will go out and walk. I'm saying I have nothing more right now, but I'll keep going into the jungle of words. Boy said, "I'm okay," and another said, "I'm in ISKCON still. It won't perish by the dawn's early light, despite all . . ." Another man: "I'm ashamed of this movement." Henny Penny thought the sky was falling. In our case, it seems that it is. It has fallen down. The end seems nigh, but only some call it a funeral.

But it's not. We ain't no bugs crawling across the floor. We're men and women, all souls, and we have learned to feel our own level of ecstasy in this movement. We have learned to become firm and to follow him. We should be good disciples, sailors, typists, *brahmacaris*, *brahmacarinis*, householders, *brahmanas*, *sannyasis*, whatever we are, with Krishna tattooed on our chests. Put "Rama" and "Hare" on your forehead. Give all profit to Lord Hari. See me, man, I look at my watch and know that I'm alive and kicking. Krishna climbed a mountain tower and jumped off with Balarama. Do we dare follow?

We gird ourselves, cinch our the belts, let our excesses blow off steam.

Krishna is the God of all

Krishna is the God of Fall

that man was a pit of snakes. Krishna ran after His Yaksa and said, "Get your hands off those pure maidens. I'll kill you!" Yet the demon's jewel was so beautiful, so uncontaminated, so pure, that He took it, and in a roundabout way, gave it to His Radha.

* * *

5:30 a.m.

Someone referred to our going to Geaglun-Inis rath as a "break." As if we're taking a break from our constant life in Wicklow. That word implies relief. I guess I am looking forward to it in that sense. Maybe I'm in a bit of a rut down here; any kind of variety is bound to produce a change in outlook.

Yet when I paused in my morning walk on the road, I saw that I could gain deeper and deeper appreciation for this one place. Especially the quietness. I stood and savored it. There was a plane high in the sky, but it had nothing to do with me. I was dimly aware that it's almost the twenty-first century, so there'll be less and less quiet rural spots like this. Who knows what madness is ahead for each of us in this world? But I'm here now, in this peace, and I want to learn to internalize it so that I can concentrate in Krishna consciousness. Living here doesn't have to be like living in a rut. Get below the surface. It shouldn't take a trip out to force us to do that.

* * *

6:05 a.m.

I don't have to write, but I want to. I don't have to . . . I *do* have to refrain from sin. Do your best "the Cub Scout's motto.

* * *

8:35 a.m.

My profound regrets
egrets
sat on a wall.

The green meadow in India and
that white egret sitting on the rear haunches of a cow, the cow quietly grazing
not in India but in Trinidad.

Just think life over. Try to understand why you blank out and what it does for your spiritual health.

We haven't had our business meeting yet.

Open the window and get a cool draft of air.

I dreamt I was being hosted by a Godbrother and his disciples at his temple. They began a *kirtana* with strange drums. I tried to join in, but I couldn't keep up.

Another scene: house burning. Gone with the wind "fire and wind help one another.

* * *

9:05 a.m.

Imagine an elder who allows himself a vacation. How does he account for it? Idle brain is a devil's workshop. He said he deserved a little let-up, and that he'd soon return to the yoke and halter.

So did he spread his blanket under a gray sky day in summer? Is that it?

No, he just sat in a chair and thought of Hare Krishna mantras a little, how saints had attained a state of constant chanting.

Oh, that's the epitome of laziness. reminds me of the saying, "Work fascinates me; I could sit and watch it for hours."

In *Krishna* book, Chapter 35, we hear that Gaudiya Vaisnavas should cultivate the feelings of separation exemplified by the *gopis* and the Six Gosvamis of Vrndavana. Srila Prabhupada seems to say that we ordinary devotees should do this. Is there a lazy-man's version of separation?

"Uh, I'm already experiencing separation. Don't bother me, Prabhu. I'm cultivating my feelings of *viraha*," and we slump back in our easy chairs while the world goes on around us and our own brief life burns down to its conclusion. As if ease and laze could bring us to the right conclusion.

I have sometimes heard that it can, in Taoism, maybe. Taoists don't believe in strain, because after all, the truth is already *here*. Srila Prabhupada said we should work hard to please our spiritual master. He criticized those who said they were going to live alone so they could chant constantly, but who actually fell asleep and dreamt of sex and money.

Oh yeah, I know about that. I've experienced it. So am I going to have my business meeting now and go over the Post-its I've written, with my secretary? Yes, I think so. We will not climb any great mountains today (not even the mountain of twenty pages), but perhaps I'll manage to avoid a headache.

* * *

11:58 a.m.

In England-Ireland they speak of, "Going on holidays." In America, we say, "Taking a vacation." In ISKCON, we say devotees never take vacations from Krishna consciousness. They do observe Vaisnava holidays, such as Janmastami and Radhastami. That's certainly no vacation. But Vaisnavas can take occasional retreats. Of course, those retreats are so he or she can better practice the rigors of spiritual development "increased chanting and reading.

What about a kick-back vacation?

Not if you mean easing up on vows or indulging in illicit sex and intoxication. No vacations from spiritual life. Not a one.

Neither does the devotee retire. He never stops following his spiritual master's orders.

What am I getting at here? I'm fishing "I don't mean trying to kill fish "feeling my way into an attitude of relaxing on the twenty-page quota, and yes, relaxing a little in my attitude toward self-imposed schedules of what I expect myself to accomplish each day. Therefore, while at Manu's house in Geaglum for two weeks, fresh out of my white-cloud residence in Wicklow, I think I'll take a break. There will be other demands than the ones I have here, so I can't really call it a vacation. No, it will be more like a change of pace. It will be nice to spend some time with friends "a vacation from solitude.

Rest, respite, intermission. Freedom from activity. So you vacate "leave the workplace, school, monastery and just take a vacation. For a specific interval usually, then return to work.

* * *

4:08 p.m.

It's all right with me if you don't want to work so hard for a while. You can read things you have to catch up on. Get your lecture together. remember, you'll be expected to speak about Srila Prabhupada on his appearance day. You'll give the main lecture, then everyone can speak their homages. So what will you say? That he should appear in our lives, just as the day before I plan to say that Krishna should appear in our lives personally. Same old thing, inviting people to praise him and to take him into their lives. I'm struggling to do it myself.

I can't tell exactly of what I'm going through, the petty faultfinding. That would be ridiculous. Find something to say which is not merely official, but neither so personal that I have to be embarrassed by it. But something substantial.

Prema bhakti-marg dasi said that in New York City, they plan to have a show-and-tell presentation on Prabhupada's appearance day. Each devotee will hold up something of Prabhupada's and say something about it. That sounds like a good way to go.

Do I have an object on which I could speak? Maybe one of my books about him? Maybe something of his? No, I have none of his personal effects. I don't want to be so daring as to pick up a rock and say, "This rock reminds me of Prabhupada in such-and-such a way."

As I write, I'm feeling the first sign of a twinge. Anyway, at least I mentioned that I will be expected to speak about Prabhupada. It's as important as the talk I will give on Krishna's appearance day. Actually the only thing I have to hold up of his is . . . Oh, I know, my red beads, my beautiful red beads. Sure, I can hold them up.

And what else? One of his books? Do I have one that is old? Do I have something he touched? How about holding myself up by the scruff of the neck and saying, "Here is Prabhupada's *cela*."

The guru, the teacher, the father. That book on the American Hare Krishnas said that he was a harsh taskmaster. I was insulted that she said that. I had such strong loyalties. Unless a book was a hundred percent favorable, as if *we* had written it, I didn't like it. Now we don't expect much. We expect them to find the faults in ISKCON that we ourselves find. We only hope they don't bash us into the ground as we might bash ourselves.

* * *

5:30 p.m.

Took Sumatriptan forty-five minutes ago and sat in the reassuringly dark, cool room. That med takes two to four hours to work. I should be able to rest at 7:00 p.m.

Who, me? I'm not ashamed (to say), but I heard Bhurijana Prabhu lecture that you shouldn't do anything that will divert you. *Sankalpa, kalpa*. Accept what's favorable for your Krishna consciousness and reject the rest. Not even an inch of diversion or relaxation, and certainly no vacations. Otherwise, you'll have to come back in your next life to enjoy that thing you relaxed over. Don't do anything *you* like. But maybe we *can* do something we like, then claim it as Krishna conscious because we are truly

doing it for His pleasure. Big fly or small bee buzzing around in this room. I try to coax it out, but it can't find the way.

Oh, merry men you always
find a way. Don't wait for
perfect timing. It's just as good
Right now to think of Vasudeva
and how his mind became so pure
he was able to hold the Lord in his mind
then transferring Him to his wife.

We too can become *dhamas*.

But not by advertising ourselves cheaply. No rifle clubs or riots. Just quiet, deep, heartfelt Krishna consciousness. A love to serve.

M. out making phone calls. That blue thread on my arm is an artery or vein, and I see the thump-thump of my heart, almost too faint to trace. O Krishna.

August 9,9:19 a.m.

Sit on the bench in the yard and feel the breeze. It's not quite chilly. See the stout trees? Do one thing at a time. Concentrate on what you are doing, the chanting. If I didn't write so much, would I be more open to Krishna's direction?

It's long, long, longer than anyone can read. And it repeats itself. I could release myself not just from the twenty-page quota but from writing altogether. I could never take it up again.

Or let it go for a few weeks.

But here I am, writing, chanting, waiting for Krishna's direction. No big quotas to fulfill. Just sitting on a bench, looking at some trees.

And my mind dealing with the news about a troubled Godbrother. What to do with that news? With whom can I discuss my feelings about such things? There is no one.

From Rome came the news that the Celts
were on the march
but then later, the romans marched on the Celts.
Meanwhile, back in Vrndavana,
a few felt the ecstasy of love of
Krishna and
Radha
in Goloka.

* * *

10 a.m.

If I were to take an almost complete vacation from EJW, what would I do with all that time? Increase my *japa*? Wait and see?

* * *

11:20 a.m.

By not writing, I'm observing how writing usually functions for me. Call it a crutch if you like. But I call it a dear friend, an intimate confidant. I gave M. some Internet medical reports proving that caffeine in moderate amounts is not harmful. Some of my medications contain caffeine. He immediately objected to that information. Ordinarily, I would have taken my feeling of hurt and released it in writing. By not writing, I can see how lonely my life is. And how sheltered. I need a very close friend who will agree with me when I need that, and who will love me. "That's Krishna," you say (although He doesn't have to agree with you), and that's true. But even to reach Him, I find I reach toward the act of writing. In a sense, my writing gives me Srila Prabhupada.

* * *

1:17 p.m.

Hare Krishna. Don't let writer's cramp affect you. Don't take a vacation from life itself. Hare Krishna. I'm my friend in Krishna consciousness. Until I die. Take me to Vaikuntha. I sold out to the first thoughts, but wanted them to come from the Swami while I heard them submissively.

All the cobwebs. The worldwide webs. The karma dragnet catches them all. Me too. Ease out, dead in Guyana, or somewhere surrounded by hounds and pious friends. "He went to God." Wailing trails of glory to God, who is our home (poem).

Hell for those who return to this world. Don't deviate even a milli-inch, said the lecturer, and he put the fear of God into us.

Vacation sun lotion sold here. Buy a novel to read in the bath house. Get your tickets. Get ready to spend nights with lantern light. Krishna is God. Believe it. All over the world the message went out "for ten years he took a psychotropic drug without knowing it. Now we can all decide what to do with that information.

Just the angle he needs. Clinton could use one like that too. Sensational last-minute evidence! And I could not find a friend who could agree the caffeine content in my medication is negligible.

Oh, he did, he just didn't like the pro-caffeine information put out by the pharmaceutical company, and that sent me into solitude without my confidant. That's why my pen is my best friend.

* * *

2:55 p.m.

Lonely man. Slight twinge behind the eye. I duly report it here. Go to the principal's office, you bad boy. Close your eyes, sit in an easy chair, and form a few silent Hare Krishnas in your mind. Let them float. Imagine a devotee with contacts, healthy, striving to serve in his master's movement, and regularly mixing with people to preach. Then see yourself in this reclusive fix. I quoted Thoreau's sentiment: he liked to be alone too. But sometimes it's more like, "On rainy days "/> this monk ryokan/ is lonely. "

I think it might be good if I dropped my gremlin off somewhere, especially when he's playing go-between on behalf of my imaginary readers and critics. He shows awareness of my shortcomings and makes fun of me. He thinks I'm self-pitying, self-absorbed, a mad, pill-consuming writer and fool. Makes me seem laughable.

We tend to say its healthy not to take yourself too seriously, but I don't know. We need to care for ourselves too. Is it time to take an Esgic? Even on vacation I need to take meds when I get headaches.

* * *

4:26 p.m.

Oh, you dear, tenderhearted boy, you are lonely. You ask for friends. You say your writing is your best friend, but we think you need another friend as well. You don't need antipsychotic drugs, do you? Do you need a woman? A man? A butler? A servant? Do you need more care? Just what do you want and where does it hurt?

Ugh-a-moo. Do you dare type a page on the machine? Only two more days before you leave for your up-north holidays.

Over the nonsearch border.

No one even comes out to check you. I mean, not in a human form. They survey you from a distance.

Then you arrive at the charming Geaglum peninsula and go to your room attached to Manu's house. I propose you write more confessional poetry, like Lowell or Plath or Snodgrass, although you never really studied any of them. Write simple and straightforward, and change the names to protect the innocent. Do what will help you utmost. River-run. The angel of mercy. The unmanifest entities in the psyche.

The psyche is demythologized.

He slipped a mickey
into the ashes. He

Resorted to modern chemistry and called it something else.

I intend to use that shed up there to write and write.

And draw my happy inkings, those sometimes misshapen
people who parade
and let myself want to be alone.

I seem to need just enough mental and spiritual hand-holding to know that someone nearby cares for me. I'm on a lonely path and need encouragement from the sidelines.

Of course, they want the same from me. So I'll try to give it.

M. said I may have to take more meds than usual to get through this week, with the grand finale on Janmastami, then Prabhupada's appearance day on Sunday, Yes, that's likely.

But please know that I am a very conscientious fellow and that I scrutinizingly count every milligram of caffeine or other ingredient that goes into my body. In the end, though, the whole thing is beyond my control. Did you know that of men who are seventy years old or older, sixty or seventy percent have enlarged prostate glands? Eighty percent of the eighty-year-olds suffer from that condition.

Did you know that a hundred percent of the human beings die? Yes, that's the latest statistics, proven without a doubt.

* * *

5:20 p.m.

Well, I'm glad to be alive, I can tell you that. Surely that means I must be feeling a little bit of Krishna's presence.

Eckhart needed to say what he'd realized of spirit. At the end of one sermon he said, "Those who understood this sermon, good luck to you, but even if no one understood it, I'd have to have preached it to the offertory box."

August 10, 12:05 a.m.

The lecture I hope to give on Srila Prabhupada's Vyasa-puja can begin with this verse:

kali-kalera dharma "Krishna-nama-sankirtana

Krishna-Sakti vina nahe tara pravartana

"The fundamental religious system in the age of Kali is the chanting of the holy name of Krishna. Unless empowered by Krishna, one cannot propagate the *sankirtana* movement." (Cc. *Antya*7.11)

How do we know Lord Caitanya wanted His names spread all over the world? "In as many towns and villages," from *Caitanya-bhagavata*. Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati states that the true *acarya* who can spread the holy name throughout the world "must be considered an incarnation of Krishna's mercy." I'll give these evidences and say that they all apply to His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada. It helps build our faith in him to consider his unique position as the one chosen by Krishna to carry Krishna consciousness out of India. Knowledge of Hinduism and even other editions of *Bhagavad-gita* in English had already reached American and European shores, but not a single person became a devotee of Krishna. What Srila Prabhupada did was not easy. He surveyed the difficulty when he first arrived at the Boston pier and wrote that poem.

While still crossing the ocean to reach America, Srila Prabhupada wrote a poem expressing that he was coming on the mission of Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati, who "is that great saintly spiritual master who bestows intense devotion to Krishna . . ." Prabhupada knew that his *guru maharaja* strongly desired that the holy names be spread to all Western countries. Srila Prabhupada expressed himself as unworthy of the task. "I am very fallen and insignificant. Therefore, O Lord, now I am begging for Your mercy so that I may become worthy." He was seventy years old, in weak health, yet starting out for a foreign country with no money or worldly backing. He felt personally humble, yet convinced he had a great task to carry out on behalf of guru and Krishna.

When he arrived in Boston, he almost seemed to hesitate at the magnitude of the task before him. The U.S. city and its people seemed so different from everything with which he was familiar. "How will they understand the mellows of devotional service? I wish that You may deliver them." He recalled that *Srimad-Bhagavatam's* message was

capable of breaking up the modes of nature in a *jiva's* heart. "So if you have brought me here to dance (like a puppet), then make me dance." He had such strong faith in Krishna's holy name. The rest is history.

Srila Prabhupada was able to serve his spiritual master so successfully because he had so much faith in him. And he didn't try to change Krishna's message.

Then perhaps I can speak some memories. I'll have to break the ice around my own heart to do that "the idea that I've told these stories too many times.

As I encourage myself to break the ice and tell Prabhupada stories on his appearance day, I encourage myself to write now, to write throughout the remainder of my life. In his diary, Prabhupada drew lines through days when he was too sick to write. Then he noted, "Passed over a great crisis and a struggle for life and death. A separate statement has to be written on this crisis area." I wonder if writing those lines gave him solace?

* * *

4:24 a.m.

So, I am taking a vacation from EJW pressure to see if "the process" or God in my heart will tell me how to proceed. I don't want to write simply out of a sense of duty. I don't *have* to do it. Examine whether I am in a rut of sameness, or whether this is my inevitable life. Hare Krishna. It would be good if I could become more holy, more concentrated on Krishna. That means eliminating all worldly attractions. Can I give up reading the nondevotee books I use to help me in my service? Am I too dependent on them? I say I need life, emotion, art. See and feel it in others, and use it to give Krishna pleasure.

What about that free-association form of writing? Is it possible to reconsider it? Should it be given up, or is it serving a purpose in my preaching? I may consider all this because I am giving my life here and don't want to make a costly mistake.

Free-write "I had better watch out
how I use my sacred time. Up and
down it's magic
you say.

But if it's not intensely Krishna conscious, it's a waste of time.

I dressed Lord Hari in yellow and gold, and Srimati Radharani the same. I'm certainly happy with that. It was the best thing I could have done this morning. As I dressed Them, I heard Srila Prabhupada tell how (*Krishna* book) Narada went to Kamsa and told him the Secret: Krishna was the one who would kill him. Narada wanted to stir up the action, get things moving, so Kamsa would be killed as soon as possible.

Earlier, in the bathroom, I didn't listen as well when Srila Prabhupada spoke on a morning walk in Dallas, 1975. Still, I retain my basic acceptance of whatever it was he said. I remember he said that humankind was headed for disaster. Will nudism lead to becoming a tree for five thousand years? Are almost all Christians hypocrites and all ISKCONites right and pure? Did he *say* that, or did I interpret it? We gave our lives for something, but both we and the movement seem to have been derailed along the way.

I said I'd go and look at Hare Krishna's garden "flowers and vegetables "to divert my mind from the bad news of the ISKCON leader's crisis, and to forget that I have an all-work-and-no-play ethic for EJW. I'll prove that I can take it easy sometimes.

* * *

5:25 a.m.

A fullish moon partly hazy in the sky less than a week before Janmastami. You know the *Krishna* book line that says that although the moon wasn't full, since Krishna appeared in the moon dynasty, the moon adjusted itself so that it appeared full? See the outline of these hills? They have a special gentleness in their slope, but then, everything is soft this morning. Hare Krishna. A nice time of year, not cold yet but not much left of summer.

* * *

5:40 a.m.

I thought it was alarm that Bartok was sounding, but perhaps it was more post-war (between wars) depression. I heard it when I was a teenager. All was lost; *we* were lost "our generation. He wrote that piece early in the century, before the Nazis rose to power.

A little respite. Light talk as I come back from the walk. Crazy assonance, dissonance, clash. Tired eyes forgetting Krishna, forgetting

death, remembering

aunts and uncles, I was a boy

controlled by adults,

playing games only in my imagination "imagining I was running alongside the car and able to keep up, imagining I was leaping from telephone pole to telephone pole, or seeing each car pass and waving to some, especially that boy and girl in the 1948 Studebaker. Mental games that repeat themselves even now sometimes.

O Krishna on the hilltop at Govardhana playing His flute. He enchants the mind. The demigods can't figure out how He can play like that. Krishna on a mountaintop. We're on queue to join Krishna's sports. Standard Oil. I'm writing what comes. Genuflect. Want to go to heaven, not hell. Jesus made a contract. Everything we know or think we do. In Vrndavana, special air, earth, food, talking, sight, rickshaws "even now whatever we can see is Vraja-centered.

* * *

3:58 p.m.

Packing for travel. Cleaning up. Went this morning to see Hare Krishna's garden. I don't so much feel like writing now. Allowing other sides of me to surface and grow, but it feels uncomfortable. I'm so *used* to writing. What would I become if I gave it up?

August 11, 12:04 a.m.

Suddenly it doesn't seem so important to me to write everything down. Then what *is* important to me? At my age? Such an interminable chronicler. I'd really have to be convinced to keep writing when readers . . .

I thought you were going to tame that gremlin.

It's not always him who wants to stop what we are doing in favor of something else. It's the question I have to face "we *all* have to face "what pleases guru and Krishna most? We should always be prepared to shift to an attitude similar to the one Maharaja Pariksit expressed when he asked, "Please tell me the duty of one who is about to die." He was told to chant and hear the glories of Sri Krishna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. We know what that means, but we have lives to live out now, or so it would seem.

Looking at one of Prabhupada's Janmastami lectures. He quoted *janma karma ca me divyam*. Such a powerful promise Krishna makes there. Anyone who in truth knows of His appearance and activities doesn't take birth again. Surely I should quote this too. I could say, "We often ask what it means to know Krishna in truth." Some say it means to understand His *lilas* "the facts of the narration. But it also means that Krishna appears within us. I mean, that's part of His appearance. Here I could quote Eckhart quoting Augustine, "What good does it avail me to know of the eternal birth of God (as Christ) unless He is born in me?" Then I will tell them how He can be born in us.

It's simple, actually. We just have to hear about Him with attention. And chant His holy names, understanding that they are the sound incarnation of Krishna. It's not that He appeared long ago in Mathura; He is present now, in the Hare Krishna movement and in our hearts if we want Him to be there. Srila Prabhupada also indicates that we can come to know Him by preaching. But more "and this is the point I can't yet realize "God should manifest within us, so that we know He is the Absolute Truth.

That's rare. You have to want it badly enough to pay the price of *laulyam*. It can take many births.

Arjuna placed a doubt before Krishna about all these activities. How could Krishna have been born like us? "How can I believe it?" Lord Krishna replied that both He and Arjuna appear again and again. Krishna remembers those appearances; Arjuna could not.

Krishna must be known scientifically and by the process of personally performing *bhakti*. We offer Krishna a little *patram puspam phalam*, but it must be with devotion. We cannot understand God's nature by superficial or experimental (material) knowledge. We have to learn by hearing from Vaisnava *acaryas*.

I'll speak on Janmastami morning. I could sankirtana . . . sometimes chanting with music and sometimes speaking."

Execute at least one of the nine items of *bhakti* on that day.

* * *

4:30 a.m.

So, I've let drop a lot of the writing I usually do, but I have not followed it up by practicing a new renunciation of comforts. Neither have I moved to Vrndavana. I barely have a desire to "go out" and lecture. Yeah, this *is* repetitious.

But vacation. I won't excuse myself from work, but I'm confident that the process or the Supersoul will direct me soon enough. I ask the Lord to show me the way. What shall my life be? What shall it mean? If not this EJW, then what other possibilities?

* * *

5:25 a.m.

A bright but decimated moon shining, a single star next to it. The sky everywhere else blue just before dawn. Or is it dawn now? First light on the land. It's not so cold out, but I can tell it's getting darker each morning. This is the last morning walk I'll take here for at least three weeks. Once I leave a place, who knows if I'll ever be back? Krishna says if I understand Him, I'll never have to come back to this world. Do what Krishna wants: *hrsikena hrsikeSa-sevanam bhaktir ucyate*.

We don't want simply to become confident in ourselves, or even to have connection with a vague god. We want Krishna and a connection with Him. If we are going to take time to think things over, pray to Krishna for direction.

I think I owe it to myself to make this questioning serious. That means giving it time. Don't make quick-fix solutions just to get back to work (or not). I can't achieve the solution on my own in any case.

Anyway, I'm realizing that any vacation is good for me "I'm such a workaholic. In the meantime, I'm still writing a little.

* * *

5:45 a.m.

Wide open window will probably invite in the midges, perhaps even some birds, especially because I have the light on in here. Let me close it.

Pray to God. Hare Krishna. An actual raven at his window?

Crow.

Oboe.

Violin.

Loose hairs in food. Whose?

What's the message? All these separate or thematic poems, and the passion to publish them.

Seems I'm going to break out of something that is too much the same thing. EJW probably can't change if I don't change. Maybe I can become a peasant marching in Siberia somewhere "marching to a drum.

I could change?

Do I want to?

Does God want me to? But change to what?

And what is possible for me at sixty years old with my current health and with ISKCON the way it is, the world the way it is? How flexible am I to be able to change for the better? What would I do?

Silhouettes of cows on top of a distant hill. I look nervously to the left to see if any creature "cat or rat or bird "is coming in that wide open window. Nevermore. Ever onward to a Krishna conscious goal. He's ready to chant and be a good fellow. Waiting

for the Lord to tell him, "I know you and what you can do. Do this. Go ahead. This is for me. Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna."

* * *

7:50 a.m.

Woke up from dreams thinking I should be a bolder preacher. That's what the change in EJW signals. Perhaps I should travel and preach in the U.S. or in Europe. But the headaches. It always comes down to that.

But the pressure to go out more and preach. Where is that coming from? I think it's because of the news of a brother falling. Perhaps I should act more to give others reasons to keep their faith. Also, the ISKCON leaders who are fighting to maintain Srila Prabhupada's movement could probably use my help. Well, not really. I doubt I would make much of a difference. I'm talking, then, about my own purification.

Being bolder in my last years rather than retired. Because in the state that seems ideal for retirement I find myself at a dead end. The writing is so long and repetitive, and I'm depending on it being my preaching. I can live even if I don't write all day. Maybe my literary contribution has reached its zenith and I should let it go now. Besides, I'm so far ahead of the publishing. It will take them years to catch up "to be publishing what I'm writing currently.

Staying in one place doesn't seem to bring less headaches. It does, however, allow me to gain some control over them. Perhaps I'm losing taste for preaching by not preaching. Am I reading Srila Prabhupada's books less?

If I went and did some traveling and lecturing, I would have to keep moving, or they would get tired of me. But at least I'd be speaking the philosophy regularly.

Try it, and if I collapse, I can always come back here.

But realistically, I need a place where I can get up at midnight and go to bed by 7:00 p.m.

Maybe not. Maybe I need to be ready to face whatever comes. If I don't need to write all day then, I don't need to always get up at midnight. I can have more confidence that when I do write on the run, it will be worthy.

* * *

8:32 a.m.

I'm alone in the house. M. is out making phone calls or something. When he gets back, shall I tell him I'm a changed man? Tell him I have a plan not to worry so much about how things turn out? Let me be really detached. I will continue to try to protect myself from pain, but when pain captures me, then let me embrace it for Krishna.

If I can't live up to this bold plan, M. won't hold it against me. Here is my plan: As soon as Janmastami and Vyasa-puja are over, I'll go to Belfast (yes, the temple where rowdies throw stones, steal things, and might even break in). But some ladies are managing that temple "they're not afraid. I'll go there and lecture for a few days, carrying my earplugs and pills.

And my pens and Dictaphones.

Then I'll go to Newcastle for a few days of lecturing. Then elsewhere in England. Some temples. Morning lectures. During the day? Oh, I can't really bear to meet with individuals. Maybe I'll just go from Newcastle to Guru-daksina's house, then lecture at the Manor and other London venues. Then fly to Italy in September and do a tour.

* * *

12:32 p.m.

Called M. and told him the plan. He laughed and said, "Thank you for an exciting life!" But half an hour later I called him in again and told him I had changed my mind. I said stopping EJW has left such a vacancy in my life that I'm bewildered. Therefore, I grabbed at the idea of travel action. But maybe I should linger a bit at Geaglum-Inis rath and wait more patiently for inner changes.

But I won't bring Srila Prabhupada and Radha-Govinda with me in case I do take off for the tour. M. thought that if I traveled to England, I should still come back to Wicklow before going to Italy. Anyway, I may do the England tour. It's a fairly safe place, and I feel at home with those particular devotees because they respect my headaches and seclusion.

* * *

2:25 p.m.

Who am I? I can't keep *all* my options open. I can't stay entirely reclusive, waiting for an inner signal, and at the same time launch into travel and lecturing. Why break the seclusion? Because . . . if I think EJW has become too repetitious and too long, if I think it doesn't improve my health to stay alone, and if by staying alone I don't improve my reading or *japa* "then why not try moving about and giving myself by preaching? Travel may help me see, if only by contrast, what I want to do now that I feel EJW is somehow "finished" in its present shape and direction.

Is it finished? Then what will be next in this literary life? Banshee operation. Songs and files foes and foose, Don Foose and Giles Standish, Bhaktas Marcello, Sam, Bhaktin Sile, Senka. Add it up, stay in different rooms . . . one option is not to bring the Deities of Radha-Govinda and Srila Prabhupada. That changes my life right there "leaves me freer and almost committed to moving. I think I'll do that and ask Their permission. Leave this house and its quiet.

What does Krishna want me to do? What am I capable of doing?

August 12, 6:30 p.m., Geaglum-Inis rath

Stop writing just because it's too long and repetitious? Travel to temples and give lectures? With that in mind I left my Deities behind, but I already miss Them.

Anyway, I have decided to resume EJW. I won't worry whether or not it can be printed, whether it's too long, whether anyone cares what's in it. EJW is my *bhajana*. It helps me to read Prabhupada's books "because I want what he says to go into my writing. And travel? Am I simply bored in Wicklow? No, I'm not. I'll go back there from here. I don't need to travel.

August 13, 12:15 a.m.

By stopping EJW I saw how much I wanted it. Let me resume and try to improve it. It's meant to help me become a better devotee, and it is meant to preach to others, to help them toward self-improvement. It is also meant to include scripture, but to also face oneself with honesty.

Thinking also about my reclusive life. I do want to remain reclusive, but I don't mind coming out sometimes and giving classes to devotees, being with devotees.

In 1973 on Janmastami, Srila Prabhupada was in London. He began his lecture, "His Excellency, the High Commissioner, ladies and gentlemen." So it must have been a formal affair. Yet he launched right into a substantial topic "the advent of Krishna. He quoted *janma karma ca me divyam* and said, "The fact is we can achieve such a stage of life when we can stop our birth and death."

When I first arrived at Inis rath, I saw myself finding fault with devotees. Now I feel more inclined to be compassionate and to give them good advice if I can. Perhaps the change came when I felt situated again in my vocation, which is based on my nature. Writing is my chosen path "writing, reading, and chanting. I use those activities to help me preach. I don't travel well because of my health and temperament "that's clear "and I don't think I make such a big impact when I arrive at some temple for a two-day visit. I will make an impact by living my life with integrity and then putting that into my writing, which is then sent out for others to read.

One lady disciple writes me that she wants to follow my example by reading a lot in Prabhupada's books. Good. But I notice she's sharply critical of her husband and doesn't even mention her child. A reader of Srila Prabhupada's books should also be kind; he or she shouldn't read as a way to shut out the world of imperfect beings. Yet even if we read with that motive, we will benefit. At least let me remind her of the goal to be Krishna conscious in a way that is kind to others. And let me practice that goal myself.

But maybe we do need to care for ourselves first. So on Janmastami I want to talk about becoming pure, so Krishna can "take birth" in us. Becoming initiated is one way to purify ourselves, then strictly following the rules and regulations, etc. On Srila Prabhupada's appearance day, say we are indebted to him. It's called *guru-daksina*. Anyone who thinks he can fulfill the debt to the guru is a joker.

* * *

4:07 a.m.

I volunteered to give the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* class today. It's a good verse: "My Lord, O Supreme Lord, You are the Supreme personified form of all benediction . . . to ignorant devotees like me, You are the causelessly merciful maintainer, just like a cow, who takes care of the newly born calf by supplying milk and giving it protection from attack." (*Bhag.* 4.9.17)

God is a cow and we are His errant calves. The Lord gives us milk and steers us. He actively protects us, even though we continue to make mistakes. He says, "I'll give you the intelligence to come to Me." He says He will come as the swift deliverer from death. He'll give us what we lack and maintain what we have.

Where is the proof that He actually does this? Does anyone have an example? He sent Srila Prabhupada to the West, and He gave a simple process, chanting Hare Krishna, but those are general points. What about something more individual?

Yes, but let's first acknowledge Srila Prabhupada and the Hare Krishna mantra. They are also individual. Something personal Krishna did for each of us.

Krishna is so much in our lives, if we will only acknowledge it. We have to look closely to see Him. Anyway, we tend to be too theoretical sometimes. We don't really examine things with the heart.

* * *

6:55 a.m.

Esgic in breast pocket, key in inside pocket, just like in the old days. Glue in teeth. The devotees trust me. I pray the Lord protects me. He is like a cow protecting His calves from their own mistakes.

There is that gray-blue morning sky. It's raining. No stories or myths or poems right now. A sincere hand.

He opened his mouth, hoped his brain would work, and saw the words flow the way one boat tugs another. The rain soaked into the earth. They did not keel over in ecstasy when he lectured. He learned to participate and not to perform. Lowered his sights; spoke as a function, like a nurse who holds a hand or a man who takes a turn pumping the handle on the well or directing traffic. He took his turn to plead for Krishna and Srila Prabhupada's mercy.

* * *

10:40 a.m.

People mention the trouble (some call it crisis, falldown) of HarikeSa Swami in their letters to me. Some describe it more generally as trouble in Europe or in ISKCON leadership. Some hint at a need for change in the guru system. These issues hang in the air like the low clouds that hang over Lough Erne. Some say to me that they feel confident that I won't fail them, won't have a crisis, won't fall down. Oh, yeah? Is that asking for trouble?

And here I am, about to hold an initiation ceremony on Janmastami. Five people for first initiation. Last-minute gathering of the official recommendations, choosing names "Mukunda, Sridama (used it once, but he's long and far gone), Santa, Silavati, Niskincana "names of the perfect whom we follow.

I'll meet with the devotees before the ceremony. Will I mention that low-hanging cloud, whether their guru may fall or go away? Why mention it? Am I going to say, "It won't happen because I'm good, humble, I read Srila Prabhupada's books, and I have a special outlet in my writing. Besides, most fall down into illicit sex, and I'm almost sixty"? No, that won't do.

Say, "We need to depend on Krishna, both you and me. We both need to keep our vows." Yes, something like that, with the illusion distant. We are both promising to the best of our ability. Let us be true to one another.

* * *

12:25 p.m.
Swami, remember when
you wrote those easy poems
not afraid how they'd come out?

* * *

Well, I would like you to resume.
But only if you want to. I don't
know what's best but surely
lots of little songs.

* * *

Swami, that's you. They fall
and you're no iron man. "May
Lord KeSava protect his head,
may Lord Damodara keep his
honor" "or death is worse.
Pop a feverfew when you
feel the twinge and stop
for lunch.

* * *

I pray my brother will be
well and we will accept
him with compassion as
someone. And that the Hare
Krishna movement will go on.

* * *

3:32 p.m.

Ink drawing. Glorify Krishna! Two men on two ladders. The ladders seem to be capsizing. A giant red demon on the left hooks his claw over the head of the nearest (green) ladder climber. The demon's claw is like the hydraulic iron scooper on a tractor, and he's getting closer! Yet somehow, "Glorify Krishna!" goes on.

The other ink and crayon drawing has more color. Says, "Beeswax churner wild stuff writer Glorify Krishna."

I'm happy. Wrote to a disciple, "Your problem is "and I know it because I have it too "you are always dissatisfied." He wasn't happy alone, so he got married. He married a beautiful girl, but now he's not happy. She demands his time, which he used to spend alone. What is it? He's lonely.

Get to know this old Geaglum. The wild grass all green this time of year. Tiny gnats outside writhing in some kind of predicament. Are they stuck in a cobweb? It looks like that, dozens of them. I thought it was peaceful here.

They liked the lecture I gave this morning about Krishna described (by Dhruva Maharaja) as a cow who gives milk and protection to His calflike devotees.

* * *

Night Notes 6:05 p.m.

Twinge made me take two feverfew capsules, but still I'm restricted by pain. Couldn't read Srila Prabhupada's Vyasa-puja lectures, which is my next reading assignment. I placed the book, *Festivals With Srila Prabhupada*, right in the center of the desk for when I rise (I hope) at midnight. It is truly bliss to have no duties but those with which I can flow. Nice to live here, because I am alone, yet many people are buzzing around nearby. I come out to give lectures that thirty or forty people attend with attention. I was thinking this morning that I should speak something helpful for these devotees. It's not that only newcomers or those who have never heard anything about Krishna need a Krishna conscious lecture. Those of us who are practicing need these lectures even more than newcomers. We need to find a daily taste of enlivenment. I have decided to stay here for a total of about twenty days.

* * *

8:30 p.m.

Couldn't sleep "earplugs too tight in head, uncomfortable "but without them, too many bump noises from the other part of the house. And this is without M. next door. He's away for two days. When he returns, it will be nosier. I want silence. I'm going inward. Not ashamed to like this life and get as much out of it as I can. But don't demand; when you can't make the world just as you like it, learn to endure.

August 14, 12:10 a.m.

"The spiritual master is not a particular man but a truth," Srila Prabhupada said on the occasion of Vyasa-puja in Hamburg, 1969. The truth is to deliver people from *samsara*. He does it by pouring God's mercy on those burning in the forest fire of material life. "He must inherit the power from the superior source."

I was thinking that if ISKCON changes the philosophy or system of guru-disciple relationships in an attempt to prevent losses when gurus fall, that could be a mistake. In any case, if one had been given the right to be spiritual master, then it cannot be taken away. He can still act in a way that would relieve his followers from birth and death. On the other hand, if the society declares a person to be guru but he doesn't actually have that power, then he won't be able to deliver his followers. How can we tell who is authorized to become guru? I'm not going to get involved in deciding on whether or not to reform ISKCON's policies, but since I have been acting as spiritual master since 1978, I am going to try my best to carry out my responsibilities. Does that sound like a poor reason, "because I have been doing it for twenty years"?

Srila Prabhupada said, "This spiritual master's succession is not very difficult . . . these respects are due to my spiritual master. I am nothing. I am just like a peon . . . He simply delivers . . . That is the duty. Similarly, this *parampara* system is like that."

Srila Prabhupada goes on to say that his students are helping him and that he's obliged to them. "At the same time, I shall request them all to become spiritual masters . . . Whatever you are hearing from me you have to deliver in total. To become a spiritual master is not a very wonderful thing. Simply one has to become a sincere soul."

Srila Prabhupada was born on Nandotsava. Try to speak your appreciation of him.

Gung-ho. Unique . . . I just want to say, a night of short sleep, restlessness, and dreams, and a tight sensation on the left side of my chest. had better finger those beads and chant nicely, old man. Received some *maha-prasadam* vanilla fudge from Gitanagari. Fruit in the fridge. We intend to have a party. At 10:00 a.m. I'll meet with those who will be taking initiation tomorrow. Tell them, "Let's be true to one another," as Srila Prabhupada said, quoting Nehru. But how? Keep the vows. I will keep mine, and you keep yours.

* * *

The praises of guru reach Krishna through the disciplic succession. Don't grab them for your own gratification. Number one priority is personal integrity. You can't develop that just by going along with ISKCON's laws, or by defying them either. You are individually responsible for who you are and who you will become. Srila Prabhupada said, "Don't be satisfied that you have understood . . . This should be distributed."

The facts are "impossible" by modern standards of history, physics, and current opinion. They wonder how Vyasa could have lived five thousand years ago, or how Krishna could be God. They don't believe any of it. The spiritual master believes, and he teaches. It's difficult, because you have to ask constantly, "Do I believe what I'm teaching?"

I do believe, but I can't always say exactly why. I believe what Prabhupada taught because I believe Prabhupada. I have no real proof otherwise. *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, *Bhagavad-gita* . . . I accept these books because he taught them. *He* convinced me. Now I try to live his teachings openly and honestly. If someone comes along and wants to be a devotee, I try to help. But I don't claim much for myself. I'll tell them that. I am simply trying to be Prabhupada's disciple. I can link others to him and to his movement, ISKCON.

What is guru? Do I know? Do I know Krishna? Do I know anything? I beg Srila Prabhupada to accept me, Lord Krishna to please accept me. Let me clear my mind and self of doubts and disqualifications so that I may serve others in a Krishna conscious way. There's nothing else to do with my life.

Now chant and try to hear. The same thing. The curtain parts and you hear that holy sound in the inner recess of your self, despite external noise.

* * *

8:18 a.m.

I feel a lump in my writing throat. Lumpen prol. He can't talk because his turn to be severely tested may come, and then what? It probably wouldn't warrant a whole committee of top GBC to travel to my country hideout. They'd send a crow. "What the hell are you doing?"

The damp earth. The rantings, they could call it. Why am I thinking of myself at a time like this? Wait around for them to decide that we are no longer gurus. Or new requirements that we prove we are getting enough association with Vaisnavas.

Oh, I can hack it whatever they do. Why worry in advance? I almost stopped writing EJW without enemies. I was facing the enemy within. Was that my test? All that's in me, that I've been hiding, that is wrong about me but hasn't been exposed or pushed to conflict "will suddenly become my turn in a grimy spotlight?"

Before that happens, bring me in to the corral of the well-behaved. Find an easy way for me to be forced to give up my excesses and shape myself to the desired mold.

But they admit that a severe test might be necessary for our spiritual advancement "we have to go ape in public for a while, some say "and only after we go through that can we be strong enough to be truly self-sacrificing. Only after we go through it will we sing the song of the conquerors.

Of course, if we fail as we go through the test, we'll be rejected. This is what I'm thinking after I read the committee's report on my Godbrother. I slept extra this morning, and didn't go for my walk, because at 10:00 I have to address the group of about seven who will take initiation from me. I don't feel ready. I just have this one line to pass on: "Let's be true to one another."

But one of them has already backed out because for the past five months she hasn't been following the rules. She said she will never be able to promise that she will never fail. Be compassionate. One just has to find the right masseur, therapist, or bottle of pills. Sooner or later we will all become better. But not "enough" in this lifetime.

I wanted to go out more to temples and lecture? Even at Inis rath I'm in a funk because of having to prepare myself in an antiheadache mood to prepare for the next lecture. O Krishna, if I walk I'm likely to bump into someone . . .

Let us be true to one another. Avoid the heavy topic that ISKCON gurus seem to all have clay feet, and here I am, initiating more disciples. I don't fight if possible. I stay in the back. I don't associate so much with those who could level me in regular give-and-take before I develop worse symptoms. But it appears that I can go wrong, even if I am the most prominent and active in all sorts of face-to-face electronic exchanges.

*Now don't think I'm loony,
I'm just talking of Narada Muni
and my literary career.*

* * *

9:10 a.m.

Initiation is the most important contract in our lives. It's a contract with Krishna and the disciplic succession. I am merely the peon, the latest rep. It's not that I claim I'm perfect. But a disciple will respect the person who carries the knowledge to them, and who is recognized and authorized.

The emphasized cult of me as person. It's the link with Krishna in the *sampradaya*. I have already studied the philosophy in its basics, and they have studied me. Now we have to both agree. Make them feel good, light, but grave. Say things I have said before, then take questions.

I dig out responses. For me, I need to stay in the favorable position of hearing from Srila Prabhupada. Then I can answer in a caring, convinced way.

Just read Srila Prabhupada's lecture at New Vrindaban in 1972 on his Vyasa-puja day. He said that nowadays, people don't have sympathy. Knowledge and perfect life are taught by Krishna. We suffer from four defects. He went over each one. I remember the crowd outdoors under that pavilion on the hill at New Vrindaban. Lots of outsiders, a representative from the *New York Times*. A classic lecture. The mango comes handed down the tree. The viceroy in India was offered jewels, but they all went to the royal treasury. You honor God by honoring guru.

So what does that have to do with me? I'm okay until I go crazy, or until it's found out that I'm already a deviant. Or until it's decided that none of us are competent to be gurus. I'm not Srila Prabhupada. But is he a role model for me? Anyway, go ahead and do your duty as best you can. No one told you to quit. If they do, that's a different thing.

* * *

11:20 a.m.

I feel better after speaking to the devotees I'll be initiating tomorrow. As I told them, I've been initiating since 1978 "twenty years. I feel less threatened now by any forthcoming GBC changes in the guru system or by any future scenarios where a GBC committee might investigate me. Simply live for the day and do the best you can. And be humble, not defiant, if and when you are called on the carpet. Pray to be spared the worst. As Srila Prabhupada wrote to me, "May Krishna protect you from calamities." Thank you, Srila Prabhupada.

* * *

5:45 p.m.

Took Imigram. Waiting for Srila Prabhupada and Radha-Govinda to arrive.

August 15, 12:15 a.m.

I wake up and remember who I am and what I have to do, different feelings associated with each. I thought just now, "Oh, it's the all-day fast." Then I thought something second, then third. I thought about what's happening with HarikeSa Prabhu or Maharaja. I thought maybe I shouldn't get up right away but try to preserve my strength until 9:00 a.m. when I have to give the initiation lecture.

I didn't think so much of the inner quality of any of it. At the meeting of initiates yesterday, Caitanya-candrodaya said that the goal was *prema*, so what should be one's expectation toward that? How passionately should one try to attain it? I told him to be humble. And I said some other things. It was good of him to mention the goal. Upon awaking this morning, I didn't think, "Will I attain *prema* today or soon or what?"

Also, while listening to Bhurijana Prabhu's *Srimad-Bhagavatam* lectures, I'm reminded of Maharaja Pariksit's sitting for the last seven days of his life "his question, "What is the duty of a man who is about to die?" "and Sukadeva Gosvami's reply "to hear about, glorify, and remember Krishna. This is very important. I'm getting old. I am about to die. Sukadeva Gosvami told Maharaja Pariksit that one should be bold and fearless at death. He should act with detachment. He should avoid materialistic association. What we are attached to, we'll think about. What we think about (some mundane little tune) at the time of death will determine our next life.

When we do less than devotional acts, we tend to rationalize them as necessary for our service or necessary for any human being. We say we need concessions. We don't want to drive ourselves to be overachievers and then break down, do we? We convince ourselves that all these little concessions will be easy to put aside at death. We imagine ourselves thinking in rapture about Krishna. But Sukadeva doesn't say that. He says better we give up our concessions now. Don't rationalize anything. It won't help. Don't wait until death to find that out.

* * *

Vyasa-puja is not man-worship, Srila Prabhupada explained. Maybe ISKCON will take away birthday parties for gurus, and gift-giving and private financial accounts. Maybe *sadhus* will resort to laundering their money in some way, and holding *sat-sanga* meetings that are not exactly birthday parties. It doesn't make much difference to me, as long as I can get my daily bread, a roof over my head, and something to write and publish and distribute as preaching. And some medicine "or nothing. As long as when I'm reduced, I know only the holy name and Prabhupada's books and have enough strength to take shelter in them.

Lord Krishna is the guru within all hearts. As we desire, He gives us facility. "So when Krishna sees that the living entity is very anxious to understand Him or to revive his Krishna consciousness, then Krishna gives him all opportunity, especially by manifesting Himself as the spiritual master." (Lecture 1973, London, *Festivals With Srila Prabhupada*, p. 138) On that occasion in 1973, Prabhupada also said, "I am very much hopeful that my disciples . . . my movement will not stop." We have to continue it even if it and we are in a broken state. We can learn from our mistakes how to do the thing better, to be devotees, and to live in some kind of association. I'm getting ready to be detached about that.

I wish I could be more attached to the simple practices befitting a *sannyasi*, which in my case means living alone to chant, hear, and write. In his purport to a Second Canto *Bhagavatam* verse, Srila Prabhupada says that the first business of a person in the renounced order is to contribute literary work. Now I'll have to stop this first writing of the day and the reading to chant *japa* "equally important.

Happy Janmastami, Prabhu. May it be auspicious. As you are planning to tell the audience today, "Let us each have an inner meditation while we go about our external affairs." Ask how Krishna can take birth or appear in our lives, and what we can do to receive Him.

* * *

8:30 a.m.

Takin' it easy on vacation, but heart is sore. All ISKCON made turbulent by what's happening with my Godbrothers. We put it out of our minds and go on with our Janmastami, or we try to. I just laid back in bed and rehearsed my speech on Krishna's appearance. Now it's almost time to go across the strait to the temple. Brilliant sunshine. Water calm. I'll get through this much of it "lecture, give beads, spiritual names, say the mantras, and light the fire. If that's all I do today, it won't be so bad. But I hope to do more.

* * *

3:47 p.m.

Gave extensive explanations of *gayatri-mantras* and other things to Caitanya-candrodaya, because he is so nice and intelligent. But I felt a sore throat developing. That's sometimes the first sign of physical weakness for me. I kept talking anyway. Too much. But he's receptive. He kept saying, "Just one more small question." I wanted to respond, because he already knows a lot of Vedic information, yet he hears my version with faith. A hungry devotee should be fed.

* * *

6:12 p.m.

I spent the afternoon answering letters. I'm going to do something unusual: I'm going to break the fast in a little while, then take rest soon after 7:00 p.m. so I can rise at my usual time. That way I'll be up at midnight for Janmastami, and not in a weak or headachy state (I hope).

August 16,12 Midnight

For me, my regular schedule is the best festival, so I should look to invest it with my best consciousness and attention. Be always looking for Krishna's direction in ordinary happenings.

Srila Prabhupada speaking on his own Vyasa-puja day "he recalled that he was only twenty years old when he met his spiritual master. At seventy, he started for America. Before that, he had served in India. Our beloved spiritual master, and we his young children. He said, "Therefore, I have to thank you. It is all due to you. It is not in my credit but it is your credit that you are helping me in executing the order of my Guru Maharaja." Lord Krishna and Vyasa are the original gurus. Vyasa produced the Vedic literature, which is our sacred scripture. "And whatever is written with the conclusion of

this Vedic literature, that is also Vedic literature. Just like our books." (*Festivals With Prabhupada*, p. 142)

A mortal being, no matter how intelligent, is imperfect in at least four major ways. Perfect knowledge comes from the Supreme Personality of Godhead through the *parampara*. "And our business is just to present whatever we have heard." This is a very important point. It's true for me too. I write antics, in self-ways, but the value is that I'm trying to represent the *Vedicparampara*. My literary victory will be to turn people toward Krishna and Vyasa.

"To become a spiritual master is not a very difficult thing. You have to become spiritual master. You, all my disciples, everyone should become spiritual master. It is not difficult . . . if you simply present whatever you have heard from your spiritual master." (*Festivals With Prabhupada*, p. 143)

Sir, why do you want to go back to that solitary house with no outgoing program?

Because I can't go out forever, and neither can I find solitude forever. Let me look for solitude now. Let me learn how to use my time profitably to both cultivate deep Krishna consciousness and to preach. I want to celebrate the primal acts of writing, reading, and chanting the holy name. I want to practice living undisturbed, like a white cloud. ISKCON is full of agitation, change, and controversy. We know we need to reform, and there are plenty of opinions as to how that should be done. Let me work on personal reform. That's where all reform begins anyway. Let me remain peaceful, yet responsible, in such an atmosphere. Writing is my daily devotional bread. It is not idle or speculative, because I do care about what happens to myself and others and to this movement. Writing is worth giving my full attention to, and it can improve the quality of that attention too. I can receive a spiritual breakthrough by constant practice.

It takes work to remain loyal to Prabhupada. I need to spend time with him "lots of time" so that I can come to be a more devotional disciple. Sometimes I face my rebellion, but Prabhupada always draws me back to him. "Don't try to become over spiritual master. Then you'll spoil. remain always a servant of your spiritual master and present these things as you have heard. You'll be spiritual master. This is the secret." (*Festivals With Prabhupada*, p. 144)

I have my lecture outline ready for the Vyasa-puja speech. I'll praise him and tell them how he dealt with me gently, yet heavily. He instructed me through my major life changes "under him I became a *brahmacari*, then got married, then became a GBC man, then a *sannyasi*. I gave my life to ISKCON as he requested. My whole life is an investment in Srila Prabhupada. I have lost nothing because of that. In return, I have received the best possible chance to attain *Krishna-prema*.

* * *

12:25 p.m.

The ceremonies are over for me. I'll just honor the feast, then see what little is left of the afternoon. Lots of mail. I don't have to answer all of it immediately.

Spoke my homage to Srila Prabhupada and told stories of how he drew me to him, how he continues to do that. Then I met with Varuna about GNP. He said he is hurt by the shaking of the ISKCON boat. "All the gurus leaving, the BBT case with Hamsaduta

suing, the Gaudiya Math's invasion, the *rtviks*, and now this prominent guru falling down." It's too much, he said. "But maybe it will just blow over like everything else." I said the typical things, trying to be realistic, yet assuring.

Then we spoke about how EJW might be marketed in New Age bookstores. Put a photo of the author and a short "About The Author." But if I'm writing about ISKCON's inner affairs, who "out there" would want to read it? The neo-Buddhists and impersonalistic *yogis* of America? The ISKCON folks are already sick of it. I don't have much to say anyway.

Find myself taking pride that I'm a guru who has not fallen down. My disciples also address me on this point: "You are good, you are faithful, we can trust you." But pride goes before the fall, so let me be careful. And compassionate toward those who have fallen and those who have been hurt by those who have fallen.

* * *

5:33 p.m.

You don't like to write any more? No, I do. I just need time and space. Process and product "I need inspiration for both. Write for fulfillment and solace "that's process. Write for making a volume of EJW, a life's work, for preaching "that's product.

August 17,12:03 a.m.

What should I read? The next holiday, Radhastami, is two weeks away. It might be "too much." I could at least start and see how long I want to go. Because Srimati Radharani is a confidential topic, it might be good to read a lot so that I could then not present a lot in my lecture. I could give only the essence. I'll read what's in Prabhupada's books.

Sri Krishna attracts everyone, so He is called Madana-mohana. "But Radharani is still more attractive, for She can even attract Krishna." (NOD, Chapter 1) These are like *sutras* about Radharani. How dare we even utter Her name! (When I hear the name Radha, some rascal said, I think of a barber I know, whose wife's name is Radha.)

We don't know what devotional service is, so how can we know Radharani? Don't become *prakṛta-sahajiyas*, but learn whatever Prabhupada teaches. He doesn't omit Radha. She graces all our major temples. She appears in every "Hare Krishna" mantra that we utter. "To perform devotional service means to follow in the footsteps of Radharani." Devotees put themselves under Her direction. "So, being directly under the control of the internal potency of Krishna, devotional service attracts even Krishna Himself." (NOD, Chapter 1)

I don't want to take more of a vacation from writing. Let it rejoin the flow of my life. These are troubled times for ISKCON devotees, with challenges and failures rapidly following upon one another. "What next?" we wonder. The optimist turns to faith in the remaining leaders and the good things he or she sees happening in ISKCON. The optimist believes that Krishna and Prabhupada are present in our efforts.

The pessimist says ISKCON is finished or soon will be. The enemies gloat and try to get together to put the finishing touches on this sinking ship. I stay away from the

centers of fighting and continue faithfully from a distance. Our group happily observed the Vaisnava holidays over the weekend. There were no heavy hearts.

Now the rain is falling and I can hear it. Grass shooting up in a patch of land just outside my window. Two more weeks here. We are all at Krishna's mercy.

We've heard of devotees experiencing ecstatic love of God. The best of them is Srimati radharani. "O Lord Govinda, the girl who is the daughter of King Vrsabhanu is now shedding tears, and She is anxiously chanting Your holy name "Krishna! Krishna!" (NOD, Chapter 18) Pretenders imitate having received Radha-Krishna's *darSana* or that radha and Krishna have come to talk with them. Experienced devotees see through these claims.

Lord Krishna is grave; He doesn't express His mind to everyone. "Another example of Krishna's gravity is found in connection with His love affairs with radharani. Krishna was always very silent about His love affairs with Radharani, so much that Baladeva, Krishna's elder brother and constant companion, could not understand the transformations of Krishna on account of His gravity." (NOD, Chapter 21)

Hare Krishna. Draw a picture. Grow some hair. Hear what your ear lets in, an airplane or a military helicopter. Live on, but don't expect it will last forever. We leave a place of troubles only to come back to another place of troubles. Unless we are a hundred percent imbued with pure devotion to Krishna. Srila Prabhupada said on his arrival in ISKCON Berkeley in 1975 that he traveled around the world two or three times a year because he was anxious that those he initiated may not fall down. I don't travel so much, so at least I should write them thoughtful letters, something genuine from within in response to their sincerity.

The mix flows, allowing one thing to follow another. There is no particular logic to it, and no need to justify anything. My mind doesn't perfectly order things. Life is full of "*rasabhasa*" events.

Then how, you may wonder, will this writing pass Svarupa Damodara's test? It doesn't have to. It's not meant to be *read* by the Lord. I only want Him to know that it was written to help others and that it has succeeded.

But why would others want to read imperfect or odd mixtures?

They will be attracted to it in the name of truth. It is meant to be true to experience. As Varuna told me yesterday, "Devotees are resilient. We're not children. The GBC should not cover anything up but give us a full report. We can take it and go on with our duties." Devotees don't want covered versions of the scandals that happen in high places, and they don't even want covered versions of the more ordinary lives. Tell the truth.

Krishna is compassionate. "Actually, because Krishna is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, it is very difficult to approach Him. But the devotees, taking advantage of His compassionate nature, which is represented by Radharani, always pray to Radharani for Krishna's compassion." (NOD, Chapter 22)

* * *

4:28 a.m.

Don't disturb the man on vacation by forcing him to write.

What's this, he's a writer?

What's this, he follows
any word that floats
into his brain?

Why not compose thoughts and put them down nicely? He thinks this is a three-ring circus.

Imagine all the things he could have been by now if his life had been different "gotten married and no *sannyasa* or stayed out on book distribution or went back to school or even just to psychotherapy. Perhaps he could have opened a preaching ranch on Staten Island.

All the things he could be by now if he had caught himself early enough and staked his claim in Santa Cruz or Virago or

I said I would not write these sentence so freely.

If he applied for citizenship in the right country, or if he had heeded his master's suggestion to do book distribution in India . . .

What if he had just helped out with temples there? If he had followed his heart's inclination, stayed in a cabin in the Pyrenees.

But I could not, he says, and I know it's true. Those ways were strongly against my grain. I read *John Of The Cross* for a while, and Teresa of Avila, then got fed up with the Christian expression of spirituality. I chose instead a path of less resistance. That's what I have in Ireland in that cement cottage with gray walls and a thatched roof. I am who I am and I have landed.

Light the votive candle in a dark church, offering prayers and money (clink, clink) for departed souls and for myself. May the light shiver but stay lit until it has burned down to nothingness. I pray not to fall down. I pray to become an actual *sadhu*. I pray to be a Vaisnava poet so that I can praise Krishna. I don't pray for a gentle death but for the assurance that my next life will be better, more conducive to spiritual attainment.

Thank God Radha-Govinda and Srila Prabhupada *murti* have arrived. My tired body reaches out to them as I arrange their clothing. Thank You, Lord, for coming into the life of a poor one, by Your grace.

* * *

Well it's good to see you in the SiSumara
planetary system, otherwise known as
the Milky Way. It's good
to see you have finished your
walk on the Appalachian trail.

* * *

I'm glad you're back with us in
Reindeer Land in
Hare Krishna Mantra Land.
You can still take it easy but
I'll ask you to sing and you have only
eight or ten songs of your own

which you revolve in a cycle.

* * *

I'm glad to see you're back
in the temples and homes, reading the books
and no longer pronouncing obeisances
to another guru. Please
feel free to clean our shoes.

* * *

I'm glad to see you're preaching
and staying clear of *ennui*. I
heard you don't do e-mail but
at least you bust your bones to
get the message out.

* * *

So they wrote me, and so in my mind I believed them. He said, "If you want to get a terrific pain management course, go to Dr. Weinstein in Virginia. Be prepared for a sizable payment up front, but then you'll get the very best compassionate care." Please read the Vedic scriptures and learn to leave behind all extras and deviations.

The devotee guests have made their exoduses. The big weekend is over. There weren't so very many people here, but enough to keep the temple room warm when they sang and danced. Now we have a chance to get back into the ordinary routine with Ordinary Mind, which is Zen-super. We will worship our *ista-devata* and go to the shed in the afternoons. But it's a fact that after breakfast, I'm always likely to get the head trouble that stops me from my usual hula dance. Still, I got in what I could over the weekend, through slow rounds, discussing breezy topics, a little reading, thoughts of beautiful Srimati Radharani. I do like this life.

* * *

5:20 a.m.

First walk at Geaglum. It's so dark out, I felt like I was going through a tunnel. Plenty of little pothole puddles. As I left the house, Tilaka started out behind me. I turned a few times to see if he was still following. When I reached the edge of our land and started back, Tilaka stood in the middle of the road as I approached. He opened his mouth wide and yawned. I petted him and remembered when we used to be closer friends.

Thoughts cloudy. Thinking about Sharma dasa, my Godbrother's disciple. Madhu spoke to him at the temple yesterday and advised him to take shelter of Prabhupada, especially on Prabhupada's Vyasa-puja day. "He's obviously affected," Madhu said. "He's more withdrawn than usual."

I said, "They'll be praying for his recovery." We who are not directly affected cannot really feel what this is about. We think angrily or loyally about ISKCON. But the agony experienced by those who are actually going through it, the loss of a guru "what can I understand?"

* * *

9:00 a.m.

Sunshine crashing down on me as I sit facing the window. Maybe I should move. *The Nectar Of Devotion* states that Krishna is *lalita*, or a meticulous dresser. I thought of this last night when I was arranging Krishna's *dhoti* and *kurta*. Actually, I was having trouble with His *kurta* and thought I would just let it go, even though He looked a little messy. Then I told myself no. Krishna likes to be well-dressed. That He is *lalita* includes that He likes to decorate Srimati Radharani. If I am Their servant, I should try to dress both of Them nicely. And I do.

I'm thinking to give a class next Sunday morning in the temple. I could read the section in *Caitanya-caritamrta* that describes Lord Krishna's desire to appear in the mood of Srimati Radharani "to learn the three things She knows. Then some section describing Lord Caitanya's expressing Himself as radharani. It would be advanced material, but once in a while that's all right. I would not describe intimate physical details but Their attitudes "what the Lord wanted to taste and what happened when He did. Then I could relate all that to ourselves. Chapter Thirty-five of *Krishna* book states that Gaudiya Vaisnavas cultivate feelings of separation similar to that experienced by the *gopis*. This discussion might be a nice preparation for Radhastami. This philosophy doesn't exist in any other religion, and it's good to remind ourselves of the substance of Gaudiya theology.

Srimati Radharani exhibited the ecstatic symptom of trembling as She told one of the *gopis*, "Don't joke with this disappointing boy! Please ask Him not to approach Me, because He is always the cause of all grief for us." (NOD, Chapter 28) We know that beneath Her expressions of anger or fear, Srimati Radharani is always happy in Krishna consciousness.

"There is a supreme symptom of ecstatic love which is called *maha-bhava*. This *maha-bhava* expression was possible only in Radharani, but later on when Sri Krishna Caitanya appeared to feel the mode of love of Radharani, He also expressed all of the symptoms of *maha-bhava*." (NOD, Chapter 28) I'm not sure whether it would be right to present this. I'd have to talk of something way over our heads.

* * *

12:00 Noon

To give a class on why Lord Caitanya came as a combination of Radha-Krishna seems too much of an endeavor on too intimate a topic. I did Sunday morning classes on *Caitanya-caritamrta* when I stayed here before, but let me not start that up again. I feel like I'm always preparing lectures or answering letters. I'd like to be free to float toward what I want to say right here. Find a gentler concentration.

My troubled Godbrother says he now wants to live in solitude in a rented house. Does that make me look good or bad? Does it affect the way I live? We are all affected when one of us falls. This brother was such a prominent leader. Now he appears as if he is crazy. His followers are told not to listen to him. I can't imagine what they must be feeling. Bulbous white clouds resting or floating over the island "the old nature theater that's been going on for centuries. People coming and going. As down by the shack, so here, spiders have set up an extensive web system just outside the windows and have caught dozens of midges. If I look closely, I see them, their bodies blowing in the wind but stuck to the web. I suppose the spider comes and eats them as it needs to.

The captain on the plane from Philly to San Francisco came back and spoke with Srila Prabhupada. He asked, "If God is the source of everything, then where does evil come from?" I could add, "Is the cobweb evil? The claws of the tiger? The pincers of a crab? Is it wrong that one living being is food for another?"

It is wrong in that we have to feel terrorized by a predator's attack, but we have brought this condition upon ourselves by our desire to be separate from God. God is not to blame. The condition comes from Him indirectly, but He asks us and teaches us how to get out of the hunter's net. We simply have to take shelter in Him, surrender to Him, and He will protect us from all evil.

Lurch "quiet words, but
underneath, who am I?
Keep close to God and don't
chew the chewed the worldly
grat and trust
that He knows best.

Thus I moralize, Mr. Goodie Man. Does the Shadow want a little action? The hairy newt, the jumpy toad, the alto sax Bird fingering as fast as hell, sweet in his way. Who is religious? He got it from God. Yes, but if he doesn't acknowledge it? Maybe he does. We'd like to claim all daring artists as devotees, but I know it's not always true. It is true that they received their creative passion from Lord Krishna. Unfortunately, they seem to rarely want to use their talents to reveal His glories. Propagandists in a bad age.

* * *

2:30 p.m.

Antlered deer grazing. I can approach quite close to them. Could have killed them with a gun. Light tan, white-spotted, they leap off noiselessly into the copse. I am left alone with the view.

On my way out here I sankirtana van. I imagine myself meeting and talking with the leader, a disciple of my fallen Godbrother. "How's it going?" I'd ask. Then, "Your spiritual master gave you an eternal order to distribute books." But I didn't meet anyone.

Near the house, two tractors were mowing and gathering hay into bundles. It's that time of year. I am slow to notice the signs. I seem more eager in spring, thinking of those early mornings and the year ahead.

Water in jar turned red from paint. Photos I taped to windowsill "Radha-Damodara on Their Jhulana-yatra, the swing suspended between two trees. Tall grass. Noticed it's me who is irritable; no one else is to blame for that.

* * *

4:07 p.m.

Oh, lame-assed critics, get back in your box. We are busy lamenting the demise of the great hope of a united movement. The GBC is trying their best, but nobody's perfect "neither the leaders nor those who follow them. Leave me out in the green hinterlands. I'm not taking dope with Richard Nixon or having an affair a la Clinton, but I realize that what I want is that we are kind to one another. Let us be kind. But objective too. Guard us against loonies and abusers. May we once and for all pick up the pieces and go forward.

I returned from the shed with no proposal. They're cutting down wild grass. The earth is not to blame. The lake strait. Does the falldown of a brother make it harder for me to look good?

I drew two pictures. I can't quite make them out. They are of people talking to one another about Krishna consciousness, trying to express my unconscious myth and story and exact hope in forward gear.

August 18, 12:27 a.m.

Couldn't fall asleep at 7:00 last night with that tractor running outside. And the bedcovers were too tight on both sides. My mind was running. I finally fell asleep and dreamt of going into a basement, where I was accused of loving the music of T. Monk. Then I went again to the basement, where men were watching a film of beautiful, naked women. I woke from that dream; it was too dangerous. I also heard a gun shot in the dream and my father or mother threatening my sister. I said to my parents, "Be careful! Our lives depend upon it!"

Now awake and praying not to fall down. Let me be free of sex desire. Then fell asleep again and dreamt of Native Americans integrating into regular American society. We acknowledged their powers, and wanted their participation in our lives.

I allowed myself to sleep until 12:20 a.m. That makes it too late for any sustained *lectio divina*. At least I'm glad to be alive, awake, and pursuing a quiet life in Krishna consciousness.

* * *

Sometimes Radharani manifested feelings of guilt after being with Krishna, and sometimes she manifested symptoms of intoxication. Her *gopi* friends always assisted Her and enhanced Her moods with their words. "Sometimes Radharani felt pride with Herself and said, 'Although the cowherd boys prepare nice flower garlands for Krishna, when I present my garland to Him, He becomes struck with wonder and immediately accepts it and puts it on His heart.'" (NOD, Chapter 29)

Sometimes the expressions of love for Krishna take the form of insanity. "Let Srimati Radharani purify the whole world, because She has surrendered Herself completely unto Krishna." Confusion, dizziness, forgetting one's self.

I've run out of time for reading and writing. I feel a tightness in my heart. My material symptoms of old age, disease, and the anxiety I feel after hearing the bad news about my Godbrother and this movement are all prominent now.

Muck: This is a symptom of nonsense and impurity employed by the joking free-writer. This is an example of pride in thinking whatever you write should stand and be read. This is an example of poverty in spirit, influenced by reading Christian literature. This is an example of attending public schools on Staten Island in the 1950s. This is an example.

When they accused you of loving T. Monk, did you (and do you now) disown him as unfavorable for your spiritual life? In the dream you hummed "In Walked Bud." You did shake off lust. An example of fear of loss of honor as a *sannyasi* and an example of strength in renunciation. Use *those* powers in Krishna consciousness.

* * *

4:32 a.m.

Lord Caitanya was the ideal preacher of *Srimad-Bhagavatam*. He recommended studying the *Bhagavatam* to Sanatana Gosvami as one of the five most potent practices of devotional service. There is also a verse which summarizes Lord Caitanya's mission. It's the one that says there is no higher worship than that practiced by the *gopis* (*vraja-vadhu*), and that the land of Vrndavana is worshipable. That verse also includes the statement that study of *Srimad-Bhagavatam* is topmost. Lord Caitanya often quoted from *Srimad-Bhagavatam*. I'm going to make this a theme for a class next Sunday. I'll read the end of His teachings to Sanatana Gosvami, where He recommends reading *Srimad-Bhagavatam*. I'll turn to another section at the end of *Madhya-lila*, "The residents of Varanasi become Vaisnavas." There again, it is recommended that we *hear* *Srimad-Bhagavatam*. Another example is Lord Caitanya's order to Raghunatha Bhatta to always *recite* the *Srimad-Bhagavatam*. The combination of Lord Caitanya and *Srimad-Bhagavatam* is excellent. Someone might think Lord Caitanya favored ecstatic dancing and chanting but did not encourage the devotees to study books. That's true to a point. He didn't study the impersonalist's commentary on *Vedanta-sutra*. He said Vedanta was already commented on by *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, a book by the same author.

And how does this fit into our lives? Does it get down to the same old crunch that each devotee should spend time every day with Srila Prabhupada's books? Is that so hard to do? Do I do it myself? Yes, I do, and I'm finding new ways to keep it up.

* * *

I did not stay to answer letters after I finished my fourteenth round. I was tired and wanted to save myself for this writing slot. I took a nap instead and dreamt that I was a sportscaster at a baseball game. The Chicago Whitesox were playing. As the game began, I realized I didn't have a good view of the ball field. It was ridiculous. The teams weren't even playing in a stadium. But I did my best.

It occurs to me now that this dream can be taken as a metaphor for EJW. There are thousands of baseball games, and most are basically alike. But a keen fan is interested in the start of a new game, because it always develops into its own drama; those moments have never happened before. Each day provides a new chance to steer to Krishna. Each baseball game ends in a win for one team and defeat for the other, but a Krishna conscious day is always a winner. Hare Krishna. Let us all chant as we play, and never forget Krishna.

* * *

Sri Hamsaduta begins with Radharani in a state of despair feeling separation from Krishna. We are told that after Krishna left with Akrura for Mathura, Radha was plunged into reminiscence. She appeared almost to expire, but Her *sakhis* cared for Her with great concern. Lalita left Radha's company to get some Yamuna water, and as she did, she met a swan. As the story begins, Lalita is speaking to the swan. Rupa Gosvami says that we should not doubt that a *gopi* would speak to a dumb creature. *Maha-bhagavata* devotees see Krishna everywhere and see the whole universe as animated by love for Him. *Sri Hamsaduta* is a very visual piece of writing, and Lalita describes to the swan all the sights it will see as it flies over Vrndavana on its way to Mathura and to Krishna.

Bite your fingernails and find fault with Godbrothers. Worry over what will come. Try to see yourself and your end. Assess your service and plans. Admit you like to be simple and comfortable without much trouble or duty. Admit you just want to be.

The *parivrajakacarya* is one who wanders. I'm not one. Krishna will move me as He likes, though. I will remember Him as I tend Radha-Govinda. They do not like to move so much, and neither does Prabhupada *murti*. They cannot be taken from place to place. They are a good reason for staying in one place. When the body is less active and vigorous, there may be a chance for the inner self to take on a life of activity. We serve Krishna in that way.

* * *

Hurry man, hurry. Why? The lane will still be dark. Could I possibly listen to the names of Krishna as I chant them, instead of listening to and observing my mind? Oh, but I thought a living being had no choice but to think and be a mental being? I want to be something else, but how is it possible?

O Lord, please allow me to approach You in prayer. Let me serve You. Let me know You better. Please give me the intelligence and strength to do what is right. I want to please my spiritual master. But the energy to do so is inspiration, and sometimes I feel it has run out.

No, that's not true. Don't say that. Don't admit defeat. I can still scrap with *maya*. I can still accomplish something I haven't yet accomplished.

The tractor was roaming past my window at 9:00 last night, picking up the bails of hay that have now been wrapped in black plastic by another machine.

I'm thinking a lot about my Godbrother's situation from different points of view. It bobs up like a doleful buoy at sea, flashing its light and making me feel sad and troubled.

I don't know the actual situation, only the news that has reached me. But I have to go on with my service.

* * *

5:25 a.m.

Sliver of the moon. When I start out, it's so dark I can't see where they have mown the grass. It's nice to be alone to walk a country lane and hear the sound of my clothes rustling. Chant Hare Krishna mantras. Get a little peace. The bright red lights of my Dictaphone, like the running lights of a trailer truck. I'm Krishnaized, but how deeply? Is it just a game, that I can tag on Krishna names to everything I see or do? My religion?

* * *

9:25 a.m.

I want to tell the devotees, in a lecture from the *vyasasana*, that Lord Caitanya advised us to read *Srimad-Bhagavatam*. I went over the text I have chosen, and it's nice. But perhaps it's too short. It will only last about fifteen minutes. Then what? I want to speak about reading reform, but don't want to (1) do my own thing, such as read from my *reading reform* notebook, or (2) push people to do something I am not doing myself. Also, I heard Srila Prabhupada say chanting was enough. Or any one of the nine limbs of *bhakti*.

Do I dare say that none of us are exempt from reading Srila Prabhupada's books? Why burden them with this? Well, I have to say *something*. Then why have I chosen these sections of *Caitanya-caritamrta*? I could read the sections without going on to make a plea for reading reform.

Instead, I could talk about why we should accept *Srimad-Bhagavatam* as authoritative, especially the commentaries of the Gaudiya Vaisnavas. Srila Prabhupada's Bhaktivedanta purports are a gathering of these commentaries and are intended to create a revolution in the heart. read *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 1.5.11, where Prabhupada says, "Let there be systematic propaganda for popularizing reading of *Srimad-Bhagavatam* and *Bhagavad-gita*." He said people want to read, but they are reading trashy books. *Srimad-Bhagavatam* may seem dry because of our jaundice, but the dryness soon goes away.

I like to think my books will help popularize *Srimad-Bhagavatam* and replace nondevotee books with Krishna conscious reading. Hare Krishna. Srila Prabhupada says in 1.5.11 that his own writing will have defects, especially since it is presented in a language that is foreign to him. But because of the urgency of the message, honest people will accept it. I say the same thing: my writing, if offered as a substitute literature to the great writers of the nondevotees, will fall far short, but it's a Krishna conscious attempt, and those who seek the truth beyond speculation, beyond sense perception, beyond death and atheism will find light and nectar in what I write. There, I said it.

* * *

11:30 a.m.

It's August 1998, and when people finally read this volume, they'll expect that I was aware of the latest crisis. And so I am. But if I don't write about them in my book, I'll look like a quietist. Emily Dickinson wrote while the Civil War raged on, but she didn't even mention it in her poems. We don't fault her for that. "A fly buzzed when I died," "Because I could not stop for Death" "she had her own agenda. I do too.

Very well. Swallows with that special divided tail fling themselves into the air and fly back and forth over the peninsula. Boats cross regularly. Two antlered bucks run suddenly right into the open field in front of my window. They look like young boys. They rush down to the water's edge, where the weeds are taller and the grazing better than our mown field. I see their tails twitch as they chase the flies. Wild, easily frightened, but untamed they are.

* * *

12:25 p.m.

Reading some Bob Kaufman poetry. Too much, hysteria and hard-world music. Death and horror with no reprieve "his own fierce attempt to tell the world's truths. I expect to be calmer. I don't attempt to say it all, eat it all. He said, "We don't trust charisma." Let me be simple and straight in my writing, a peon mailman. But even a peon mailman is a person. We have personal mailmen in this movement.

* * *

2:44 p.m.

To the shed. Warm and sunny. M.'s melodeon music floats on the air. I meet no one, see no snakes or toads, only insects. Radhanatha said he'd fix the door, but he hasn't yet. Children's voices reach me from a distance. Plenty of green grass out here, but it's too marshy for the tractor to come and mow. Look at the excerpts on Srimati Radharani.

Symptoms of ecstatic love are often caused by remembering Krishna. "For example, one friend of Krishna informed Him, 'My dear Mukunda, just after observing a bluish cloud in the sky, the lotus-eyed Radharani immediately began to remember You.'" (NOD, Chapter 30)

"The damsels of Vraja and Radharani were very expert in talking cunningly, so as soon as they saw Krishna they began their talkings . . ." (NOD, Chapter 30) When Srimati Radharani first saw Krishna, She became conscious of all transcendental happiness and Her limbs were stunned. Then, "When Lalita, Her constant companion, whispered into Her ear the holy name of Krishna, Radharani immediately opened Her eyes wide. This is an instance of alertness caused by hearing the sound of Krishna's name." (NOD, Chapter 30)

Srimati Radharani . . . I can't take much of this at a time. Even one example, and the most relatable ones "Radharani seeing a blue cloud and remembering Krishna ecstatically "is beyond me.

Seagulls circling over the lake strait. Some of the weed heads have become golden, like wheat. The cattails are a plump brown. I could pick them and burn them like incense, right?

* * *

3:53 p.m.

Water reddish from paint. red canoes. I read a letter from Kaliya-damana dasankirtanas. Preaching. There were six Hare Krishna groups there, two from ISKCON and four from non-ISKCON organizations. He spoke of negativity toward ISKCON, of people taking delight in the fall of ISKCON leaders.

Another letter said, "Don't get upset if someone reinitiates your disciples, but turn the other cheek."

"Why can't we all chant and dance and have *kirtana* together and forget philosophy? It seems the more we learn *sastra* and philosophy, the more we get puffed up and forget that we should be humble and show respect to all. We should see Krishna in everyone."

Rainbow Gathering "I didn't go.

My dear sir, I have seen the rabbit issuing from its hole. I saw the stray thoughts of your imagination. I heard you wanted to face beasts and lightning but couldn't hold it together long enough for a fireside tale. Then what do you expect of a reader? Cracks in the fingernails, in the wood grain on the desk, in a religious movement, in an individual's heart. Our reform is ultimately up to Krishna. We need His guidance more than ever before. In the meantime, we do the best we can.

Are they called punks, those cattails? Why so quiet? What am I waiting to say?

* * *

5:58 p.m. Night Notes

In and out of the kitchen he comes. Hooded crows stalking around the now-yellow patch of land where the hay was mown. It will grow up again for winter, but by then I'll be gone. Plan to be back for a short November-end visit, though.

Sad ISKCON. Let's keep going anyway. After all, fires on the other side of a river don't *really* burn you.

The deciduous trees are blooming green, but we don't believe them. We know the best of summer is over. It has already peaked. Waiting ourselves to be carried by the waves of time.

Can we really believe in each day? M. and I read and recorded the opening pages of *Prema-samputa*, in which Krishna, disguised as a woman, tells Radha why Krishna should not be loved. We await Her reply.

August 19,12 Midnight.

One of Radharani's friends told Her, "My dear graceful Radharani, Your intimate friend Krishna is also served by His intimate boyfriends. Some of them cut jokes with Him in mild voices and please Him very much by this." (NOD, Chapter 41) *Priya-*

narma friends like Subala and Ujjvala canvass on Krishna's behalf, entreating the *gopis* to meet with Krishna.

Krishna's servant Patri addressed Krishna, saying, "You have protected us cowherd boys from demons like Aghasura and Kaliya. But I am suffering from Your separation, which is more severe than the hunger of Aghasura, the poison lake of Kaliya, and the burning of the forest fire. Why should You not protect me from the pangs of separation?" (NOD, Chapter 42)

"In the *Lalita-madhava*, rupa Gosvami explains that the movements of Krishna's eyebrows are just like the Yamuna, and that the smiling of Radharani is just like the moonshine. When the Yamuna and the moonshine come in contact on the bank of the river, the water tastes just like nectar, and drinking it gives great satisfaction." (NOD, Chapter 44)

Just see how the beauty of nature is not ultimate but a springboard to the beauty of Radha and Krishna. The atheist can never think in a devotional way; for him, the beauty of nature is taken for what it is. That isn't always a virtue. I want to be able to remember Krishna through everything I perceive with my senses. The Lord gives us all the space and comfort to do that. I realize I can't think of Krishna deeply and with feeling, and as a result, I am sometimes preoccupied with my failures. Better to appreciate what I can.

Krishna's love for Radha is steady. Whatever else may be happening in His *lilas*, His love for Radha never withers or becomes distracted.

Sometimes radha feels *mana*, jealous anger. When Radha and Krishna are out of contact because He has gone to a distant place, this is called *pravasa*. In that state, Srimati Radharani always cries and cannot sleep. Uddhava said, "The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Govinda . . . is always thinking of you (the *gopis*) and He is not even accepting His regular lunch. Nor is He getting any proper rest." (NOD, Chapter 44)

Maybe that's enough for now. Soon I will start my *japa*. Pray to become Krishna conscious. They say we have to undergo severe tests before we attain spiritual realization. We are often afraid of that. And often when we are tested, other devotees have no compassion for us. We want leaders to behave perfectly and to be equipoised. When their *anarthas* come out, who will be sympathetic? Especially if they were high and mighty before their falldowns? It is human nature to enjoy the fall of the proud.

* * *

4:29 a.m.

Oh, devotee, want to have a go? He's riding his Heigh-ho Silver horse into the arena to show off. He doffs his ten-gallon hat. That same unsupreme personality is before us now, laughable and bedraggled. They *laugh* at us, Dumbo, but we can fly if we extend our ears and trumpet nose. In the end, we shall each offer ourselves on the altar of sacrifice to Prabhupada and Krishna and pray they will accept us. All of us will get to that point eventually.

It was nice to dress Them once again. Krishna's *kurta* doesn't quite fit "that gold one from Vrndavana. Radha's clothes fit perfectly. On the whole, They both look very nice. Bring to Them your eyes of love if you wish to really behold Their beauty. Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna.

I don't know what else to say. ISKCON falls like London Bridge, but we can continue to use it to cross over the nescient worlds. Because ISKCON is many different things. Each community, although centrally governed by the GBC and affected (especially through the internet) by goings-on all over the world, is a local place and can be peaceful unto itself. If the residents are peaceful in their simple services, especially by hearing and chanting and laboring for the Deity, they don't need to become riled up by world news and thus lose their Krishna conscious focus.

My words floating in like logs from the sea. I claim the analogies were too simple. One professor called it Pollyanna and unsophisticated. Let them say that. We beat them up. We don't let them beat us up. We see the highest knowledge of the soul and the Supreme given in *Bhagavad-gita*. We stick with that.

Maybe that's all I want to say. I just want to remind us to remember Krishna no matter what. In Vaikuntha, where so many have *svarupa-siddhi*, He can be distinguished from His servants by His mark of Srivatsa and His Kaustubha jewel. In Goloka Vrndavana, it's even more clear.

* * *

He wrote to me, "What if we are not allowed guru worship anymore?" He added, "I read an e-mail that said that most of ISKCON in India has 'gone *rtvik*,' including Juhu."

But we love one another. Who can challenge that with new regulations? Our love is here to stay. We do live in a society. He said, "With all this agitation in our society, there seems to be more reason for you to stay in that house." It's true. We are a troubled nation. There are so many viewpoints on how to solve our problems, and they run the spectrum. Who can sort it all out? Better to go back to our smaller worlds of less communication and try to contact Krishna consciousness within ourselves and our smaller communities.

Suddenly a *sannyasi* up and leaves, a woman on his arm. We can try to understand why. We can forgive and not condemn. I can see the ridiculousness of myself doing something like that. Me, cavort? It really would be too ridiculous. To have come this far and then quit. By now, I might as well get the credit for following my vows.

Krishna is smiling. This jalopy is making noise. It feels a new pain in a new place. *Heil Hitler* "those worst days are over. Let us not live a nightmare of living outside the bounds of human mercy. It is too horrible to face. When I dream of such conditions, I tend to wake up. Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna.

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5:25 a.m.

Buddhists talk about watching the mind. I watch myself, my body too, little fellow, walking down the dark lane. Seemed to remember when I was more keen on pleasing Prabhupada, more willing to "go out" and preach. Now I have to internalize my preaching desires, it seems. Too many of the people I invited to ISKCON are now bitter that they joined. remember those people in Madison? Now they wish they had never become devotees.

* * *

9:23 a.m.

Nice things last. They come slowly, easily, from Krishna, but they have to be paid for. Drowse/snooze-panel on clock is not to be used regularly. A man hugged his enemy. A sardonic face softened. An old hand felt younger. A grouch began to write poems okay. A man dreamed Robert Bly was conducting a poetry course and charging a high fee, but the man didn't show him his poems.

Don't break the chain. Don't stop the action of good things. Bad news settles eventually. On Janmastami, the *brahmanas* who had been forbidden to start yajnic fires started them again. What about after Janmastami? The guests went home. The sky became blue and gray. A seagull floated in the channel. The weeds hugged the shore.

In the period between Janmastami and Radhastami, some hooded crows landed in a field before my eyes. I picked up a big book, but didn't read it. I said to myself, "This would be a good time to read things about Radharani and to prepare a simple talk." This year, the holiday dates are all early; next year will be later.

We are saddened at the breakup. Can things improve? As for myself, I plan a quiet time, provided the body doesn't require emergency treatment.

He was concerned about himself. He heard his spiritual master speak of three kinds of experience, and say that direct sense perception was the lowest. The best is hearing knowledge from a superior source.

Yes, he thought, but I must also report with these senses and the mind. He heard his spiritual master say that there is first-class, second-class, and third-class among prisoners, trees, and animals.

Between Janmastami and Radhastami, the temple staff recoups. A householder went on a money-making marathon, because after Radhastami, he plans to take his family camping in a hired van, maybe somewhere in Europe. And me? I will return to the south, to my abode.

Cut me down to size "I don't mind. I don't need to depend on a puffed-up definition of myself in an institution. I'm just a tiny spirit soul. As Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati said, "I never took disciples, I don't have any disciples now, and I'll never take them in the future." I am a servant of the servant, simply a disciple of Srila Prabhupada.

* * *

9:50 a.m.

There are many intrigues concerning Radharani's alleged relationship with Krishna, which Radha and Her friends deny. There are many suspicions expressed by elders like Jatila. These affairs cause laughing and sometimes anger. In mixed *rasas* involving Krishna and Radha, the conjugal *rasa* usually surpasses the other *rasas*, so there is no incompatibility. Here's an example of conjugal love mixed with ghastliness, spoken by Krishna: "My dear friend, what a wonderful thing it is that since I have seen the beautiful lotus eyes of Srimati Radharani, I have developed a tendency to spit on the moon and the lotus flower!" (NOD, Chapter 50)

As I write, I see Syamananda rowing toward Inis rath. I just saw Vilnes walking across the field toward this house. Both of them may have seen me, because I'm wearing a bright orange sweatshirt, and the hundred-watt desk lamp is a spotlight on this dark day. The double window places me like a fish in a fish bowl.

The word Radharani does not appear in the *Slokas* of *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, but She is mentioned in some of the purports. Here's one: ". . . The Lord is more pleased when He is addressed as the son of Maharaja Nanda, the son of Yashoda, the lover of Radharani." (*Bhag.* 1.9.22, purport)

A conditioned soul under the illusory energy forgets the Supreme Lord. The separation devotees feel cannot be described. "After His separation from Vrndavana, the innocent rural cowherd boys, girls, ladies and others all felt shock throughout their lives, and the separation of radha, the most beloved cowherd girl, is beyond expression. Once they met at Kuruksetra during a solar eclipse, and the feeling which was expressed by them is heart-rending." (*Bhag.* 1.10.9 - 10, purport) These purport references are infrequent but wonderful. We savor them. They count for a lot.

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12:05 p.m.

Humble idiot. ISKCON's strongest leader, the one with the most followers, exposed himself as a proud madman.

Don't say that. You don't know what it's like, what he's been through.

Still, it's no wonder that ISKCON's non-guru authorities cry, "*Enough!* Cut down the gurus and make only Prabhupada guru. We can't keep sacrificing all these innocent lives to fallible gurus. It's not working, so stop it. Give our members more insurance. Spell it out that they belong to Srila Prabhupada and are *his* disciples, even if their initiating guru falls and goes away."

Speed on, man.

Lunch on a hunch his
undigested *amma* is a burden
now soul can burn up
crummy desires in
Hare Krishna man's gut.

* * *

Simple Swami won't desert,
women don't disturb him
aw, he's got his claim, prays,
"Master, protect me! I wish
instead of dead or dread
to live in you forever."

* * *

12:30 p.m.

Olive oil on bread instead of butter. Honest instead of thief. Holy altar boy with open mouth. Put wafer in. Caitanya-candrodaya says he was never religious in his Communist Russian upbringing; he never once entered a church. He asks whether this works against him in Krishna consciousness. I'll say no, as long as he is sincere now.

* * *

2:45 p.m.

Patri wrote me a letter on Janmastami, enclosed his homage to Srila Prabhupada, a short comment on *yasya prasada bhagavat prasada* of "*Guruvastakam*," and said, "I have a pen in my hand and I can't write this very well. I must go back home today . . . "

Blossoming green. The devotees visit one another. Tell me how they feel, to some degree, and make a response.

Lord Krishna is Madana-mohana, "He attracts the mind of even radharani, the supermost beautiful creation of the Lord." (*Bhag.* 1.16.26-30, purport) Her beauty is Her devotion to Him.

"In Vrndavana all the pure devotees pray for the mercy of Srimati radharani, the pleasure potency of the Lord. Srimati Radharani is the tender-hearted feminine counterpart of the supreme whole." (*Bhag.* 2.3.23) Her mercy is readily available to sincere devotees, "and once She recommends such a devotee to Lord Krishna, the Lord at once accepts . . . "

Sukadeva Gosvami was a strict renunciate, yet he relished the transcendental taste of Lord Krishna's *rasa* dance.

Big, handsome canopy of white clouds. Resembles an altar. right above them is a patch of brilliant blue. The changing sky. I was here a year ago, remember? I wrote about it in *Cc. ASraya*. I said I'd travel after Radhastami, but I went back and forth about that. I thought I should stay and read. When I saw I couldn't get deeply into full-time reading, and that staying in one place didn't seem to improve the headache condition, I thought about going to Italy to preach. But this year I'm going back to Wicklow after Radhastami. I still can't enter reading *samadhi*, but I'm going to try harder.

* * *

3:35 p.m.

I really should try to answer those letters. I feel a lack of physical strength right now. I had better wait for my strength to return.

Drew two pictures today with word balloons to float over them. No words came, however, to fill the balloons. At least I branded the figures with Vaisnava *tilaka*.

One picture was of an odd-shaped bird landing confidently beside a cactuslike, green-ink bush. I'm running low on green ink, but didn't want to burden M. with a shopping list when he went to Dublin. I get left behind, alone. Little children run, stomping around outside the house. This is my duty. Wait for a swell, then ride the wave. But stay away from the big ones.

Yes, the purple flowers out the window are dead. Soon they will turn to puffballs and release their seeds. Large wingspread of a seagull gliding down to land on shore amid

the cattails. A white butterfly, a tan-patterned moth. A small power boat in the channel. Look at all the action, water ripples, hair-blown weeds. Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna.

* * *

6:20 p.m. Night Notes

People can get better from illness. People should be compassionate toward physical and mental illness. But they won't "can't "understand, and you can't expect them to. Keep your own little world going.

August 20, 12:05 a.m.

"The pure devotees of the Lord take shelter of the *para-prakrti*, the internal potency of the Lord called Laksmi-devi, Sita-devi, Srimati Radharani or Srimati Rukmini-devi, and thus they become actual *mahatmas*, or great souls. *Mahatmas* are not fond of indulging in mental speculations, but they actually take to the devotional service of the Lord . . . " (*Bhag.* 3.6.38, purport)

It is manifest by the primary process of hearing and chanting. Don't ask for something more complicated. The *mahatmas* enjoy hearing about Krishna, and they're happy in this life and the next. I could be happy like that too.

The Supreme Lord is seen as more beautiful than the goddess of fortune in Vaikuntha, "but the devotees in Gokula or Krishnaloka want to see Radharani as more beautiful than Krishna. The adjustment is that the Lord, being *bhakta-vatsalya*, or one who wants to please His devotees, assumes such features . . . " so that the devotees may be pleased. (*Bhag.* 3.15.42, purport)

"The tendency to want to be attracted by womanly beauty exists in Krishna. That is why we have it in the material world. Our attraction is perverted and therefore inebriates one when we pursue it. But when the Supreme Lord Krishna wants to be attracted by a woman, He creates such a form by His energy. That woman is Radharani, the pleasure potency of the Supreme Lord." (*Bhag.* 3.31.38, purport) We are fortunate if instead of being attracted by material beauty we become attracted to the beauty of Radha and Krishna. "When one is attracted by the transcendental beauty of Radha and Krishna, he is no longer attracted by material feminine beauty." (*Bhag.* 3.31.38, purport)

Crazy dreams of Godbrothers acting crazily. Delusion is a malady, but we tend to be judgmental and say the sufferer is bad or crazy. When the delusional person turns against us or coerces us, we certainly condemn him. How short-lived and fair-weathered is our respect for one another. How quickly we abandon it. I for one am not prepared to deal with them "don't have experience dealing with delusion, and can barely tolerate it. That's the law of survival. As soon as one deviates, he is finished, because he was supposed to be a pure devotee.

In one of the dreams last night, after giving everyone else trouble, a Godbrother finally began to rant, "I'm one of the spiritual elite, but I need to rest sometimes." Then he collapsed.

In one part of the dream, I didn't want to surrender to an elderly Indian man, or to *anyone*, and to have to learn new emotions, how to lament, face my inadequacies, etc.

When he exposed that I didn't care deeply enough to execute his orders in all their details, I burst into tears. "But mere lamentation is useless "one should find out the means to mitigate one's lamentation." (*Bhag.* 4.8.24, purport) In the case of the frustrated young Dhruva Maharaja, his mother advised that he seek shelter in the Supreme Godhead in the forest. "To the Gaudiya Vaisnava the forest is the forest of Vrnda or Vrndavana. If one takes shelter of Vrndavana under VrndavaneSvari, Srimati Radharani, certainly all his problems are solved very easily." (*Bhag.* 4.8.24, purport)

* * *

4:26 a.m.

Hearing, listening "the primary act. I don't do it well, but at least I do it. Lately, hearing the message Lalita gave to the swan, telling of Radha's piteous condition. Are these the ravings of an ordinary girl, or some mundane concoction dreamt up in the mind of a poet to mislead people? No, no. This is the inner meaning of the Vedic scriptures. We hear of mystics in other traditions, but for most of them, the inner meaning of their scriptures leads them into an experience of oneness; it has an impersonal tinge. That's true even when their mystical experiences are couched in the language of amorous love. But this is something entirely different. The Lord has a spiritual body, as do His consorts. We can join them if we purify ourselves with strong desire. Who can understand devotion except one free of both carnal desire and *jnana*? Even though I am not free of either, I hear Their pastimes regularly. I want to feel the *bhava*.

Oh, writing is long and hard. Srila Prabhupada said that a person works hard, then they present him with his check. Prabhupada said he himself didn't work. "Why should I work?" He said this on a morning walk in Berkeley. The devotees laughed. He was a mendicant, and sometimes money did not come to him. He was ready for that too. But on Krishna's behalf he preached and eventually got money. Krishna doesn't work. A disciple said, "But Srila Prabhupada, in the *Gita* He says He does work." Prabhupada said He worked to set an example for those in this world who must all work. But in the spiritual world, He is the "most lazy person." He spends His days playing and His nights dancing with the *gopis*.

If I study the nature of writing, maybe an inner form of it will be revealed to me and I will be able to shape it, improve it, flow with it, or even abandon it for a different service. Study how it is going, how it reads, what it is like. The daily round from morning till night.

O Krishna, do You remember Your father Nanda? Are You coming back any time soon? Let us know if You are actually giving up Your relationship with Radha, because then there is no use putting the swab in front of Her nostrils."

They want to know whether it is time to give up hope. Yet they cannot. Hope is their one friend. All else has deserted them.

* * *

Fidel Castro let all hell break loose. The man who ran the communal farm for spiritual seekers attracted many hippies looking for sex. They sat in their tents and smoked marijuana. They discussed the cult personality of the person in charge. Stephen

something his name was. They called it The Farm. Anyway, all that's over. Now I have a Veritas book in hand. Look in the other room and see if there is anything like that.

But what's the use?

It's good that Krishna has taken away my taste for Judeo-Christian reading. I really do want Vraja now. Whatever little attention I have, let me bring it to Srila Prabhupada's books and lectures.

Although maybe Madhu and I will read the Greek novel about St. Francis so we can get into the spirit of his suffering for God.

Or maybe we won't. Time is so short. Hear the sublime message of *Krishna-katha* in that limited time. Sand is running down into the lower part of the hour glass. Do as Maharaja Pariksit did and don't waste a moment. We are fortunate to have a direct representative of Sukadeva Gosvami as our spiritual master, so why turn away from him and seek something else?

Fidel Castro embraced Dizzy Gillespie on a visit, and Diz didn't even know anything about Krishna consciousness. Who knows, what prominent person (aside from the faded George Harrison) could surrender to the Lord? Just a few have, and they often don't take it *so* seriously. Boy George came and went, and a few others. Ah, we can expect . . . We are sorry that the world of Hare Krishna is plunged into turmoil and sadness. We can only maintain our own sanity. There's little else we can do "or at least that's how it feels sometimes. We can only work to take care of our little corner of family responsibility. We can't run around with poultices for the hurts of all those I don't even know. May they get strength from Prabhupada and Krishna, and I pray for them.

"Only the top devotee can become guru." There it is again. We say, "But this is an emergency. There *have* to be more gurus. We can't wait for a *maha-bhagavata* to descend." O Krishna, what to do? Have another meeting? rebel?

Remember the grassroots rebellion against the GBC in that meeting they held in 1986 at New Vrindaban? Well, that doesn't have to be the last of them. We can declare a war against the powers that be.

But I'm outside of that. I live here with small flowers in my yard. No, I don't want to rebel. I just want to dovetail whatever I am and become Krishna conscious.

* * *

8:50 a.m.

Chanting silently this morning to avoid pain. Plowing through silence. Putting off this writing because it's too hard (has no shape). Make a riddle: "What's hard, has no shape, is too long, and follows the day?" EJW.

What's full of queries, repeats itself, and wants to be accepted as an offering to guru and Krishna?

A pure devotee doesn't want happiness in this material world. "He simply wants to associate with the Supreme Personality of Godhead like the inhabitants of Vrindavana "Srimati Radharani, the *gopis*, Krishna's father and mother (Nanda Maharaja and Yashoda), Krishna's friends and Krishna's servants." (*Bhag.* 6.12.22, purport)

"A pure devotee always thinks himself more deficient than everyone else. If a devotee approaches Srimati Radharani to offer some service to Krishna, even Srimati radharani thinks the devotee is greater than She." (*Bhag.* 7.1.27, purport)

"The form of the Lord with a flute in His hand is most attractive, and the one who is most sublimely attracted is Srimati Radharani, Radhika." (*Bhag.* 10.3.31) Her name is derived from *aradhana*, "which indicates that She enjoys the highest loving affairs with Krishna."

* * *

10:15 a.m.

Krishna book (Tenth Canto) introduces Srimati Radharani as follows: Krishna was enjoying with the *gopis* on the banks of the Yamuna. They had come to Him in answer to His flute-call. At first, Krishna spoke to them in a formal way, but when they cried and showed their loving anger, He reciprocated with them as they desired.

Suddenly, He disappeared from among them. The *gopis* became mad and searched for Krishna, asking the animals and trees of Vrndavana whether they had seen Him. They found His footprints, and beside them, another set. Here in *Srimad-Bhagavatam* the word *aradhana* is used, meaning "the best worshiper of Krishna." Vishvanath Cakravarti Thakura states that Sukadeva Gosvami tried not to use Her name in the *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, but it appeared at this point automatically.

The *gopis* felt sorry that this one dearest *gopi* was with Krishna, leaving them to lament. Srila Prabhupada uses the name radharani in *Krishna* book. The *gopis* are able to surmise how Krishna and Radha were playing. Then they understood that Krishna must have disappeared from Radha, leaving Her alone to lament.

As the *gopis* went further, they met Srimati Radharani. They became sympathetic to Her, and together, all the *gopis* continued to search for Krishna.

* * *

12:19 p.m.

Pre-lunch free-write. The horse of poesy leaps, jumps, and flies, but mine is running on wood. The boardwalk is showing that the cracks beneath are dangerous men with cut bottles and fierce intentions. I see them in dreams sometimes. They come after me. Dream researchers usually say that these are inner forces that may be turned into allies. I tend to see them as actual demons whom I may have to meet in the material world, either in this life or in a future one. Even if I don't have to meet them, other *jivas* do.

We are cruel to each other. And the animals "they are not even morally corrupt, but they are heartlessly cruel, eating one another without feeling. They have no choice. Material nature has made them that way.

Why is life so cruel? I know that we humans misuse our free will and therefore develop the ignorance of cruelty, but why are lower creatures cruel? Is it because they are reaping the results of past karma, in which they wanted to be tigers? What about those who are punished by becoming the tiger's prey? I cannot figure it all out. I want to know what the *Sastra* says and accept that. But thinking about it makes me want to get out of the material world.

Hare Krishna. It is peaceful here for the people. A little colder, though, than it was yesterday, the sky overcast. I'm looking forward to heading out to the shed. I'll write a couple of pages there, read a little Prabhupada, and draw a few pictures. The freedom and ease to be able to sit there has been hard-earned; I just finished answering all the mail.

O Krishna, please let me stay away from the turmoil out there. I'll accomplish nothing by flying into the thick of it. I have already resigned that managerial involvement. Now I find myself becoming more and more debilitated every year. I can't go back now. I'd never make it. I even had to resign my BTG editorship when they saw I couldn't do anything. There's no point making a farce of involvement. I'm no SWAT team preacher or even an active participator over the internet. Stay out of it. But don't rebel either. If they take away the gurus' money and power, I'll go on like a Theophan the recluse, keep writing my letters and books. Eventually, everything but my most simple and sincere devotion will be taken away. If I have no devotion, I have nothing anyway. I will be tested to see whether I can serve without the tasty kind of reward and comfort I am used to. Which brings me back to thoughts of demons under the boardwalk, and my fear of them. May Krishna protect me from calamities.

* * *

2:28 p.m.

"Fifteen days after Krishna's birth, Radharani appeared. Radharani is Krishna's pleasure potency. *Radha-Krishna-pranaya-vikrti ahladini Sakti*." (Srla Prabhupada's radhastami lecture, 1969, London, *Festivals*, p. 167) When Bhagavan, the Parabrahman, wants to enjoy, what kind of enjoyment will He have? "The loving affairs of Radha and Krishna are not ordinary, although it appears like that . . . They try to imitate Krishna's *lila*." (*Festivals*, p. 169) To understand Krishna one has to practice austerity.

There were four spotted deer near the shed as I came out, three with antlers and one doe. I walked to the shed and even entered it, but they only stepped a little to the side. Later, I saw them start slowly across the meadow. Suddenly, the shed door blew open, startling them and chasing them back into the woods. Now I see only golden weeds, wild grasses, and cattails.

Out of thousands of persons, one may seek perfection, and out of those who attain perfection, hardly one knows Krishna in truth.

Krishna has external and internal energies. His *para* (superior) energy is in the spiritual world. "As this material world is being manipulated under the external energy, similarly, the spiritual world is also conducted by the internal potency. That internal potency is Radharani. She is His pleasure potency."

First sign of twinge. Let me see if the less powerful feverfew will rescue me today.

Krishna's enjoyment is not material. We have to understand it by learning of Krishna from the Six Gosvamis. Srla Prabhupada recommends his audience to read p. 264 of *Teachings Of Lord Caitanya* if they want to understand "how the reciprocation of loving affairs of radha-Krishna is transcendental." Srla Prabhupada speaks of praying to Radharani and offering Her our obeisances on Her day. "Radharani, you are so dear to Krishna, so we offer our respectful obeisances unto You." If Radha recommends us,

Krishna will accept us. Srila Prabhupada explains why Lord Caitanya appeared in Radha's position, feeling separation from Krishna. The Gosvamis were also in that mood "*he Radhe vraja-devike!* They did not claim, "I saw Krishna dancing with the *gopis* last night." Search out Krishna and Radharani in Vrndavana or within your heart. "The more you feel separation from Krishna, you should understand that you are advancing."

* * *

4:45 p.m.

I just started reading Virabahu Prabhu's book, *The Guru and What Prabhupada Said*. My first response is that I want to believe that we need gurus and that Srila Prabhupada's disciples are now gurus. I want to read what Srila Prabhupada said about this. I want to give up any of my own acts that aren't sober enough for that service. I improvise when I write, but I don't improvise with my Krishna consciousness. Let me become a real *sadhu*, and not a stereotype of a *sadhu*.

I'm not reading this book of quotes so I can prepare a position paper. Even if ISKCON did something in a pendulum-swing reaction, reducing the normal position of ISKCON gurus, I could go along with it in an outward way. More important is my conviction that I am serving Prabhupada by trying to help those who have come to me for help. When I first read Virabahu Prabhu's book ten years ago, it strengthened my conviction that Srila Prabhupada meant for his disciples to become initiating gurus. It will probably have that effect on me again at a time when the pendulum has swung toward dismantling the system in favor of the *rtvik* system. I can sympathize with those who want to dismantle it, but I can't agree.

August 21,12 Midnight

Lord Krishna sent Uddhava to Vrndavana. I found the section in *Krishna* book. (I remember being in Bhubhanesvara and Gaura-Govinda Maharaja telling me the plot of Rupa Gosvami's *Uddhava-sandeSa*. He dwelt on the detail that Lord Krishna took Uddhava's hand in His when He asked him to go to Vrndavana.) Separation from Krishna is the great Gaudiya Vaisnava theme and ecstasy. Somehow that night in that room, I didn't appreciate it as much as I do now. Rupa Gosvami's elaboration . . . So here I am with *Krishna* book. I could attempt to skim the material for what I want to use in the Radhastami class, but is that reading? Would it even be sharing what I had read? What was it like when I *first* read this? Now, can I enter?

The Christians have their great themes in Christ worship. Most of them are centered around the Passion, but others are focused on his life and teachings. We too have themes centered on the life and teachings of Krishna's many incarnations. Our deepest theme, however, is the understanding of Krishna in Vrndavana, especially the devotees' feelings of separation when He appears not to be present. When we hear of radha's ecstasies, is it too far above our present struggle?

I want to include the prayers to Radharani that Srila Prabhupada recommends in his 1969 Radhastami lecture. "If Radha will recommend us to the Lord . . ." It's astonishing

that he encouraged us to offer obeisances, we the most fallen and insignificant, to Krishna's beloved.

Radharani addresses the bee as if it is a messenger from Krishna, like Uddhava. She tells the bee she cannot trust either Krishna or His messenger. She criticizes Krishna's past incarnations of Ramacandra and Vamanadeva. "We know all about Krishna and how ungrateful He is. But here is the difficulty: in spite of His being so cruel and hard-hearted, it is very difficult for us to give up talking about Him." (*Krishna*, Chapter 47, p. 431)

It's nice gathering material for a lecture. I want to make it a treat for the devotees. I must get the *Krishna* book tape where Prabhupada is speaking in radha's mood: "You foolish bumblebee . . . your moustaches . . . we know very well about Krishna. Don't touch Me . . . I know that you are a messenger coming from an even greater trick-man, Krishna." I also want to get the excerpt from the lecture I published as a found poem, where Prabhupada recommends we pray to Radharani: "Please tell about me to *Your Krishna*."

The last verse of the *Siksastakam* is also Radha's. These talks of Radha to the bumblebee are the topmost transcendental ecstasy known as *maha-bhava*. One could say that She is imagining that the bee is Krishna's messenger. Others say the bee is Krishna, or really is His messenger. It doesn't really matter which it is. The point is that pure devotees always remember Krishna; when they look out at the world, they see everything in relation to their own *bhava*. How different from Zen Buddhism!

The bee left, and Radha became almost mad, thinking the bee would inform Krishna about Her talking against Him. Then it returned and She thought, "Krishna is still kind to Me. He has again sent the bee to take Me to Him."

I wish I could have such hope and even despair that I would see Krishna everywhere around me in nature. O Krishna, when are You going to manifest in my utterances of Your holy names? If You would, I could become a valid preacher of Your holy names. O Srimati Radharani, mother of *bhakti*, could You ask Krishna to appear in my utterances of *hari-nama*?

Radharani said (and I recall Srila Prabhupada's voice dictating it), "Is there any possibility that Krishna will come back and place His *aguru*-scented hand on My head? Please put all these inquires to Krishna." Uddhava was standing nearby and heard Radha talking in this way. He was astonished and deeply impressed. Now he had learned of the deepest love for Krishna, love beyond anything he had known in Mathura.

* * *

3:25 a.m.

What was the *japa* like, sir? Gosh, I almost keeled over. Strain. Slow rounds. Comin' through the rye of semi-unconsciousness. But doing it "ten, eleven, twelve rounds all external. Still, I hung on for dear life.

* * *

4:23 a.m.

The same things happen at the same time in my day. That's all right. I'll do them for Krishna. It's like a cook boiling milk; he's careful not to boil it too fast. After a while, stirring seems to be the same old thing, but if he's patient, that stirring results in ever-fresh sweets.

Even if I don't change, the weather does. We want steadiness. Follow a schedule. Don't be whimsical. The sun comes up regularly, doesn't it? Radha-Govinda cycle Their clothes and ornaments. They have about two dozen sets, but They wear them one set after another until the cycle repeats itself. Shall I give Them the yellow and gold today? All glories to Krishna and Radha who kindly appear before us and in us.

Speaking of cycles, I don't want to repeat the bitterness of coming back into this prisonlike existence. Why can't I learn the lessons once and for all and be released? If I do that, I can go to Goloka, where even repetition is full of variety and freshness.

Regarding repetition, if I really want to avoid it, I could try to change the outer shape of my life. Go to Russia, China, somewhere else. Then I'd have something new to say. I'd write about how the plane was delayed and I got a headache, or how I got mugged in the public lavatory. I could tell how I preached to a Mormon and what the people looked like on the moon. But if I stay in Wicklow, I will see none of that. However, there are advantages to Wicklow. In Wicklow I can be peaceful, settled, reading regularly, and have the time to internalize something. I hope I will make such progress. Travel can be superficially agitating in that you never have time to look deep into the water.

* * *

I admit it, I'm using a Canon typewriter and a Sheaffer pen. I have a body full of ails, but the art of breaking-down harmony makes me happy to keep trying to write. repetition means the same numbers keep turning up, and some lightness, some heaviness.

Okay, leave it behind and just tell things as they are. I was going to abandon writing ItM poems, because I thought the bounce unbecoming a sober-minded *sadhu*. I was going to renounce worldly literature. Now I think I may not. I should remain a witness to my times. I grew up in America with the threat of the atom bomb over my head, but it never fell. Neither did I have to go to war. I joined the Hare Krishna movement instead, got a break, the luck of the Irish, the ease in the body from being Italian. Wealth and the good karma of an American using his talent to worship the Almighty Buck. The accessibility of modern jazz in New York City. Keep being a witness now from a distance to the art of the times, and how we were saved. Life naturally juxtaposes things that don't normally go together. As devotees, we study *sastra*, then feel some raw emotion, often material, but not always. Sometimes we don't like the *sastra* we are reading. Then we catch ourselves, put our noses gently back on the grindstone, and say, "Come on, son, you know you are a fool, a *cela*. Now say five Hail Marys and two Our Fathers and make a good Act of Contrition." I mean, that's not *exactly* what we would say.

The Krishna conscious version of that is to admit we want to read our master's books. I was a good, going-nowhere-fast Catholic once, no ferryman for the FBI. I rode the

Staten Island ferry every day to college and back. I rode the Staten Island rapid Transit, and the buses. I attended public schools. I did what every healthy kid did "masturbated and got a part-time job. I spit on all that. I was afraid of the mobs and tough kids, but grew up in milder times before it got really heavy. What need is there to confess all this? Now I simply have to turn to my master with respect.

This morning I ran out of tapes to listen to while dressing Radha-Govinda, so I played a Prabhupada lecture. It fit in perfectly. It was great. He said that Tulasi dasa says you can go against the current if, like a small fish, you take shelter of the water. We take shelter of Krishna and go against the current of the material world. We believe in God, Krishna, and not the scientists. Stay with me as I stand by the stove and patiently stir the milk.

* * *

9:15 a.m.

A young *bhakta* wants to be a writer. He asks me if he has to go to college, or can he just learn by practice? I preached to him. I told him that he first had to make his life right before he could actually write transcendental literature. How is he going to live in Krishna consciousness? It makes me uneasy thinking what I may be influencing him to do, what he may be aspiring to do.

What is the problem in our ISKCON? People come together to tell us the answer to that question.

The U.S. flag is in tatters. Somewhere they burn it in protest, hoping to be photographed and then shown on the news.

Finally, I recall that I'm supposed to be reading *sastra*. I'm not much different than that very young *bhakta* who wants to become a famous writer. He wants to be published just for telling what's on his mind and in his soul, especially his gripes "how he joined the temple and was ordered to overeat, what he was told when he tried to love, and how he felt when he saw through the materialists and the leaders of this religion.

I can explain in an elementary way what we mean by love of God. It means to love Krishna the way Radha loves Krishna. Krishna Himself takes part in the exchange by expanding into Radha, who is the pleasure-giving potency, *hladini*.

All right, but how can any *jiva* besides Radha and the other eternal *gopis* come to experience love of God? They must understand Krishna and approach Him through His internal energy. But we should know that all love begins with Krishna's desire to love, and with His love for His topmost devotee, Srimati Radharani. The waves of love of God move out from there. That's why pure devotees take shelter of the source, Radha.

We can start by taking shelter of the spiritual master.

* * *

Late mornings are usually slow. I feel unfit now to read scripture. I've also again given myself assignments "read all of *Teachings Of Lord Caitanya* and *Caitanya-caritamrta* on Radharani; read *The Guru And What Srila Prabhupada Said*. But so much reading promotes skimming, covering pages, absorbing what I can, analyzing. I prefer not to read in that way. Maybe I should soon make my outline for the Radhastami talk.

Then I can put aside the frantic search for material and just read a little at a time, prayerfully.

* * *

12:21 p.m.

Letters. A twinge came at 11:20. I took two feverfew tablets and lay down. Feverfew seems to steady me. Blowing but firmly-rooted bright green grass. Twirling leaves and swaying trees. The sweet sound of wind at Geaglum. I hope I can go to the shed later. "Without Radha there is no meaning to Krishna, and without Krishna there is no meaning to Radha."

* * *

2:36 p.m.

Tilaka barking, long snout in the air. Does he see or smell the deer? Big rushes of fresh wind. The shed is stuffy. Let me crank open the windows. Now sit in emptiness, waiting for something to fill me up. On my way out here I thought of BTG's coverage of Chowpatti ISKCON and how they left out a lot of history. They told something completely different in the magazine. I can't do that with myself. As if it never happened. On the other hand, none of us want to be rough-handling or muckraking.

Lord Caitanya asked Ramananda raya if he could speak on a perfection further than Krishna and the *gopis*. Ramananda raya said of all the *gopis*, Srimati Radharani is the best. Sri Krishna left the *rasa* dance to show Her special favor. In Her absence, Krishna considered the dance disrupted. Lord Caitanya asked to hear more about the features of Radha and Krishna's reciprocation and love. By accepting Ramananda raya as His teacher for Radha-Krishna affairs, Lord Caitanya demonstrated that one should not consider birth or social caste when accepting a spiritual master.

Ramananda raya praised the land of Vrndavana. Srila Prabhupada quotes Narottama dasa Thakura: "When will my mind be cleared of all contamination so that I will be able to see Vrndavana as it is? And when will I be able to understand the literature of the Six Gosvamis so that I will be able to know of the transcendental pastimes of Radha and Krishna?"

"In His spiritual form, Krishna enjoys His spiritual energy, and that is the sum and substance of the Radha-Krishna pastimes." (TLC, p. 325)

* * *

6:30 p.m.

Say night notes, nappies, nap for five hours. I usually wake up six or ten times or more, or don't sleep at all at night. I often think, "Hey, if this gets bad enough, maybe I should sleep past midnight." Sometimes I do sleep in, but usually not. Body and mind are not in my control.

M. is doing his Epsom salt thing tonight, so he'll be up passing and passing in the bathroom. More power to him. I'm feeling a fog in my head. I want to go to bed soon. "History is the piling of bodies," said Artaud. But the soul doesn't get piled. It slips away

like mercury or undetected light, noticeable only by its absence. Where do we go? The *sastras* tell us and sages know. I know. Fix the mind on Krishna.

One of my correspondents sent me all these things "*Essene Book of Peace, A Course In Miracles*, the internet latest, and now a technique about how to revive my liver. She also sent something about writing our personal myths. I want to think of that cowherd boy, Govinda, and His call, *man-mana bhava mad-bhakto*. May all other things act as springboards back to Govinda.

August 22,12:05 a.m.

To start off suddenly at midnight reading of radha is a leap. A Godbrother wrote asking if I had written anything warning people against practicing *raganuga-bhakti* prematurely. I have, but I don't know where it is. On Radhastami we can at least ask for the mercy of Krishna's internal potency. In Vrndavana, devotees take shelter of Radharani, pray to Her more than to Krishna, see Her as more beautiful than Madana-mohana . . . but who are they?

Her beauty is not material. It's made up of Her love for Krishna. Her ornaments are ecstatic emotions. To describe Her, the *rasacaryas* resort to metaphors. I can get lost in them. "Radharani's hearing is eternally fixed on Krishna's name and fame . . . When Krishna stands in His youthful posture, she puts Her hand on His shoulder." With my Radha-Govinda Deities, I place the edge of Her veil against His shoulder, a kind of leaning by Her, or almost a touch of Her hand to His shoulder, bringing Them close.

She manifests twenty kinds of *kila-kincita* emotions. She is fifteen days younger than Krishna. She always talks and thinks of Their pastimes together. "She possesses unique and uncommon qualities for Krishna's satisfaction." (TLC, p. 327)

"This exchange of Krishna and Radharani is very difficult to understand unless one is elevated to the platform of pure goodness . . . it's not a subject of the material world." Lord Caitanya asked Ramananda raya how He could raise Himself to the transcendental platform to understand Radha and Krishna. Ramananda raya replied that They can only be understood in the association of the damsels of Vraja. In *Teachings of Lord Caitanya*, Srila Prabhupada mentions the *sakhis* and that "Her near assistants are called *manjaris*." The *manjaris* "have no desire to mix directly with Krishna or to enjoy Him personally. rather, they are always ready to help radha associate with Krishna. Their affection for Krishna and Radha is so pure that they are simply satisfied when Radha and Krishna are together." (TLC, p. 331) Deity worship is like that in a simple way. A *pujari* just wants to see Radha-Krishna together.

Radha is like a creeper embracing the Krishna tree, and Radha's associates are like leaves and flowers on the creeper. Their dealings resemble the affairs of men and women, but they have nothing to do with material lust. Srila Prabhupada mentions *raganuga-bhakti* and taking shelter of Krishna's personal associates. The sages mentioned in the *Upanisads* and *Srutis* desired to become *gopis* and follow in the footsteps of the Vraja *gopis*. The same with the sages at Dandakaranya. Srila Prabhupada criticizes *prakrta-sahajiyas* who dress as *gopis*.

"By following the mood of the associates and friends of radharani, one can ultimately achieve the perfectional stage and be transferred to Goloka Vrndavana, the

transcendental abode of Krishna." (TLC, p. 334) But we can't do this until we attain our *siddha-deha*. I may read this same chapter of the talks with Ramananda raya in the *Caitanya-caritamrta* version. Then I may read Cc. *Adi-lila*, Chapter 4. Be careful of such rich readings. I don't maintain this form of study to the exclusion of regular *Bhagavatam* reading, but all of it is for my purification. Don't avoid anything. I am always in an unfinished, imperfect state. No foreseeable change in that. I'll probably kick off before I discover my *siddha-deha*. That's okay. I'll go down reading.

Ramananda raya recited *anayaradhito nunam/ bhagavan harir iSvarah*, "Dear friends, the *gopi* who has been taken away by Krishna to a secluded place must have worshiped the Lord more than anyone else." (*Bhag.* 10.30.28)

Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu said, "Please speak on. I am very happy to hear you, because a river of unprecedented nectar is falling from your mouth." (Cc. *Adi* 8.11)

* * *

4:32 a.m.

All these weird things pass through my mind as if they are important. Some of them may be, but that doesn't seem to be why they pass through one after another. Even the important ones don't get much honor. For example, I hear Prabhupada's words but don't embrace them as I should. Sometimes his words moving through my mind get the same weight as other thoughts. Prabhupada said philosophy means to keep death always in the forefront. We should always behave properly. He said that if we behave like the animals, then we are no better than animals. The scientists say . . . the disciples brought up their theories . . . he defeated all of them. Was his logic always exactly right? If not, he still always stood on the authority of scripture. That's the main thing. Krishna says *aham adir hi devanam*. Accept Krishna's authority. My real friend is he who tells me about Krishna. Srila Prabhupada was not overly attached to his examples, but he was attached to spreading Krishna's message.

I want *these* thoughts to live on in my mind "thoughts of Prabhupada, remembrance of his words "and I do want to honor them more than other thoughts. How do we honor Prabhupada's words? We follow them.

I'm tired. How will I ever get through this writing session? What am I trying to squeeze out of myself anyway? I noted how stuff comes through me strained through a strainer, or ground up in bits. A devotee wrote to tell me she was praying for HarikeSa Maharaja and his disciples at her prayer group. That's good. We all hope things will work out for him in his Krishna consciousness. It will take a lot of humility on all fronts. It's harder to be humbler under pressure.

I got a taste of humility in the days when I gave up the mantle of zonal *acarya*. It felt good. Of course, I joined another band wagon, although a Johnny-come-lately. Still, better late than never.

Srila Prabhupada said a gentleman is one who, when you point out his mistake, admits it. A rascal will never admit his mistakes, even if someone points them out. "So we should only give people Krishna consciousness, right, Prabhupada?" a disciple asked.

"What else do you have to give?"

The disciple said, "I was thinking that some devotees want to do business. You don't want that, do you?"

"No, that is all right." If the business-minded devotees make money, they can give it to Krishna.

We often tried to get Prabhupada to answer according to our own conceptions. We thought we had it all figured out.

* * *

I don't remember, sir. I can't say where I took that morning dose of liquefied feverfew. I don't know if I punched the time clock. You will have to tell me. I know I did answer a few letters, encouraged a man who said he falls into a light trance while stirring the mango *pera* in a pot and listening to a Krishna conscious lecture on tape. Tell him it is good. May he go on cooking like that as much as possible. All the time. Another man said he was going to Vrndavana so he could chant twenty-four hours a day. I told him to be careful. There are controversies and criticisms raging. He should remain chaste. Someone else told me his house burnt down, but he saved the paintings and *Bhagavatams*. Someone told me he managed to get out of the temple, because they were always having eating contests and thought it was the greatest thing if someone could eat ninety-six *gulabjamons*. He thought it was disgusting. I agreed. "They got sick, very sick, from overeating in the name of *prasadam*."

Once a man claimed
that he'd run out of steam.
We gave him a boost but he said
he wanted nothing to do
with chemical stimulants.

* * *

We grabbed his boat instead by the sail
and hoisted him up. He landed on a ledge
near sedge and said,
"Gosh I don't have anything up here
but my own head in a tent."

* * *

That's too prosaic so he'd
better wait till devotees come
home. In the meantime he
should wash pots.
He agreed, under the
temple president's fond gaze.

* * *

A month went by and now he
is ready to preach, wants
to move to the *cakra* center of America where
many Buddhists and Native Americans
live and where
Krishna consciousness is
just another thing.

It doesn't seem right. As soon as a person gets softhearted, does he have to fall down?
I can't write straight. The rumors and things people tell me in their letters, or the
thoughts that go through me about what other people are doing "I try to get some fix on
it all, then turn it into literature with a flick of my wrist. But it comes out neither clear
nor well-baked. I won't, however, be going back to school to learn how to write.
Whatever I am, that will have to do.

In the temple they worship the forms of the Lord on low-lit altars. We're relieved to
be here and not in some church, factory, or office. We have done better in this lifetime.
Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare. Chanting is best.

* * *

9:00 a.m.

Someone told me he was sometimes lonely and bored in the evenings. I said if there is
no serious temple program in the evening, then he can have his own. Why should he be
dependent on others to chant and hear or read *Bhagavad-gita*? As for loneliness, yes, I
understand that. But we should . . .

What did I tell him? I told him to increase his feelings of separation from Krishna.
Even Radha and the *gopis* feel "lonely" without Krishna. But it's an entirely
transcendental ecstasy.

Slow down and make your plans, calendar in hand, for January 1999 in America. Is
that what's tiring me out? Would I like the boost pineapple juice might offer? No thanks.
Where has the magic gone? It's still in the electric-aura clouds. Waiting around for a
headache to happen.

I gather threads like an Indian village weaver on his porch in Bengal. I plan to sell the
colorful cloth, then start another piece. Weavers weave.

Planning to visit America. read a little *Progresso* to make sure it came out all right.
Spoke about the latest ISKCON crisis of faith. Don't have strength now to talk more or
answer letters.

Let me chant. It's all in His hands anyway.

* * *

9:21 a.m.

Go ahead, tell me more. I know you had something on your mind. Okay. repetition is
okay.

"Scissors," the man insisted, and raised his hand out of the water even as he drowned.
Scissors, I'm
Right, I'm a

writer. I'll go down
writing.

Before the pain develops
and even after it ends.

As I lie on my back relaxing, I invite the muse. Let this be a Krishna conscious book, or at least one seeking Krishna consciousness. Then let me float the books into this world.

A man I met while he was plowing snow from a road "it was the first time I had ever seen him "now writes to me to tell me how the story of the ex-hunter touched him. He said he was a former muskrat trapper. He wants to read from my book at an animal rights group in Wisconsin.

And a *sannyasi* staying at the cabin turns to *Nimai And Gurudeva* and gets something from it in "Gurudeva's" self-admonishment for attachment to women disciples.

Books, go out and work for Krishna's cause.

It won't be long now "pain developing.

Drinking Ballygowan water "two liters.

Don't be lonely,

defiant,

despondent, but

follow the *gopis*.

Not an imitator.

Be like your spiritual master. Unripe mangoes become ripe if treated under the right conditions. The rules and regs are not enough, yet they must be followed. Get the mercy of the pure devotee.

The unconscious is simply that of which we are not aware, like those ditch diggers in the picture don't realize whose pulling their strings. Ultimately, the self is pure, and the "unconscious" is that which covers us from knowing that, or from knowing the Supreme Personality of Godhead. *Bhakti* is the best way to get in touch with the unconscious self.

* * *

Noon

Wise-guy in me, timid fellows who can't speak because they are too ashamed. Those subpersons who do speak, as if gathered around a big round table "the chairman *sannyasi* disciple of Srila Prabhupada, the Krishnaite, the poet *litterateur*, the free-writer (tinged by the "New Age"?), and the others "tend to get along if different assignments are given to different fellows.

Oink stinks, partly my heart
doesn't flutter after Sumatriptan
because . . . it's my karma but
you're getting older fluttercup and
you could be an undetected cad.

* * *

Let the trees blossom,

"Hang in there!" was the best thing you said to me, wrote Hari-dasa to me. "It empowered me to go on living with my wife and business." Say it to yourself. I picked it up from the migraine on-line journal with a use to help each other when there's no other recourse, when the magic bullet doesn't work. Pray to God.

* * *

I dreamt that I was talking to a Godbrother. He was doing some secretarial work. Before he left for the day, he told me he would like to look at my intimate diary. He wanted to see if the things I have been writing line up with his own frame of reference. Then I asked him, "When are you going to rejoin Prabhupada?" This Godbrother was once Prabhupada's personal secretary. He became embarrassed. "Oh," I said, "didn't he invite you?" My brother said that Prabhupada wanted to show us that he is independent. He didn't need us to serve him.

* * *

2:30 p.m.

Anayaradhito nunam/ bhagavan harir iSvarh. "Dear friends, the *gopi* who has been taken away by Krishna to a secluded place must have worshiped the Lord more than anyone else." (*Bhag.* 10.30.28) Radharani left the *rasa* dance first. Then Krishna left to seek Her out. "The *rasa* dance does not shine in the heart of Krishna without Srimati Radharani. Therefore, He also gave up the circle of the *rasa* dance and went out to search for Her." (*Cc. Adi* 8.114)

Lord Caitanya told Ramananda Raya, "Now I have come to understand the sublime goal of life and the process of achieving it (*sadhya-sadhana*). Nonetheless, I think that there is something more ahead, and my mind is desiring to have it." (*Cc. Madhya* 8.118) Ramananda Raya spoke further, because he knew that the Lord, although omniscient, desired to hear more of Radha and Krishna.

He spoke next of *Krishna-katha*, establishing that Sri Krishna is the resting place of all existence and all incarnations. He also praised Vrndavana-dhama. The purports here are long and technical, but they contain important information if we wish to understand the mellows of all-attractive Krishna.

The name "Krishna" refers to His . . .

Anyway, I needn't repeat it all here. It would take too many worlds and too much energy to say it all accurately, and anyway, if anyone wants to study it, Prabhupada already recorded the information in the *Caitanya-caritamrta*. Let me keep this writing simple.

I can't taste anything whether simple or complex anyway. The *klim gayatris* are discussed "those mantras I say so mechanically three times a day. To theoretically learn their esoteric conjugal meanings doesn't seem to help much.

* * *

3:45 p.m.

Man, I'm not forcing you. You got something to say? Here's the pen. Disciples' meeting, Guyana. Don't use it for political purposes. No "Guru Maharaja says." Don't do that to yourselves.

Hot in this shed. I'm in Northern Ireland and they are far away. Everyone working according to their karma and free will, hoping to learn how to make the transcendental choice.

We're all so scattered since the times we lived more together. We came together, but are now bored by the ways we quarreled. We all seek peace, whether we admit it or not.

Hot feet. Sun baking the shed. That's rare in this country. Tomorrow morning, if I'm okay (pumped up by allopathy), I'll go to the temple to speak from *Caitanya-caritamrta*.

She's feeling better, he's feeling worse. It's getting steady. I'm monitoring the pulse of it all, and noticed that it suddenly flickered and went down. We're still alive, but the heartbeat is faint. Come on, beat that drum softly. Softly enunciate, "Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare."

* * *

6:45 p.m.

Almost forgot to say goodnight. Thinking of my troubled Godbrother and the way the Executive Committee is handling his "uncharacteristic behavior." They apologized that they let loose so much detailed information about his difficulties. They said other things too. What am I expected to do about any of it? I can only pray for him and all of us out here in Ireland. I don't want to send any telepathic messages, and I certainly don't want to worry unnecessarily. Let me work at keeping my own nose clean and my heart clear of envy. In this case, I really do feel clear: I sincerely hope he recovers.

August 23, 12:00 a.m.

"Lord Krishna tastes all kinds of transcendental happiness, although He Himself is happiness personified. The pleasure relished by his pure devotees is also manifested by His pleasure potency." (Cc. *Madhya* 8.158)

It's raining softly. I can hear it on the roof. Yesterday was Manu's birthday. He arrived home from selling paintings around 6:30 p.m., and they had a party for him, but I went to bed and had a dream. Now the house is quiet. I'm not worthy to read or relish the descriptions of Radharani. "If one asks about the origin of love of Krishna, the answer is that the origin is Srimati Radharani alone." (Cc. *Madhya* 1.182) *radhikaika*. "Who is the most dear friend of Krishna? The answer again is Srimati Radharani alone." *Radhikaika*.

Old memories. I hope I will be able to go over to give the class. The *Bhagavatam* says our time is diminishing, but there is no loss if we spend our time chanting and hearing the glories of Uttama-Sloka.

Lord Caitanya asked if there was anything further Ramananda Raya could say. Ramananda Raya referred to another topic, *prema-vilasa-vivarta*. He began to sing a song he had composed, but Lord Caitanya covered his mouth with His hand. This indicates that such activities cannot be understood by one in material consciousness. *Sattvam viSuddham vasudeva-Sabditam*. "Our identification with the gross body and subtle mind is different from spiritual understanding. Since the intelligence and mind are material, the loving affairs of Sri Radha and Krishna are beyond their perception." (Cc. *Madhya* 8.193, purport)

I find the rain comforting. And I find it comforting to read without the pressure to turn it into a performance. It's also comforting to know that Radha-Krishna's affairs are beyond material understanding, even if that means I cannot taste them. At least I'm not going to confuse Radha-Krishna with material sense enjoyment or impersonalism. Radha is a star not easy to attain. Yet Srila Prabhupada asks us to pray for Her blessings: "Please tell about me to Your Krishna."

Lord Caitanya asked how He might attain this ultimate goal. (In one dream last night, my disciple, Sacinandana dasa, was teaching me how to ride a bicycle. It was complicated and took a long time to learn. Finally, we collapsed on our bicycles and fell asleep. His wife discovered us the next morning). How to attain the ultimate goal? And why do I juxtapose sublime spiritual information with a mundane dream? My attention can't seem to hold still, so this is the honest record of my life. Just as I was about to tell how Lord Caitanya asked how to attain the ultimate goal, that dream popped into my mind. Do you see how hard it is to stay fixed in pure Krishna consciousness? We have to keep returning the attention to the higher Self every single time it goes off. That's a lot of work. I wanted to show you the nature of the journey.

Ramananda Raya replied, "Actually, You are speaking through my mouth and at the same time You are listening. This is very mysterious." (Cc. *Madhya* 8.200) Srila Prabhupada states that whenever a pure Vaisnava speaks, he does so perfectly. "His speech is managed by Krishna Himself from within the heart." We can't claim that, yet we aspire for direction. At least He (and Srila Prabhupada) may approve what we say if we are sincerely employed as their preachers.

"All intelligence emanates from the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the Supersoul within the soul of everyone." Nondevotees are interested in sense gratification, so the Lord places them under *maha-maya*. A devotee, however, is directed by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, so he's under the shelter of *Yogamaya*. This is implied by the statement, *sarvasya caham hr̥di sannivisto*. (Bg. 15.15)

Ramananda Raya said that Radha and Krishna's *lila* can be understood only by following the way of the *gopis*.

* * *

I had another dream last night too. We were in a foreign country, and people were doing some kind of experiment to see whether some animals would eat an elderly

woman who lived there. Fortunately, some civilized people arrived and forbade the experiment, although many people had gathered to see the result. The dream seemed to be about having to go along with worldly expectations, and then the idea that devotees can live differently. When I awoke I thought the dream might be about ISKCON's relationship with the devotees and the world, or about my troubled Godbrother, or simply about myself and the need I feel for protection against those who would insist we go with the status quo, even when it is wrong.

* * *

3:00 a.m.

Am I ashamed to tell how my *japa* session went? No, I guess not. While chanting, I thought quite a bit about Guyana, then had to bring my mind back to what I was doing "trying to hear the holy name. This life is such a river of mixed thoughts. Krishna is His name. I can explain that theology quite well. *Purnah Suddho nitya-mukto/ bhinnatvan nama-naminoh*. But when I chant, I don't practice what I know so well in theory. O Krishna, Hare Krishna.

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4:34 a.m.

Yesterday at this time I admitted that I was made up of all the things that pass through me "the voices and others' opinions. It seemed to me then that I had no other identity, because I couldn't sustain any meditation other than fielding the news and noise moving into my mind. Today I hope that's not true. But to the extent that it is true, let me use the mix in Krishna's service. Even great *acaryas*, such as Baladeva Vidyabhusana, took others' opinions and responded to them. Thus the *purva-paksa* method is followed by great teachers who assert Krishna conscious conclusions. When I hear others' opinions, especially if they move through my mind again and again, I tend to write them down. I hope I'll be able to stand back from them then and find out what I myself really think.

We are never alone because we are not God. Since we are not God, God is always with us. We can always think of Him, link with Him through the ninefold methods of devotional service. There's always some new service to do. As long as we live, we have a crest of the present moment in which to live. If we are not afraid of that moment, we can use it to become the most we can be right now.

I used to be a bold explorer of inner realms in the days I took LSD, or so I considered myself. I thought I was willing not only to be who I was but to see that self in truth. Facing self-truths was a kind of discipline I practiced. Those days are over; those trips let me down in the end. Now I want to worship and serve Sri Krishna, Radha-Krishna, as He is presented by Lord Caitanya and the Six Gosvamis, as delivered to me by Srila Prabhupada.

Now I don't know ultimately who I am, although I still try to face self-truths, but I do know that I am no longer alone. I am an eternal soul, a tiny part and parcel of Krishna. I am meant to give Him pleasure. What gives Krishna the most pleasure? When I freely give my love. When will that day come when I will give so freely?

Rhubarb-pie free-write. When I can't think in ordinary ways, I say, "All right, whatever words are there, whatever fragments I can find, let them come through now." That's the free-writing side of me. I write what's there.

And what *is* there? I open the cupboard and write down what I find without distinction. I don't worry whether it makes sense or even whether it's always palatable. I just have to get it out.

* * *

I want to be careful this morning so I don't get a headache. I will take extra rest just after penning this. The abracadabra, open-sesame, Arabic mystic and magician enters. Did he come because of some evil genie? Why did that ISKCON leader get so affected?

Don't play around. There are spirits of all kinds out there, waiting to suck out our lives. Don't tap into their energy. Dickinson said that the soul selects her own society. Well, select Srila Prabhupada's. Stay with his books and learn to associate with the *sadhus* they describe. Live in the world of *Srimad-Bhagavatam* and *Caitanya-caritamrta* if you want to be safe.

Just went off on a train of thought, imagining I quoted Emily Dickinson's entire poem about the soul who, out of an ample nation, chooses one, then shuts the valves. I sent that poem once in a letter to a disciple who keeps trying to get me to debate about the origin of the *jiva*. I don't want to discuss it. He insists I must. But I won't. I sent him Emily's poem, telling him that I have a right to select my society, and therefore the things I will or won't discuss, and he has the same right. No one can force us into controversy. It's too much of a waste of time.

I used to think I had to get involved in all these controversies, and especially to associate with all sorts of people I wouldn't normally have chosen to mix with. That was true of school, the Navy, college, riding the subway, at the workplace, and later, in ISKCON. We can respect the fact that God is in everyone's heart without jumping into every controversy that walks by.

I'm at a different stage in my life now. I'm more picky about whom I will choose as friends. I also have made the choice to spend a significant amount of my time alone. I still reach out to people who want to hear from me what Srila Prabhupada said, but I do that through the mail.

Lord Krishna also selects His own society. O Krishna, one day I hope You will select me "select all of us.

Snakes in holes eat mice. Man who don't praise Lord Hari drown themselves by wearing such heavy turbans. A woman's bangles will drown her. Hare Krishna. After Krishna disappeared from the earth, the religious principles took shelter in the *Bhagavatam*, which is as brilliant as the sun. May we learn to chant with feeling.

* * *

10:28 a.m.

Start of a headache while on the *vyasasana*, but it came near the end of my lecture. A man was translating into Croatian for someone, and the added distraction didn't help my head. I took an Esgic right after I finished speaking. I feel better now.

In the question and answer period, devotees spoke about *Poor Man reads The Bhagavatam*. My lecture was on the theme that Lord Caitanya recommended hearing *Srimad-Bhagavatam*. I ended by discussing the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* commentaries written by Lord Caitanya's followers and presented by Prabhupada. Maha-mantra dasa said PMrB appears to be another commentary and may seem impertinent. But it's not. Manu commented on how in PMrB, the *Bhagavatam* can also be found in the world. Bhagavata dasi asked if more PMrB is "in the pipeline." There are still two more volumes to come, but I have stopped writing it. I don't need to write PMrB anymore. *Whatever* I write is based on the *Bhagavatam*, even if it appears in *Every Day, Just Write*.

I didn't mention my health. In the rowboat coming back, Madhu commented that one lecture a week seems to be enough for me. "Those days are over," he said, "when you could give a lecture every day." Then he tripped while jumping out of the boat and almost fell flat on the quay.

As I write this, I see two young *matajis* walking this way over the field, both with their hands in beadbags "a vision of the Vaisnava way.

* * *

12:12 p.m.

Energy to burn. Told Madhu an anecdote about Charlie Parker to encourage him to practice his music. Dictated a letter to a psychologist friend on the definition of the unconscious. Burn available energy. In the *pranayama* story by Narada, the *prana* is compared to a snake that eats air. Energy eats fire; burns life. When I took drugs and lived on the Lower East Side, I and my friends would go on talking jags. Burning energy. I lived a life of silent depression "not only me. In Krishna consciousness, we can burn energy for the very best thing "chanting and hearing. Use energy to find attentive reading in Srila Prabhupada's four main books. Speak *Krishna-katha*. Serve. Burn the energy down. It will be gone soon enough. Already we are becoming tired. Don't waste energy on unworthy pursuits.

* * *

2:35 p.m.

Back to the talks between Lord Caitanya and ramananda raya. Only by following in the *gopis'* footsteps and with their help can one enter into radha-Krishna's pastimes. A *prakrta-sahajiyad*resses up his material body as a *gopi*, a travesty. "One has to practice living in Vrndavana by hearing about the talks of the *gopis* with Krishna. However, one should not consider himself a *gopi*, for this is offensive." (Cc. *Madhya* 8.205, purport)

Lengthy and belabored doubts about my writing and my way of life. When those doubts appeared in later sections of *Progresso*, I saw it was a low point in the book. I was sorry our team was losing. I looked for signs of winning, and when I found them, I was satisfied. I think I nag myself less nowadays.

"The pastimes of Sri Radha and Krishna are self-effulgent. They are happiness personified, unlimited and all-powerful. Even so, the spiritual humor of such pastimes

are never complete without the *gopis*, the Lord's personal friends." (Cc. *Madhya* 8.206, from *Govinda-lilamrta* 10.17) When the nectar of Krishna's pastimes is sprinkled on Srimati Radharani, the *gopis* appreciate the pleasure a hundred times more than if they were sprinkled themselves. *Gopis* try to engage other *gopis* in serving Krishna. Thus it's different than material lust. Krishna is pleased by His devotees' behavior. We have to attain our *siddha-deha* by practicing *raganuga-bhakti*.

Now in the last days before Radhastami, let me read the fourth chapter of the *Adi-lila*. I really don't need more material "I plan to give a simple lecture "but I want to read to enrich myself. Maybe I'll find something there worth recording.

Among my favorite *sutras* so far are, "Without Radha, there is no meaning to Krishna, and without Krishna, there is no meaning to Radha." I also like Srila Prabhupada's instruction that we pray to Srimati Radharani: "O Jagan-mata . . . please tell about me to Your Krishna." I'd like to mention the *manjaris* being the leaves and flowers of the Radha creeper. Add that to the talks between Lord Caitanya and Ramananda Raya and my lecture is long and full enough.

* * *

5:10 p.m.

I lay down for about an hour with Sumatriptan. Now I feel a foggy sensation in the front of my head. O editor, what are you going to keep and what are you going to omit from this writing? I keep adding to the milk pot, and eventually it is condensed. All right. I'll be like Baltimore's Bhakta Ed. He says he goes into a kind of trance while cooking, stirring the mango *pera* while listening to a Krishna conscious tape.

But you see, the head fog prevents me. We migraineurs resort to first- and second-line of defense in order to have some quality of life. We try to live with dark-room pain. Even when the head is half clear . . .

Sri radhika is the abode of all those qualities which attract Sri Krishna. Go ahead, read as much of it as you can.

I see a car parked down by the boathouse. A man with a suit jacket and big belly, followed by a woman in black . . . He walks down to the quay. Radhanatha mentioned his relatives from America would be arriving today to attend his wedding on Sunday. Tilaka down there with them. There's no regular boat service for guests. Hardly a welcome. They have to figure it out for themselves. The brass bell hangs on a tree branch. If they ring it long enough, someone will come to get them.

O Krishna, I am thinking of Radhanatha's guests and not You.

Prabhupada said, "It's *all Bhagavatam*, including Joan of Arc and the temple carpenter banging his hammer."

Hold on, there, is there no limit to what is *Bhagavatam*?

Madhu's running down to catch those guests, who have already returned to their car. I glance at Radha-Govinda, Their aura of gold.

August 24,12:02 a.m.

Twice I had to rescue myself from headache yesterday. I don't feel good about that. I barely slept because of the pain, and my dreams were fitful. I'm afraid of rebound headaches with this medication, so I'll live with the pain today, if it comes. Or I'll opt for the relatively harmless feverfew. Having a body in the material world and entering old age "risky business. Finally, all the trees, the lake, the procession of days and seasons, the body in its limbs and aches and all its memories "good-bye, and no painless departure either. Where will we go next? Do we even know who we are? Do we insist on our attachments right up until the end?

Can we be sober enough to die?

I turned off my alarm at 11:00 p.m. I didn't want to get up, but here I am anyway. *Jaya Radhe*. I take shelter of You.

* * *

The highest taste is *madhurya-rasa*, and it's found nowhere but in Vraja. *Parakiya* is its greatest mellow. "This mood is unbounded in the damsels of Vraja, but among them it finds its perfection in Sri radha." (Cc. *Adi* 7.48) *Parakiya* is most enthusiastic because of the risks involved in paramour love. It's not morally approved in society. "The validity of such risk, however, is possible only in the transcendental realm."

I made it for this brief while. Keep reading. ". . . By the causeless mercy of the Lord we can have a peep into that invisible Vraja." (Cc. *Adi* 4.50, purport)

Radharani's feelings are incomprehensible even to the Lord Himself. Desiring to taste the mellow of Sri Radha's love, Sri Krishna appeared as Lord Caitanya.

"One is enjoying in two." Radha is the topmost mistress of Krishna's comforts. "As such, She is the medium transmitting the living entity's service to Sri Krishna. Devotees in Vrndavana therefore seek the mercy of Srimati Radharani in order to be recognized as loving servitors of Sri Krishna." (Cc. *Adi* 4.46, purport)

"When the pleasure potency of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is exhibited by His grace in the person of a devotee, that manifestation is called love of God." It's not just within oneself; *bhakti* is an exchange between two. It's God's internal potency, and He bestows the potency upon His pure devotees.

This is available only in Vraja. Do we have to find it in the Vrndavana in this world amid the bewildered present-day residents, monkeys, hogs, open sewers? Where do we find the Vrndavana of the *Krishna* book? We have to learn how to see with love. That adjusts everything. And we have to feel real separation. Ultimately, Vrndavana consciousness can be found anywhere in the world, but our ability to develop it is always dependent on our willingness to love.

Samvit, *sandhini*, and the *hladini* energies manifest together is called *Suddha-sattva*, the main feature of God's kingdom.

Now, while my head is clear of pain, let me chant.

* * *

Dream

Dreamt I was in the Navy and was brought up before the officers. They questioned me in a little room. I was definitely subordinate and helpless. They asked me things I

couldn't understand. I couldn't even concentrate on what they were asking. The interrogation went on for hours. At one point, they were writing complicated math problems on a chalkboard and asking me to solve them. Because I was so bewildered, they all ended up laughing at me. Finally, I exclaimed, "Oh, my God," with some fervor. Then I woke up.

* * *

4:26 a.m.

The angry disciple and the gentle, artistic guru. So he described it. Wait, talk straight, tell us. I find it hard to listen to some morning conversations, such as when BahulaSva and his super intellectual friend keep saying things about the scientists. I prefer to hear the lectures from the period on Ajamila. The one I heard yesterday was pleasing. Srila Prabhupada ended up talking about the Six Gosvamis and their feelings of separation. In most of those lectures, he speaks methodically about the Yamadutas and the Visnudutas, covering more of the material each day.

Let me wrench from my heart something to say. Krishna is sublime. Lalita told the swan about Radha's condition. She wanted it to relay the message accurately. She also gave extensive directions about the route the swan should take on its flight to Mathura. Some of her words expressed anger toward Akrura's cruelty. It was he who took their Krishna from Vrndavana. Otherwise, she mostly praises Krishna, and begs Him to please be kind to her dearest friend, Srimati Radharani. "Krishna said He would come back," they sometimes said to Radha, "He wouldn't lie." She told Lord Hari how Radha passes Her days, sometimes seeking out those who know mantras and spells with the hope of enchanting Krishna to come back, other times in a faint by the bank of the Yamuna.

My Godbrother is performing *harinama* on the streets of Cork today. He's with a group of devotees. I'm glad that the holy names will go out by his service. Surely Srila Prabhupada will be pleased with his simple and direct presentation of Krishna consciousness.

Some devotees think chanting on the streets has gone out of style. Would they dare to say that to Prabhupada? I doubt it. Hare Krishna.

I chant on my free-write toenails. Krishna's toenails are so beautiful that Lord Brahma cannot even imagine them.

Read simply, faithfully, and fill your world with satisfaction. We don't need more than this.

What are those pilots doing up there "coming in from the Atlantic or going toward America?"

Don't ask what everyone is doing. It will leave you utterly lost. Just ask what Lalita is saying to the swan, what Krishna is saying to Arjuna, what Uddhava is saying to the *gopis*, what Srila Prabhupada is saying to us.

* * *

Is it true that you or someone like you wearing a blue hat does the same things at the same time every day? Is it a fact that you're not embarrassed to think the same thoughts in the same words at the same time each day, and then to put them into your writing?

Someone said that if I do it honestly, it evolves the way life evolves. Is that true? *Have I evolved?* I know we reflect whatever is brought close to us the way a crystal reflects whatever color is near. I in particular have a bit of a chameleon's nature. But I do evolve. What I am now is different than what I was even a year ago. The record is here, on the page.

Oh boy, all those colored pencils and crayons in a jar. You plannin' to have some fun? Draw a picture of the man on the moon gathering rocks from Arizona.

Rock us to into the light.

He wanted to give his students the right things, but they got bored to death.

Another suffered a scandal but he called it "changes."

And so it is.

I seek the steadiness of slow evolution. Don't like the milk of my affections to boil too hot, and I try to be attentive to always remove the skims.

Or another analogy: I knead the bread slowly need the men and women in this movement to help me.

Looking up references to the spiritual master. Did you know that the guru is not meant to be the enjoyer of facilities offered by disciples? He's supposed to be like a parent, and in ISKCON, he is meant to carry on in Prabhupada's absence by giving them Prabhupada.

What exactly did Prabhupada mean when he said what he said? Is it true that we don't understand him properly? Is it true that we haven't shown him our love, because we have not really cooperated together to push on the movement? We used to think loving one another was some Christian trip; now we're only sorry we didn't understand sooner.

The human shadow leapt from that man after all these years. It was a hostile spirit and flared its nostrils. "ravana snorted derisively."

I short-changed a man in a subway booth once. He gave me two tokens by mistake "I had only paid for one. I was on drugs at the time. I only hoped I wouldn't freak out right there on the spot, or be exploited while I was so vulnerable. O Prabhupada, you saved me from more than you imagine. My soul I find in duress and offer it to you, dear master, dear Lord Krishna. I chant within myself and aloud.

* * *

9:30 a.m.

Maha-mantra dasi is polishing Radha-Govinda while I sit here, spaced out. What to do? Earlier I drew a picture of men fighting, so I labeled it, "Hare Krishna Fight," implying that it was a good religious fight against *anarthas* or something like that.

Sixteen rounds done, early walk done, seven pages done, at least one good reading in Cc. done, and some preparation for the lecture. I have nothing left to do. Could a person sit and in calm mood think of Krishna favorably, serve guru in a way appropriate for a debilitated condition, whisper, "Hare Krishna"?

Maha-mantra is going to Vrndavana, so I gave her a letter for a devotee there and requested that devotee to get Radha-Govinda some new clothes. Then all I'll have to do is sit back and wait until the end of November, when she will return.

Child painter (aged 10).

No, I'm no child. This is a sublime process, you fool.

But can't you see your own shortcomings?

Ecologists warn against the kinds of self-hate our society reinforces. A Hare Krishna lecturer sometimes scoffs, "Bosh. You should *cultivate* self-hate." But he may now know just how destructive it can be.

Prabhupada encouraged us, "Don't be disappointed." Yet neither should we be proud, as if we're competent devotees.

Anyway, we all know this. I'm just saying it to pass the time. It's either that or get back to monitoring my physical condition.

* * *

11:55 a.m.

I heard my troubled Godbrother is writing letters to his disciples in Russia criticizing ISKCON.

Yeah? So what's it to ya?

Uh . . . I don't even know if it's true. But we're supposed to be concerned, right? Should I phone someone to find out? Can't read about it in *Time*.

Okay, wise-guy, troublemaker. You're such a frail pup. If you can't run with the big dogs, keep your ass on the porch.

Whimper.

Bad news will come of its own accord. No point in perking up my antennae to get the news quicker.

* * *

2:43 p.m.

The material, adulterated version of *hladini-Sakti* emanates from the living being and doesn't attract Krishna. We become mad after sense gratification and captivated by the distresses of the material modes. "Only when the *hladini-Sakti* emanates from Sri Krishna and is bestowed upon the living being to attract Him does the living being become a pure lover of God." (Cc. *Adi* 4.68, purport)

There is some either/or involved here; either we love God or we love sense enjoyment. May Krishna see me trying to give up everything for Him. I have enjoyed and suffered enough.

Sri Radha is the personification of *maha-bhava* and *hladini-Sakti*. All Lord Krishna's consorts proceed from radhika. It's the same with Krishna and His incarnations. Srimati Radharani expands into many *gopis* to enhance Krishna's pleasure in the *rasa* dance. She has many names, such as Govinda-nandini, Krishnamayi, and radhika. She is also known as Sarva-laksmi, Sarva-kanta, each name full of meaning.

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6:07 p.m.

What should one do who is about to die? He should hear about and chant the glories of the Lord. I want to do that. Therefore I want to clear away extraneous thoughts and emotions. Be like Maharaja Pariksit. Don't think you have seven million years or months or days. Prepare for the end now. What that means for me exactly, I don't yet know, and perhaps that's part of my problem.

August 25, 12:02 a.m.

Krishnadasa Kaviraja described the three reasons for Lord Caitanya's descent. It's incredible that we can discuss these things. He wanted to understand Radha's love for Him, which so much enchanted Him, although He's the enchanter of everyone else. Krishna is the only object (*visaya*) of Radha's love, but He wanted to know what it was like to be the abode (*aSraya*) of that love.

Krishnadasa Kaviraja began to explain Lord Caitanya's second reason. He knew that His sweetness (*madhurima*) was wonderful and infinite. "Only Radha, by the strength of Her love, tastes all the nectar of My sweetness." (Cc. *Adi* 4.139) "There is constant competition between My sweetness and the mirror of Radha's love. They both go on increasing, but neither knows defeat." (Cc. *Adi* 4.142) Deliberating on a way to taste it, He hankered for Radhika's position.

I thought I would confine my readings to Radha and Krishna in Vrndavana and not branch out to Lord Caitanya, but He is impossible to avoid. And why should I avoid Him? Perhaps in a Radhastami lecture I won't dwell much on Lord Caitanya, but there is no harm in mentioning Him. He's the gateway to Radha-Krishna for us. We should be thoroughly immersed in His mercy and aware of who He is. Once again, the spiritual master is the representative of both Radha and Lord Caitanya. "Desiring to understand Radharani's attitude of increasing love, Lord Krishna appeared as Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu." (Cc. *Adi* 4.145, purport)

Those who can see Krishna always are most fortunate. See, hear, or feel His presence. At least know you are following His order. See and hear from His representative, Srila Prabhupada.

Now the author of *Caitanya-caritamrta* describes Krishna's third reason. "This conclusion (*siddhanta*) is extremely deep." Only Svarupa Damodara knows much about it. Anyone else who claims to understand it must have heard about it from him, "for he was the most intimate companion of Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu." (Cc. *Adi* 4.160 - 1)

Krishnadasa Kaviraja distinguishes lust from love. It's *prema*, not *kama*, but sometimes this *prema* is described as if it were lust. "The desire to gratify one's own senses is *kama*, but the desire to please the senses of Lord Krishna is *prema*." (Cc. *Adi* 4.165)

I've started a separate notebook I wanted to title it *Preparation for the End*. Why not include it here? Some details are confidential. Besides, I want it to be extremely sober. I need to list the items I must renounce if I want to follow in Maharaja Pariksit's footsteps during his last seven days.

Pleasing Krishna's senses seems beyond me. It seems to jump over pleasing my own senses, avoiding which seems impossible to me. I've heard that when we do act to please

Krishna, we also feel happiness. And we are encouraged to enjoy our senses through Krishna conscious pursuits "*kirtana*, smelling the incense and flowers offered to Krishna, tasting *prasadam*, etc.

"If there is ample reason for the dissolution of a conjugal relationship and yet such a dissolution does not take place, such a relationship of intimate love is called pure." (Cc. *Adi* 4.165, purport) The *gopis* dedicated their lives to satisfying the Personality of Godhead, Sri Krishna. Their love was not at all sexual, which is a matter of personal sense enjoyment. Srila Prabhupada then makes a long list of noble-seeming acts which are actually material sense gratification, including fatherhood, altruism, following ethical codes, practicing religion, accepting health directives, being bashful, seeking liberation, avoiding ostracism or legal punishment, etc. Transcendental to all these is the stage where we feel ourselves direct servants of Krishna. Srila Prabhupada actually enables us to *act* on that platform; I could feel it especially in the years we worked under his direction.

This giving up of all else is the actual instruction of *Bhagavad-gita*. Bhaktivinoda Thakura warns us, however, not to renounce the duties of body and mind. "Even such duties are not sense gratification if they are undertaken in the spirit of service to Krishna." It's all based on the consciousness in which we do things.

* * *

4:34 a.m.

"I can't get started," he played. You think I may still associate with those artists to learn the blues and sing in Krishna conscious time. I am not a formalist like the ISKCON school of poets from Vrndavana who write in formal English. They say free verse is for those who don't want to work hard at their poems. But free-verse poets could argue that getting away from formality forces them to surrender their whole lives in their poems, and that that's worth even more. The formalist's work is often mechanical, or it juggles words to find rhyme. It does satisfy a certain part of the self, but it doesn't always grab the poet, what to speak of the reader. Anyway, any poem of either school is good if it's successful. A poet of either school can fail while writing individual poems. We all keep trying to make a contribution.

We have a tendency to criticize when we hear someone lecture or read their books. Would we dare to criticize the Creator when we see the sun rise? It is much nicer to praise and to bless, to accept all that's happening and whatever anyone is offering as sincere.

In the bathroom this morning I saw a spider dangling about a foot below my *gamcha*. I grabbed with two fingers where I thought its web cable was, then it fell to the floor. I didn't see where it went. Then when I looked into the toilet bowl, I saw it dancing on top of the water, frantically trying not to drown. How did it get into the water? Was it the same spider? I felt responsible for its predicament. I thought of reaching in and pulling it out, but I recalled how previous attempts of that sort have rarely been successful. It seems the creatures struggle even more and are lost. We can't meddle with karma. But we certainly commit our share of violence as we move through this world.

Fee Fi FoFum, I smell the blood of an imperfect conditioned soul. He's writing out of his imperfect false ego. Why doesn't he drop that and write with elegant rhyming English the nectar of Lord Hari?

Do you think we will have breakfast today? Am I thinking of the cowherd boys? The *gopis* accuse the cowherd boys of never telling the truth. Hare Krishna. The Lord's pastimes with His consorts and friends in Vrndavana are delightful. Ordinary persons misunderstand them, comparing them to their own so-called love affairs. I will chant Hare Krishna and try to avoid such thoughts. I will also create no new chapters of degradation in this life. Live as a *sadhu* should, chanting Hare Krishna and remembering Krishna from the fresh reading of *sastra*. Let it be known that Krishna cleanses the heart.

* * *

Dressed the Lord and Radha in clean, white dresses, His with flower patterns and yellow and green trim, Hers with border flowers of blue and gold trim. They both look beautiful, shining from yesterday's polishing. While dressing Them, I heard our reading of *Sri Hamsaduta* again. Radha's condition of separation is extreme, firelike suffering. We say glibly, "She's not really suffering, She's feeling transcendental joy." That's true too, but in the transcendental world, even the joy is not always light or cheap. It comes only after all the suffering and joys of the material world have ended. When Krishna went to Mathura, the *gopis*, especially Radha, and the other residents of Vrndavana fell into deeper emotions of love for Krishna. They appeared to be dying from the pain of those feelings. He is actually the dearest supreme master of all living beings. He sent Uddhava to the *gopis* to tell them that they are never apart from Him, but the *gopis* didn't much appreciate His message. The *gopis* wanted only Krishna Himself.

Oh boy, Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna. Time to pull on my boots and go out for my walk in the predawn dark. It's just barely light enough to see where to put my feet on the path. Can't see objects. Chant Hare Krishna aloud, two rounds, numbers fifteen and sixteen. Sometimes I hear my voice saying the holy names, all thirty-two syllables, eight Hares, four Krishnas, and four Ramas. These three words Hare, Krishna, and Rama, are even better than the three little English words "I love you."

Hare Krishna, calling out to Krishna in the sound of His names. He will come to us in the form of *hladini-Sakti* "if He likes.

How a girl can stand bending like a flower on a stem? remove yourself from thoughts like that. You're not Krishna the enjoyer. You want to sing your own boilermaker song. You feel that fits you? I was thinking maybe you would only write from nature images. But I don't mind if you think it won't jeopardize your soul. If you think you're not going to make it anyway, you might as well sing some good tunes and offer them to God.

* * *

5:50 a.m.

Bhaktivinoda Thakura warns us not to renounce physical or mental duties. If our duties are performed as service to Krishna, they will be free of sense gratification. It's my duty to sing and to make the best poems possible by repeated attempts. It's also my

duty "and this is true of everyone "to express my service in a personal way, from my heart.

But if I knew for sure I had only one or two weeks left of life? Or if I lost my eyesight? I'd probably make radical changes. But it seems as long as I have life duration and strength, I should continue what I'm doing. Make an immortal song, like Bechet's rendition of "Summertime" or "Petite Fleur," which people can't keep out of their heads.

* * *

9:44 a.m.

Fred the fiction writer prepared his notes and references for the Radhastami lecture. He felt a pain in his right toe, but persisted. "I could get a toe-attack and die while working," he thought, "with no chance of making it to Vrndavana. Instead of hearing the temple bells and the wailing *bhajana* singer over the loudspeaker, I'd be hearing the falsely reassuring sound of a truck engine. I'd imagine it was the mail arriving, and wonder whether people would mind if I didn't answer their letters this time, since I was dying. I'm in a peaceful enough place, but I have to make it Vrndavana.

Fred knows that temporary peace is not enough. A man has to think of Krishna, so he should be bold enough not to be afraid of death. He should also be detached from family and other things.

Oh, Fred, there is no cure for the malady called death and dying, so write while you can. Fred thought to attain maximum medical treatment, but how far can you trust modern science or the alternative natural and "subtle" sciences of medicine and healing? He only wants up-time, what they call "quality of life," so he can play the old ball game.

I have more than enough references about Srimati Radharani. I don't want to do too much aloud reading anyway. Let me wrap the whole lecture up in half an hour. "Without Radha there is no meaning to Krishna, and without Krishna there is no meaning to Radha." Even ordinary *sannyasis* and *brahmacaris*, when they want to enjoy spiritual pleasure, are willing and able to give up material sex pleasure, material sense gratification. Therefore, if the Supreme Brahman wants to enjoy, we should not think that His happiness is material. Radharani is not a woman like your mother or sister.

Oh, Fred, the Grateful Dead have passed on, and to this day (I'm boasting my virtue) I have never heard them sing. But I know they were the best band, because devotees have done so much book distribution at their concerts. Their leader even used to announce from the stage that the Hare Krishnas were around, and he didn't mind. Then he died, and the band broke apart. The book distribution, however, continues. What's my point? I'm feeling heart pain. I hope it's not from the sodium valproate I take or anything like that.

* * *

2:32 p.m.

What's most dear to me is my Krishna consciousness and my link with Srila Prabhupada. I should be willing to give up anything that would jeopardize that dearmost. Also dear to me is a natural humility or unself-consciousness. Just now a disciple expressed enthusiasm for my art work, so I gave him two small drawings. As I did so, I

wrote my initials, SDG, in the corner. Already I feel I compromised my simplicity when I did that. I really don't want to attach too much importance to myself or to the drawings. Life itself has to be given up. Hold fast to Krishna consciousness.

* * *

The *gopis* worry that Krishna's soft feet might be injured by pebbles as He roams the forest. "The *gopis* do not care for their own pleasures or pains. All their physical and mental activities are directed towards enjoyment to Lord Krishna." (Cc. *Adi* 4.174) This makes them dear to Krishna. He appreciates all that they have sacrificed for His sake.

"O *gopis*, I am not able to repay My debt for your spotless service . . . your connection with Me is beyond reproach . . . therefore please let your own glorious deeds be your compensation." (*Bhag.* 10.32.22)

Here, let me stop and take two feverfewes. Hope they work. I'm out in the shed. A steady summer shower is falling, but I am sheltered from the rain. I'd love to read, write, and paint with ink right now, but my right eye says no, so I must comply.

I don't know what it means that when the *gopis* see that Krishna is pleased with them, "that happiness of Krishna makes the *gopis* a million times more happy than Krishna Himself." (Cc. *Adi* 4.187) I always think of Krishna as supreme in everything. I can understand it theoretically if I consider that Krishna then increases in His happiness until it's greater than the *gopis*, then they increase their happiness, and it becomes a transcendental competition with no defeat and no end. This is the joy of the pure devotee's life; it is also Krishna's joy. The devotees' joy nourishes the Lord's joy. These affairs are not mundane, "because the *gopis*' intense desire to satisfy Krishna surcharges the entire scene with pure love of Godhead, with not a spot of sexual indulgence." (Cc. *Adi* 4.195)

Learn it from Srila Prabhupada's books. There is no reason to hear it in another's words. Meditate on what he says the way a Zen disciple meditates on the koan his guru assigns him. "When the pleasure of love interferes with the service of Lord Krishna, the devotee becomes angry towards such ecstasy." (Cc. *Adi* 4.202)

* * *

I wish to be like a child. Whatever love and innocence I have, may it come to the forefront of my consciousness. This man says, "Thank you," because his pain has gone down. He used the suddenly available energy to draw a happy face for the Lord. Please accept our Krishna conscious attachment to You. Obeisances on all sides to Krishna who is loved best by pure devotees.

* * *

5:55 p.m., Night Notes

M. and I finished recording our reading of *The Love Locket*. Vishvanath Cakravarti Thakura ends it by telling us he's at Radha-kunda, filled with nectar from Rupa Gosvami's books. He writes, "This person obtained the book, *The Love Locket*." He means the book came through him as the mercy of Rupa Gosvami "as if he found this

great treasure at Radha-kunda. This is his poetic way of acknowledging his debt to and humility before the *acaryas*.

How much better this is than reading (as I was doing earlier today) anecdotes of Zen masters. What do I think I'll gain from *that*? I used the anecdote *genre* in *Prabhupada Nectar*. Maybe someday I'll use it again.

Walking through the summery, very wet, high grass, hoisting my *dhoti* up over my boots, my knees bare, soft rain sprinkling my body. It felt delicious. The only drawback was that I was weak, retreating early from the shed. But I wrote two pages there, answered a letter, did three ink drawings, and escaped self-consciousness. Hare Krishna.

August 26, 12:05 a.m.

"Desiring to understand the glory of Radharani's love, the wonderful qualities in Him that She alone relishes through Her love, and the happiness She feels when She realizes the sweetness of His love, the Supreme Lord Hari, richly endowed with Her emotions, appeared from the womb of Srimati Sacidevi, as the moon appeared from the ocean."
(Cc. *Adi* 4.116)

The author of *Caitanya-caritamrta* states that he doesn't want the public to hear these confidential topics. "But if they are not disclosed no one will understand them." He goes ahead on the premise that the devotees will become blissful and the fools will not be interested, will not understand.

Lord Krishna said in His mind, "One more qualified than Me is impossible to find in the world. But in radha alone I feel the presence of one who can give Me pleasure." Each of His senses was charmed by contact with Radha. "Thus although I am the source of happiness for the entire world, the beauty and attributes of Sri radhika are My life and soul." (Cc. *Adi* 4.248)

In order to know and taste Radha's happiness in Her love for Krishna, the Supreme Lord assumed Radharani's sentiments and appeared as Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu.

I've finished reading *Adi-lila*, Chapter Four. Now I'll look at the two sections in the Tenth Canto (as prepared by Prabhupada's disciples) to which I plan to refer in my Radhastami lecture. The first is Chapter 28, "The *Gopis* Search For Krishna," at the moment when the *gopis*, while tracking Krishna's footprints, suddenly realize that His footprints are intermixed with those of His special consort. *Anayaradhito nunam/ bhagavan harir iSvarah*: "Certainly this particular *gopi* has perfectly worshiped the all-powerful Personality of Godhead, Govinda, since He was so pleased with Her that He abandoned the rest of us and brought Her to a secluded place." (*Bhag.* 10.30.28)

* * *

My night was spent mostly awake. Woke from dreams, got up to urinate several times, looked at the clock. No big worries on my mind, but still couldn't sleep. The insomnia will catch up to me later today. But I didn't want to miss this midnight *rendezvous*. I suppose I should be glad I dreamt that I was ordered to go before the Queen. I was supposed to present thousands of dollars to her. When I went, I realized

that I had been sent to the *murti* of Sri Radha in the Dallas temple. (The Radharani in my own room doesn't seem to demand any fines.)

Coming closer to Radhastami. If I can, I'll give my lecture. Later, I'll meet with the two couples who are getting married. I'll break fast at noon, and otherwise keep to myself.

This verse (10.30.28) reveals the dearest *gopi's* name in the word *aradhita*. Srila Vishvanath Cakravarti explains, "The sage Sukadeva Gosvami has tried with all endeavor to keep Her name hidden, but now it automatically shines forth from the moon of his mouth. That he has spoken Her name is indeed Her mercy, and thus the word *aradhita* is like the rumbling of a kettledrum to announce Her great good fortune." (*Bhag.* 10.30.28, purport) He's such a wonderful poet.

He radhe.

*He me, me,
the fool.*

*Fooler's little day recorded
on gold-gilt pages a
day book, as if
he were President of his world.*

His majesty will meet with Manu and ISani at 8:00 a.m. to discuss policies for DOV, the literary magazine they edit. His Holiness will also evacuate today, if he's lucky. His Deevine Grace will not be a disgrace, he hopes, although his chanting *is*. What's he going to do about that? Is that why the Dallas temple's Radha fined him?

Hare Krishna. May Srimati and Srila Prabhupada protect me as I chant. May all powerful Lord Hari allow me to control my mind.

* * *

4:29 a.m.

What would you like to hear, how we knelt on the bare floor and chanted our rosaries together? But that's not true. We never did. We were taught to chant on our own. We got our rosary beads at our First Communion, but no one in my family said the rosary. Or maybe my mother did, but I can't recall ever seeing her. She would probably have been embarrassed to pray in front of the family, especially because my father was only a nominal roman Catholic. By the time my sister and I were in college, we were ready to mock the Church. Even in high school we would have mocked. What could my poor mother do? Now, however, we are making up for lost time. We chant on prayer beads for over two hours a day "in my case, for two and a half to three hours. There are Vaisnavas who chant six or eight hours a day. I can't manage that many hours, except once in a while on a *japa* retreat.

So our man decided not to renounce everything just yet.

Man, I thought you were some kind of holy person.

Free verse is as hard work as anything else I could be doing.

My Native American name is Spotted Doe Eyes. No, it's Shant Declare. No, it's nothing. I already have enough names.

We *jivas* can be called quickly by our names, or we can be known simply as "*jiva*." But *jiva* can become *jivan mukta*, liberated. That means even while in the material world he can become fully spiritual. rupa Gosvami states: *iha yasya harer dasye, karmana manasa gira/nikhilasv apy avasthasu, jivan-muktah sa ucyate*. Such a person has fully dedicated his mind and senses in the Lord's service, and thus he is liberated even in this body.

* * *

In the bathroom I heard Prabhupada speak at the Dallas *gurukula* in 1975. He said he had been talking the day before with Dayananda about how the children should be raised. He mentioned *durdhva-reta*, the *brahmacari* ability to raise the semen to the brain. This practice, he said, made men powerful and so intelligent that they could memorize anything they had heard only once.

I wondered how scientific this concept was. Of course, who cares what the scientists think? They are usually atheists. But we can't entirely dismiss science's achievements. I thought of anesthesia, which relieves severe pain and allows surgical operations to be performed. Anyway, I was lingering over a doubt about what "they" would have to say about *urdhva-reta*.

Or maybe they do believe in it. Want to ask Sadaputa Prabhu? No, I will have to finally part with the scientists. It doesn't really matter whether they agree with the Vedic viewpoint or not.

By the time I stepped into the shower, I had thrown the doubts off. After my shower I turned the tape back on and listened some more, with a freer conscience.

She asked my secretary if I had received the blackberries she had picked. "Yes," M. said, "he ate them yesterday." I thanked the tot, while her pug-nosed playmate stood by. I thought, "These kids are to be loved. *Everyone* is to be loved." Then I walked down toward the shed. Once in the shed, I looked up and saw a lone deer. It was a juvenile. It sensed my presence suddenly and ran off.

Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare. Please chant on the road or in your room. You don't seem to have an ounce of prayer intent in you today. If I had a near-death experience or my guru suddenly appeared to say that I have to die before I will be able to really take up Krishna consciousness . . . I need some kind of enlightenment experience. The Zen masters describe such things. Maybe that's why I'm reading that book of Zen anecdotes. They practice for decades, then become enlightened. Never mind what *they* mean by that, we know what we mean. I need enlightenment to begin the path of love of Krishna, to really begin it in a stage where I pray, so that when I'm chanting, I'm not speaking in the voice of one whose heart is steel-framed.

* * *

9:10 a.m.

Manu, ISani, and their children are planning a camping trip. I told them all about the wonderful parking spots along the Bonne route in France, and about the temples in Italy, the relative merits of travel in England, France, Spain, Italy, what to look for in ISKCON temples and what to avoid. Felt myself getting worked up about it all "as if I'm ready to

travel again. Well, I'm not. As we spoke, their young daughter, Sita, sat on her daddy's lap and played with four different dolls. Now I'm back in the room, looking out at the lake strait. Travel may be good for writing, but it's also helped by staying quietly in one place. In fact, my schedule was ruffled just by talking with Manu, and I don't know if I will be able to get back into reading again later today.

Vishvanath Cakravarti Thakura states that the *gopis* who were unhappy to see Radha's footprints mixing with Krishna's were Her rivals. Her friends were jubilant. "Lord Krishna enjoyed with that *gopi* although He enjoys only within, being self-satisfied and complete in Himself. Thus by contrast He showed the wretchedness of ordinary lusty men and hard-hearted women." (*Bhag.* 10.30.34)

The *Bhagavatam* verse states that the special *gopi* began to feel proud of Herself, so Krishna disappeared to intensify Her love by feelings of separation. Krishna's inner motives are discussed by Vishvanath Cakravarti Thakura in *Prema-samputa*. There is no fault in Radharani's mind or activities. Radha is joined by all the other *gopis*, who, after Krishna leaves, become sympathetic toward Her. Their sympathy and their willingness to search together for Krishna make the *rasa* dance possible.

Srimati Radharani is not much distinguished from the other *gopis* in episodes that follow in the Tenth Canto, but she becomes prominent again in Chapter Forty-seven, "The Song Of The Bee." For this I have Prabhupada on tape queued to the place where he speaks Srimati Radharani's words: "You are the unreliable servant of an unreliable master and trickman, Sri Krishna. Anything you have to tell us about that blackish boy is old stories. We know Krishna must be trying to enjoy the society girls in Mathura. Do you think that we will put our trust in Him again?"

* * *

12:10 p.m.

A main treat in living in Geaglum is that when I massage Srila Prabhupada's back, he's able to face the water and the island. He can see Govindadvipa. When I leave him momentarily to get warm water for his bath, I again face him toward the window. My Prabhupada. This is important, so I wanted to mention it.

* * *

2:29 p.m.

Out from the house. No one around. Manu's car parked. Tilaka trots behind me. He followed me all the way down to the shed. I didn't pet him. I mouthed some Hare Krishna mantras. Was aware of my body's shadow as I stumbled through the mud. The head vise shortens the fun and the day. Where is the vacation from pain?

I looked for blackberries on the bushes. Some branches had none at all, but nearer the shed I saw both ripe ones and red, unripe ones. If I had a container I could pick some. When I slammed the shed's door, Tilaka walked off. Now I hear him barking down by the water. Maybe he found some deer.

Someone is playing a tin whistle. Pleasure boat going by.

What did I hear him say at lunch? It's inevitable that each and every one has to give up everything upon which we depend, as Maharaja Pariksit did, and depend only on

Krishna at the time of death. Don't think Maharaja Pariksit was unfortunate "he was going back to Godhead.

* * *

"What can I say about the behavior of Krishna? Outwardly He is a very attractive young lover (*nagara-rajā*), but at heart He is a great cheat, very expert in killing others' wives." (Cc. *Madhya*2.19)

I can't claim my bodily aches are due to my feelings of separation from Krishna. Or my mental worries. The long-stemmed once-purple flowers have burst into puffballs. Gradually, more gold among the weeds. Listen and listen.

Radharani spoke of Her distress, "My dear friends, you are asking Me to be patient, saying that Krishna is an ocean of mercy and that sometime in the future He will accept me. However, I must say that this will not console me. A living entity's life is very flickering. It is like water on the leaf of a lotus flower. Who will live long enough to expect Krishna's mercy?" (Cc. *Madhya*2.224)

* * *

5:05 p.m.

"Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu continued, 'My dear friends, you are My life and soul; therefore I tell you that I possess no wealth of love for Krishna. Consequently My life is poverty-stricken. My limbs and senses are useless.'" (Cc. *Madhya* 2.40) He said that if one truly loved someone, how could he endure separation? "Actually, My love for Krishna is far, far away. Whatever I do is actually false. When you see Me cry, I am simply exhibiting My great fortune. Please try to understand this beyond a doubt." (Cc. *Madhya* 2.46)

Lack of love of Godhead appears like a spot of ink on a white cloth.

Love of Godhead has powerful effects; it's compared to drinking hot sugar cane juice. If you have it, you'll know that *something* is happening.

Krishnadasa Kaviraja says he's writing what he has heard from authorities. Devotees will like it, but nondevotees won't understand it. "If I become involved in someone's likes and dislikes, I cannot possibly write this simple truth." (Cc. *Madhya* 2.86) He's confident and defends his opus.

"I have now become too old and disturbed by invalidity. While I write, my hand trembles. I cannot remember anything, nor can I see or hear properly. Still, I write, and this is a great wonder." (Cc. *Madhya* 2. 90)

I find all this inspiring. In my tiny way, I too want to write what I've heard from Srila Prabhupada in my own way. I don't care for the opinions of unfriendly critics. I write my truth. I may have little health problems that prevent me from writing in a more structured or researched way, but still I write, Krishna willing. I can't claim it's the solid nectar of Lord Caitanya, Lord Krishna, and Their eternal associates. I can't be so confident. My hands tremble from uncertainty. But still I write.

August 27,12 Midnight

In his purport to Cc. *Antya* 4.52, Srila Prabhupada quotes from *Ujjvala-nilamani* on the ten bodily transformations that occur in Srimati radharani when She is suffering separation from Krishna. She experiences *cinta*, anxiety, and thinks, "Now I am going to die, and when I die, Krishna will surely come back to see Me again . . . He will certainly be unhappy. Therefore I shall not die."

She also experiences wakefulness and is no longer able to see Krishna in dreams. When Uddhava reports to Krishna what he's seen in Vrndavana, Uddhava says that Radharani has grown thin and has lost Her bodily luster. "Because of separation from You, all the *gopis*, especially Radharani, appear like dried-up water holes under the scorching heat of the sun."

We don't like to hear this, but we console ourselves that the pains described are actually experienced as ecstasies by Srimati Radharani and Her *gopis*. Still, we cannot fathom them. Radha describes Her feelings as a fever that causes more distress than injesting poison. Her fever, She says, feels more piercing than a thunderbolt. "I suffer exactly like someone almost dead from cholera." We should not be glib, as if we know what we are talking about, and say, "She doesn't actually suffer. Everything felt like happiness to Her." The separation from Krishna experienced by pure devotees is an extreme state. Those who are complacent try to avoid it.

Lalita wrote a letter to Krishna on Radha's behalf: "O enemy of Kamsa, You have now become a first-class politician, and therefore You can supposedly give relief to everyone. Therefore please consider the plight of Srimati Radharani . . . Why are You now so indifferent to my dear friend, Radharani?"

In Lord Caitanya's pastimes of transcendental madness, He one day entered a garden in Sundaracala and mistook it for Vrndavana. He began to inquire after Krishna. Quoting *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, He addressed the trees: "Please let us know where Krishna has gone. They have lost their minds and are almost dead." The *gopis* decided that the trees belonged to the male class and therefore were Krishna's friends. Therefore, they inquired instead from the creepers, headed by Tulasi.

In the sixteenth chapter of *Antya-lila*, Lord Caitanya and His associates taste Jagannatha *prasada*. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu announced that the *prasadam* is mixed with the nectar of Krishna's mouth. Speaking in the mood of Srimati Radharani, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu addresses Krishna and speaks of His flute, which so shamelessly drinks the nectar from Krishna's lips. The flute angrily replies to Srimati Radharani, "Give up Your shame, fear and religion and come drink the lips of Krishna." (Cc. *Antya* 16.126) Not only the flute, but any food or drink that touches Krishna's lips also becomes like nectar. "Only a person who has acted piously for many, many births and has thus become a devotee can obtain the remnants of such food." (Cc. *Antya* 16.131)

(It just occurred to me that the water I drink is not offered first to Krishna. "When a person competent to drink that nectar does not do so, that shameless person continues his life uselessly." [Cc. *Antya* 16.136] I could offer water from my two-liter bottle to Radha-Govinda and Srila Prabhupada, and remember them each time I drink.)

I'm writing this near the end of August. It's 12:30 a.m. right now, and the collie is barking away somewhere out in the night. Madhu is away (by now sleeping on the floor of the Dublin restaurant). I'm soon going to finger my beads and pronounce Hare

Krishna mantras. That's the way of the pilgrim "counting *malas*. I try not to think I am hopeless. I could gain enlightenment. The world is empty without Govinda's presence. I know I have been wasting my life in so many ways . . .

The *gopis* consider the austerities the flute must have undergone in previous lives. Austerities. I don't seem willing to perform more austerities.

Unless I'm forced.

Don't push me to exertion, I say.

I claim a medical dispensation.

Then how can I expect . . . ?

but is Krishna to be gained by my exertion? Prabhupada said He wants to see how painstaking we are in His service. *Tapasya* is therefore important. At least let me perform the *tapasya* of helping to maintain His devotees.

* * *

2:55 a.m.

After *japa*. Didn't see what I was doing wrong. I know I indulged in mental life. Didn't strenuously bring my mind back to hearing. Not that stark old struggle for loud or audible chanting and hearing. Lazy? Whatever the reason, no love descended. Sulky? No, not really. I did the rounds. Thought of how hard the Zen practitioners tried, then suddenly attained enlightenment. No mention of God's love or their love for Him, of course. Perhaps the process is different on the *bhakti-marga*. I feel a tender pity for myself sometimes. O Lord. Please accept these words as *japa*, as prayer to You, O Lord of the ironic jest, O Lord who withholds Himself until we want only Him, O Lord of true *bhaktas*.

* * *

4:41 a.m.

Methodical man hurries when he's late. Like an airline pilot, he says he will cut corners to make up for lost time and get you there maybe only five or ten minutes late instead of an hour. "We have a strong head wind, but can push our engines and fly in over . . . "

I felt so tired after *japa* that I went back to bed for forty minutes, but that doesn't seem to have made much difference in my exhaustion. Now I'm listening to Prabhupada's Krishna conscious preaching, sometimes with the nit-picky attitude of examining what others would think of what he was saying, sometimes with a more pure loyalty. When I heard him say in his *Krishna* book dictation that Uddhava was practically the instructor guru for the *gopis* when he visited Vrndavana, I remembered an exchange I once had with another spiritual master, who abruptly dismissed Prabhupada's statement and said that Uddhava was the disciple and *only* the disciple of the *gopis*. But it's clear that Srila Prabhupada did say that Uddhava did a great service for the *gopis* (and every guru is therefore a servant of his disciples) by helping them to think of *Krishna-lila* so much that they felt just as they did when Krishna was present. Srila Prabhupada has stated it in this way in *Krishna* book, and actually, I like his point.

So this morning I ranged through a variety of emotions and thoughts, made judgments, the mind out of control. Sometimes I approved what I thought, sometimes I approved what others were doing, and sometimes neither. Sometimes I liked where my mind went, and sometimes I didn't like it at all. When it entered Krishna conscious topics properly, I knew I was rightly situated and could feel the satisfaction of a soul in relation to God, a *cela* in relation to his spiritual master. I also knew I wanted to be the sort of person who surrenders.

* * *

Slim breakfast this morning because he didn't leave me much fruit "an apple, one soft papaya, a few prunes, some juice. I won't complain but will go on out and walk in the dark. I usually chant two rounds while I'm out there. Hare Krishna. It's a good routine. Don't need to change what already fills the hours.

The *gopis* said, "If we could be with Krishna again, we would worship those moments and hours." They would worship with incense and lamps. As I perform *puja* to the Deity form, they would worship the forms of blessed time in which they had Krishna's direct association.

Hare Krishna circus comes to town. They put up a poster that said, "Free Jazz Concert." The people thought it meant they could get in without paying. When they learned otherwise, they became an angry mob. I read that. I get distracted by such stuff, even if I'm not there.

Listen, read or hear Prabhupada lecturing that sugar is sweet. If it isn't sweet, it isn't sugar. People go to God when they are in trouble or in need of money. The basics. Srila Prabhupada was teaching newcomers and neophytes in Detroit. The higher teachings are in his books.

But that doesn't mean we are eligible to practice *raganuga-bhakti* before we have given up basic *anarthas* and selfishness. Be humble and take your place in the spiritual master's mission. That's how we qualify for more. First deserve, then desire. I know lots of clever sayings like that. I also have experience. When we left Berlin, I looked back at the tall statue of winged victory. I will one day attain victory and not remain a victim of my own senses.

* * *

9:00 a.m.

My head is stuffed, so I can't read right now. Someone down by the quay has been ringing the bell for the boat for twenty minutes now. Dreamt of HarikeSa Prabhu in his trouble. His face was white. He looked ill. I asked how he could improve. He indicated a set of white clothes folded beside him. He meant he should become a *grhastha*. I wasn't there to judge, so asked if after becoming a *grhastha* he'd be able to patch things up and continue teaching his disciples. He looked at me with deeply reflective eyes, indicating that he'd thought about it deeply. Finally, he said no. He would have to give them up.

Now lots of midges outside in the sunshine. Their lives are so brief. The sun is so bright I have to close the curtains. O Radha-Govinda, You live nearby.

M. should be back in about three hours with the week's mail. He'll be leaving again in two days to participate in the all-Ireland music competition. He'll be away for Radhastami.

* * *

10:25 a.m.

He used to wrest those poems out, but not with violence and not really at any serious cost. Swallows and wagtails fly right at the house to land in the eaves. What are they doing? Not building nests at *this* time of year. Lots of activity though, flying around. They appear to be chasing one another. I can't understand their primal urges. Drink water. Crick your neck. It won't be long now.

The water flowing in calm sheets. No boats or people in sight. I'm like the lookout man in my semi-hidden perch. Actually, all the devotees know exactly where I am, but they don't disturb me. That's the beauty of this place. Even if my secretary isn't here, I'm left alone. A new lawn growing outside the window. September on the way. Krishna consciousness is the only way.

* * *

3:21 p.m.

GNP publications arrived in the mail, a new "Books Among Friends" (an art book), an issue of "Among Friends," and a private edition of EJW. I'm in the shed looking at the BAF book. Letters too "enough to make me jump the track. Usually I come out here and immediately read from one of Prabhupada's books, but today I answered a letter, because I'm falling behind in my correspondence. It goes to prove that a simple, regulated, sattvic life is conducive to Krishna consciousness. It's the best way for me to use my limited energy and to find the experience of real reading, real writing, and, hopefully, real *japa*.

* * *

8:22 p.m.

Gobhatta Bhatta go
don't be afraid
to know you're pure spirit soul.
On that basis your preaching will
flow. So don't be afraid, bro, of
any of that.
By the mark, I sez, let Herald be Harold.
No night-spouting funeral for me
no heaving, the lads want to be
merry.

* * *

I'm not always thinking of Krishna as in the books. Only sometimes. Does that mean I'm not a monk, not a *bhakta*?

I like this odd hour for me. rested at 6:00 p.m. in hopes of clearing my stuffy head, now restless.

August 28, 12:08 a.m.

Hurry along, don't be late. I didn't get up until the alarm woke me in the middle of a dream. I thought I was a new, incoming student attending a general meeting on the first day of the school term. It was St. Clare's Church (now a college) in Great Kills. I lived on Hylan Boulevard, and had walked up Nelson Avenue. At St. Clare's I saw the dome's glass architecture and saw the faculty members gathering. They said their meeting was called off because of "tensions." I had just introduced myself to the hostess, who was handing out fliers, telling her I was an incoming student looking for the meeting hall. Then the alarm clock went off. I was tired and didn't want to get up, but I did anyway, because every hour is precious.

* * *

Reading "The Lord's Dancing At ratha-yatra." While Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu was dancing He sang a verse: "That person who stole away My heart is now again My master. I'm the same lover, but I'm not happy here. I am eager to go back to that place on the bank of the reva . . ." (Cc. *Madhya* 13.121) Only Svarupa Damodara understood why Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu was singing it. He was absorbed in the *gopis'* ecstasy and was expressing His mind to Lord Jagannatha: "You are the same Krishna and I am the same Radharani . . . My mind is still attracted to Vrndavana-dhama. I wish that You will please again appear with Your lotus feet in Vrndavana."

Oh, when will I have the desire of even an ordinary ISKCON devotee to return to Vrndavana? Almost all devotees would jump at the chance to go. But I'm afraid of becoming embroiled in ISKCON controversies, of which there seem to be more than ever.

"The *gopis* wanted to keep Krishna at home always . . . such pure Krishna consciousness can arise only in Vrndavana." They didn't want to merely meditate on Krishna's feet but to place those feet on their breasts. They did not want lessons in *jnana-* or *karma-yoga* but to feel intense love for Him. Srila Prabhupada explains, "As soon as one fixes Krishna in his mind, his mind becomes identical with Vrndavana." When your mind is freed of material desire "and is engaged only in the service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, then one always lives in Vrndavana, and nowhere else." (Cc. *Madhya* 13.137, purport)

If our minds are not filled exclusively with thoughts of Krishna, feelings for Krishna, and the desire to serve Him, then they will be filled with material things. Emptiness is not possible. Or desirable! "Always retain the ambition to think of Krishna."

Radharani speaks confidentially that when Krishna sent Uddhava to Vrndavana, he taught *jnana-yoga*. Now at Kuruksetra, Krishna is speaking the same thing. But Radha

says, "There is no place in my mind for *jnana-yoga*, but still you instruct Me in it . . . It is not right for you to do so."

Even I can understand, as I read the various *jnana-yoga* speeches by Uddhava or Lord Krishna about how no one is separate from Krishna because He is all-pervading, that this would not satisfy the *gopis*.

What is *our* position? Srila Prabhupada recommends Deity worship. "A devotee constantly engaged in Deity worship . . . realizes gradually that he is in direct contact with the Supreme Personality of Godhead." The Deity is an incarnation of the Lord in brass. It's not an idol but Krishna. And Krishna is in His name. Wake up, dumcluts, and approach this truth.

It's nice how Srila Prabhupada takes each statement by Radharani and teaches something in it that we can practice in spirit, something to which we can relate. That's his kindness. We get both an appreciation for Radha's *bhava* and some practical instruction to be applied at our own lowly level.

The *gopis* become angry when Krishna instructs them in *jnana* or mystic yoga. Devotees are not satisfied with anything less than Krishna Himself. I feel that way too. The Zen masters don't suffice.

Why should the *gopis* aspire for liberation, "for they are already liberated from the ocean of material existence"? Srila Prabhupada says for us that we don't have to make a separate attempt to become liberated. We should simply engage in the Lord's service. Thus he teaches us how to become *gopi-anugatyas*, followers of the *gopis*. Our following has some specific remembrance of the *gopis*, but no imitation of their ways. We don't think only of Krishna in an amorous way, only of His *lila* in the *rasa* dance, but like the *gopis*, we serve under the guru's guidance and think only of Krishna by direct service. Get the point?

So go and do it. Be mad after Krishna. Work hard and teach Krishna consciousness in various and novel ways. Be daring and active. Go to Vrndavana, to Krishna-Balaram Mandira, *toparikrama*, to Mayapur. Go to the Krishna conscious life in body, mind, and words. Don't go to hell with the *karmis* and Mayavadis.

* * *

I dreamt I was Prabhupada's secretary along with Srutakirti, who is the permanent servant. We were coming down the stairs, and because we were tired and ill, we felt we would fall over. I touched Prabhupada, but felt ashamed of my fatigue. I thought, "Perhaps I should get rid of this headache before I go on with my duties." But I lingered, and a Godbrother arrived, assigning me a load of managerial work. I raced back to Prabhupada's side and wondered why I have lived so long with separation. At the end of the dream, I was looking forward to asking Srutakirti where the secretary puts his sleeping bag.

* * *

4:18 a.m.

Don't trust that your mind is always right. I see how you find fault with everyone and everything. You even find fault with Krishna's eyes. But when you look at yourself, you

are kind. This is duplicity. Harsh on others, but soft on yourself. That's why the gremlin leaps out to attack such persons.

I am not this body or this false ego. When I go to write, I don't have to pour out what I read in the last two letters I answered. Or do I?

Dear so-and-so, thank you for writing me on Janmastami just after completing your sixteen rounds. Thanks for the silly story. Thanks for the perfumed message and the illuminated poem, "Krishna Is." Thank you for the photo of yourself beside the empty cartons, from which you distributed forty tons of sweets to the natives in Siberia. Oh, alas lass, I am not so good.

But it was nice, trim, and svelte, to see the forms of radha and Krishna dressed and adorned with necklaces. I thank Them for the opportunity They gave me to see Them.

One man from central Europe poured out in a letter a list of his dissatisfactions with ISKCON. He said devotees don't provide human warmth or social solutions. Yes, we have expected so much, but maybe it's not fair to expect ISKCON to do everything. They seem to think ISKCON is some kind of ideal welfare state, that it's not made up of people, including him and me. Well, that's just not true. We ISKCONites are guilty of having advertised our movement as something it was not, something it perhaps could not be. Did we get such idealized views from Prabhupada? Are we supposed to have turned out differently? Did we ruin what he gave? Why? Was it because we were ignorant misfits?

I have no real solutions for people with these gripes. I encourage everyone to engage in self-reform, as I am trying to do. I think social reform will start there. In the meantime, don't use the "ISKCON failed" excuse to give up chanting and hearing. No matter what ISKCON is or isn't, we have our responsibility to prosecute serious spiritual life and to go back to Godhead. This devotee implied that he was going to take care of himself from now on, and he told me that he and his wife now have a flat hours from the nearest temple. I hope his taking care will include serious *sadhana*.

* * *

Someone sent me a card with a painting of Radha and Krishna on it. They called it "a birthday card for your anniversary of *hari-nama* initiation in 1966." Thank you.

They will make radha red chutney. We will fast until noon. "We just had a big feast and are recuperating," she said. I am relieved to hear it. At least she is not recuperating from a fire or a bomb attack. I don't like to hear such bad news, although I hear it anyway.

Once upon a night, while I wandered weak and weary through many a curious volume of yore, I heard a tipping and tapping and the barking of a collie in the yard. It was only Tilaka and nothing more. No birds at my window. That would be absurd.

Once a warrior, his wife, and his tribe stood outside Satsvarupa's window, demanding audience. The poet looked out and said, "Go away, you are only a dream." The warrior snorted derisively. He was in a challenging mood. Satsvarupa only blinked. He knew that warrior was really a dream, but he wondered whether he couldn't use him to write his personal myth. He had to decide what to do. Later I'll tell you what happened.

Once, the white-haired soprano sax player played "The Sunny Side of the Street." No one recorded it carefully, but he thought if there was a stray tape recorder out there, perhaps some of his genius would be caught. He wanted to somehow serve God, so it was important that his expression be sent out to a wider audience than no one. That story could be true.

It is hard to believe all the cruelty and madness contained in history. More reason why we should follow Krishna's teachings. But the *mudhas* don't believe. They say there is no God, and no reason to live other than sex desire. Prabhupada explained it sufficiently. We are taking these instructions we now call Krishna consciousness. We always think of Krishna, and when we die, we of course change bodies, but hopefully not for more material ones. We hope to go to Him in the spiritual world.

Once we believed (and still we do, but now it's an hour-by-hour fight with the restless and destructive mind) that we would conquer. We would not allow the mind to destroy us. We would use the weapon of knowledge Krishna gave us, and the strength Lord Balarama supplied, and would chant the holy names with purity of heart. Well, what happened?

* * *

9:58 a.m.

Cleared a headache with the sometimes magic bullet, Esgic. But I can't take Esgic every day. Come on, man, into each life some pain must fall.

Making the travel plan for Christmas and a month after that "to England and the U.S.A. That's not for another two and a half months, but I like to think it out ahead of time.

I really like the art book *Splashes*. Makes me want to do more like it. For a spiritual *poverino*, a little is a lot if it's all you've got.

Told M. to rehearse in his mind what will actually happen when he's before the judges on Sunday. If he imagines the details, it will help him relax, because the real event will feel like *déjà vu*.

In reading the text in *Splashes*, I saw how my Krishna consciousness is not thoroughly integrated with my personality or outlook. Krishna consciousness is still attached to propaganda expression. I lecture to myself and others, theoretically, what we "should" do. Sometimes something comes through and I want to *be* Krishna conscious or yearn for it. Even when my Krishna consciousness seems superficial or only the top layer of myself, however, at least it's persistent. This guy is not going to give up his preaching. That means the Swami really did reach me. I am convinced that other paths, including the eclectic or "no path" (remember Yoko Ono telling Prabhupada, "We have no philosophy, we just live"?) are inferior.

But I'm not a *bhakta*. Neither do I think living in India and becoming Indianized will help me become one. I have to face my conditioning, then use it for Krishna's pleasure.

My conditioning is also useful for preaching. Most of our devotees are not residents of Vrndavana or Mayapur, and many of those who are are not Indians or even Indianized. As I must face my inherited mindset and culture, so must they. We should do

it joyfully, knowing that our minds can be Krishna conscious if we absorb ourselves in service. If we do that, then wherever we are is Vrndavana.

* * *

12:02 p.m.

Too tired, I say, to read *Caitanya-caritamrta* right now. read my own book instead, but even that was hard. Privileged character gets his writings published. What does he offer in return? He stews prunes, picks blackberries "for himself. He chants outdoors in the meadow to guide his mind, "Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, I'm picking this for Krishna." But surely it's himself that likes the berries (although they are on the list of headache triggers). What isn't? Bread, nuts, yogurt, you name it.

Do you want to be well or go to hell?

Be well, sir, I mean, Vaikuntha (Goloka) qualified.

Then behave. Fall in. Left face, right face, forward *march*. Keep your inner thoughts to yourself, and your dreams in the category of "Lights out." We don't want to hear them. As long as you are totally surrendered outwardly, we don't give a damn for your inner thoughts, the Naval Commander says.

Happy day when I said good-bye to that! Moved on to bitter all-night tears on the Lower East Side, when I could see it was all coming to naught. This gentle cat could hardly expect to survive amid the jungle cats of New York City.

The old story of my life is still being played out.

Swami with a tan and saffron aura. Picked out things I'll use again in his service. My little ways. But I tell you, if you get notice, give up the Western mindset and head for Vrndavana.

Will that be possible, or will I still be trying to convert myself at my last breath?

* * *

2:31 p.m.

Srimati Radharani asked Krishna why He wasn't returning to Vrndavana. She appeals on behalf of His mother and father and the other inhabitants. "Please come and let all the residents of Vrndavana live. Kindly keep Your lotus feet again in Vrndavana."

(Cc. *Madhya* 13.147) Sri Krishna then expressed His mind to Srimati Radharani. He said He was always unhappy in separation from Vrndavana. He said the inhabitants of Vrndavana were His life and soul, especially the *gopis*. "And among the *gopis*, You, Srimati Radharani, are the chief. Therefore, You are the very life of My life."
(Cc. *Madhya* 13.152)

All these sentiments go over my head, over my head. I don't qualify to feel them. I feel a burning sensation in my heart, but that's probably something to do with the medication. I simply worry about my health. I seem to need more time to make progress in self-realization. Although I also know that that progress is entirely dependent on Krishna's mercy. Anyway, lacking the tender feelings of a true follower of Radha and Krishna, I tend to think these statements about them are exaggerated. If Krishna felt that way, why didn't He return?

Lord Krishna tells Srimati Radharani that He visits Vrndavana every day, by the grace of Lord Narayana. He said He goes there unseen. "I hope that very soon I will be visible to everyone." (Cc. *Madhya* 13.155) So even when Krishna was in Dvaraka, He was simultaneously in Vrndavana in His *aprakata* presence. Srila Prabhupada applies this for us and says, "Devotees who are always engaged in Krishna consciousness and are fully absorbed in thoughts of Krishna, certainly return home, back to Godhead . . . He then meets Krishna directly." (Cc. *Madhya* 13.155, purport)

"Just as Krishna does not take a step away from Vrndavana, Krishna's devotee also does not like to leave Vrndavana. However, when he has to tend to Krishna's business, he leaves Vrndavana. After finishing his mission, a pure devotee returns home, back to Vrndavana, back to Godhead." (Cc. *Madhya* 13.156, purport) That's Srila Prabhupada.

The sweet nectar gushes from these verses and their explanations spoken by Svarupa Damodara and Lord Caitanya. They reveal the extremes of separation from Krishna in conjugal love, as Srimati Radharani expressed them. There is no need for me to discuss this in my Radhastami lecture. Srimati Radharani resolved not to think of Krishna, since He caused Her so much pain, but She always saw Him within Herself, and Her attraction for Him only increased. All these talks were relished day and night for at least twelve years by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu in Jagannatha Puri. The author of *Caitanya-caritamṛta* states, "What can a poor creature like me describe of those transformations? I can give only a hint of them, as if showing the moon through the branches of a tree." (Cc. *Antya* 17.65)

"O people of the world, worship the lotus feet of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu in all respects. Only in this way will you achieve the nectarine treasure of ecstatic love for Krishna." (Cc. *Antya* 17.69)

* * *

3:21 p.m.

Uncontrolled joy and anger and watch out for Mr. Lust in their statements. But a Godly person sees it all going to Krishna, who may or may not be known in His *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, even by Vyasa.

I'm just a tiny devotee who had better get his act together with no material stimulation but a heart inclined toward God. Old man, why are you dodging the truth of yourself? If you can't say more, then at least tell me how you are up late in the afternoon with your second right-eye headache of the day coming on. What, you don't want a night of pain?

He cries melancholic sweet
his music hopes to
move people of these times the
River of feeling turned to Krishna.

* * *

6:41 p.m.

Boat oars, our slow boat crosses the path of a powerboat and I'm about to close the curtains and my eyes. Pray to dream of Krishna consciousness. Let me be Srila Prabhupada's servant again, or something like that.

Just absolved M. from having to fast on Radhastami. "When you sing your lovely songs, do it for Radharani." Hare Krishna.

August 29,12:07 a.m.

"Suddenly there awoke within Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu the scene of Lord Krishna's departure to Mathura, and He began exhibiting the symptom of ecstatic madness known as *udghurna*. (Cc.*Antya* 19.32) We will hear about it from Radha's point of view. In *Lalita-madhava*, in the scene where Radha and Krishna see Their pastimes on a wall in a cave, we hear from Krishna's viewpoint that He too suffered separation when He left for Mathura.

"The family of Maharaja Nanda is just like an ocean of milk, wherein Lord Krishna has arisen like the full moon to illuminate the entire universe. The eyes of the residents of Vraja are like *cakora* birds that continuously drink the nectar of His bodily luster and thus live very peacefully." (Cc. *Antya* 19.36)

Lord Caitanya, in the mood of Radha, describes the peacock feathers in Krishna's helmet as resembling a rainbow over a cloud.

So low am I that I don't even feel low. Why can't I see that sight? We are not really personalists. How to capitalize on the fortune the spiritual master has given us so that we can make the ultimate sacrifice? We have been given so much.

I like the view from this window at dawn. It's still dark now, but I will watch for the sunrise.

We don't want to rock in the waves of Krishna's ocean of *prema*. Why not? Why else would we be holding back? We are so used to rocking in the material waves that we don't think we can tolerate spiritual tumult. Imagine what it feels like to be an actual lover of the Lord. To be satisfied with nothing but Krishna's direct association. When Krishna is not before them, in their madness they see Him everywhere.

"Krishna is the reservoir of art and culture, and He is the panacea that saves My life. O My dear friend, since I live without Him, who is the best among My friends, I condemn the duration of My life. I think that Providence has cheated Me in many ways." (Cc. *Antya* 19.43)

My expensive pen acts up and causes me misfortune after misfortune. I reach over to change it for another pen, but when I reach for the pen box I knock over the cup full of water. Waste, annoyance "condemn the pen. Yes, I curse the pen while the *gopis* curse Providence. Providence has arranged to bring them together with Krishna, but before their desires are fulfilled, Providence has separated Krishna from the *gopis*. "Their activities are like the foolish pranks of children."

The *gopis* blame providence, Akrura, themselves, and finally this Krishna who had become so cruel. We read it as if it were something that happened long, long ago. And it's so sacred that it becomes even more inaccessible. "Keep away," the signs say, so we lose heart for that reason too, although fools, *prakrta-sahajiyas*, talk about it as if they know . . . because someone told them. After all, they are *gopi-manjaris*, right?

"Because of separation from His many friends in Vrndavana, who are like His own life, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu spoke like a madman . . . May that Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu rise in my heart and make me mad with love." (Cc. *Antya* 19.76) If one

argues and doubts that Lord Caitanya could be transcendently mad, the author of *Caitanya-caritamrta* advises one to be faithful. "The evidence of the truth of these talks is found in *Srimad-Bhagavatam*. There in the section known as the *Bhramara-gita* ("The Song to the Bumblebee"), Srimati radharani speaks insanely in ecstatic love for Krishna." We may review those verses again as they are translated in Prabhupada's purport to Cc. *Antya* 19.107.

* * *

4:26 a.m.

Dear friends, today is the day before Radhastami. I want to thank you. It is a thankless task to manage a temple. "We were donated land," he said, "and I asked devotees to show up to clear it. Very few came. However, on the same day, a rich man invited devotees for a feast at his home. Almost the whole congregation showed up. I'm frustrated. I told my spiritual guide about this, and he said I should see the good in others." Hare Krishna. Krishna does do that "I mean, see the good in us. All right, but Krishna also judges, doesn't He? He notices who are the slackers and hypocrites and who sincere?"

The typewriter blues the
management blues
the wishing we were was better
but the what-can-we-do
blues.

He says he likes to be stark in cutting out all material activity, even the stuff that is spiritualized by his using it in Krishna's service. Cut out everything that has an origin other than Gaudiya culture.

I'm not able to do that. I'm not even sure I want to. I keep thinking I can get some good ideas from others in this world to use in Krishna's service.

A devotee I know reads the "Events" weekly newspaper in Dublin. But it's so much garbage. He's trying to see where the devotees might go to preach. I thought, "Let me cut it all out and live in a six-by-nine-foot prayer cell and simply chant, chant, chant and read.

To have to live in that condition must be difficult. They gave him a solitary cell.

Stop talking about other people. Talk about yourself. Solder it to what went before. Make it all part of the same epic, I mean
topic
but it already is.

This is a festival for giants. They begged money to invite *sannyasis* and gurus, but little money was given. I bet people thought, "Those gurus have their own money. Why should we give ours?"

Madhu is going to leave at six for two days of competition.

While I was in the bathroom, I heard Srila Prabhupada answer a question by an Indian man in Detroit. The man seemed overwhelmed by Christianity. I thought maybe his boss and neighbors were Christians, and that he had come to feel inferior, a foreigner with his

Hinduism. He couldn't convince anyone to accept Krishna as God. He was having trouble maintaining his faith.

Srila Prabhupada said that Christianity is, after all, "a minority." He said we should learn that Krishna is the Father, as He says in *Bhagavad-gita*. Jesus says he's the son. There is no quarrel between father and son. If the man could learn this, he could go on with his duty to preach. Preaching is the duty of all Indians.

Then I heard a morning walk in Detroit. Adi KeSava said, "They accuse us of not being practical, not training people in a trade." Prabhupada said someone is a doctor and we are teachers of Krishna consciousness. There is a division of labor. Why be envious of us for teaching Krishna consciousness? Do they expect everyone to be doctors?

Another good reply, and so reasonable. It showed me how unreasonable they are in their criticisms.

Radharani told the *devi* who was actually Krishna in disguise that She loved Krishna. I won't explain it here. I'm feeling too many flash signs in my right eye. Please, I want to go out for a vigorous walk, swinging my arms and chanting *gayatri* in the dark. I'll take my flashlight for the first part of the walk. O dear Lord Krishna, I'm hearing You in the way which is not always simple. We are really mixed in with these moods and all the stuff we have to hear about in the world. We can't evoke pure love. I can't seem to perform the required *tapasya* or have the required *Sraddha* to reach You. These are bad times for faith, with leaders falling down and the whole institution cracking apart. Now it's more important than ever that we become human enough to be kind to one another.

Manu will return late tonight after his days of selling paintings. Tomorrow will be Sunday and Radhastami. I hope to get through it all. Hare Krishna. Krishna science startles London, alters mood when listening to *bhajan*s.

The drum rolls and I roll
over in bed
earplugs in, dreaming
something weird "I
can't remember what.

Let me push aside the worst and go to Krishna's scriptures.

Let me now be noisy or lusty or even a word
monger. It's better to seek avenues
and to avoid doubt.

Krishna, Krishna, Your music in *kirtana*
the holy name
jargon and cliches, the rolling out
of thunder fingers pounding
the typewriter
to remind me, "Just have faith
in guru."

* * *

9:30 a.m.

Drinking in the extra quiet with M. away. Day before the festivities. I sat down doing nothing for a while, then tried to think. Sun shining so brightly I have half drawn the curtains. What book will I read after Radhastami? How about sections from *Srimad-Bhagavatam*? No special order "start with Dhruva's prayers. That sounds good.

And writing? More of this. No radical break is really possible for me.

These holiday weeks started out with inner churning. I actually quit writing EJW for a few days. Planned to do a lot of traveling and lecturing, so I left my Deities behind in Wicklow. Those are all radical acts. It all started because the twenty-page quota was exhausting me.

But slowly, I have put the pieces back together, brought the Deities here, and continued to write. I decided not to travel because of my the headaches, but I've given up the twenty-page quota. I've been averaging thirteen, but I feel no pressure even to keep that up. I'm also twitching my feelers to see if a new writing form wants to appear. So far none has. Therefore, in another two and a half days, I'll finish this volume and return to Wicklow to start another. If Krishna desires.

* * *

10:15 a.m.

Mess desk observer "you know those old times. The guys were sad. I don't have to tell you the whole story. People were dancing and drinking. That was the old blues. I don't think a Vaisnava wants to go out with a memory like that ringing in his head. No way to relate it right now to my Krishna conscious head and heart.

* * *

3:17 p.m.

Saturday afternoon. More medicine than usual this week "took Esgic twice, Imigram twice, and feverfew three times. In addition, I took the preventative medicine I have been prescribed (sodium valproate) twice a day. As a result, I aborted all sharp, sustained headaches. So far. But so many meds, and that tightening in my chest . . . Not good.

I woke at 2:00 p.m. to the sound of the outer door closing. I went out and saw a letter there from Caitanya-candrodaya. He's worried because his wife is a disciple of HarikeSa Prabhu, and she's now cooking for him and doing his laundry. She spoke to Caitanya, but he thinks she didn't give him all the details, didn't confide in him. Supposedly HarikeSa Prabhu is saying that Srila Prabhupada was wrong to teach "no illicit sex" in marriage. He says he should have taught us to avoid sex outside of marriage. Now I am worrying about it too.

My little world and my contact with events beyond my orbit. Caitanya-candrodaya commented on my remark about how an artist should remain detached from praise and criticism. He said the hunger for praise is a disease. He said when he wasn't praised in art school, he lost his enthusiasm to paint. My drawings are linked to my writing, he said, implying that they don't have to stand on their own.

* * *

3:47 p.m.

Here's a penny on Madhu's desk, along with his usual scattered collection of things. When we die, will we become saints during our last hour? I can't speak for everyone on that one. I'll speak for myself. Like Ike, "I have always loved my country and wife," etc. I have always tried . . . I have . . . sometimes . . . I have occasionally and never, in the early portion of my life . . .

I was never there, Your Honor, I was never like they said, a dead man or a sinner. I never could fully believe or taste the nectar except that fifteen-thirty-minute nectar I tasted during that tasty feast. But I knew it couldn't last. The buckets were almost empty.

I wrote vainly, thought erstwhile that any madness I committed would count for good. So I'm guilty of "Sugar." I didn't dedicate every last ounce of blood for the general cause.

Man we are sorry your
cartoon ration is used up
you better stay out here with
small fry. They'll call you
if they need you. Then you can send
your coded message
to the old south land.

You better remember that I sent you to Boston and back in one day, and only by his grace have you today a message for da people of South and East Coast Demerera, the Hindu bounce the highland hop.
How that copper penny shines!
This could be
my last Radhastami.

August 30, radhastami, 12:40 a.m.

Someone wrote, "Have a nice Radhastami. I know it is a special time for you." Is it? Yes, inside, sort of. Don't milk it to death.

I couldn't sleep last night. Got up at 8:30 and read a newly arrived book on headaches. It was quite conservative about medication for migraine. Said take only one kind of abortive medicine, and take it no more than twice a week. Said if you are taking more, or if you are taking preventative medicine, cut down on the abortive medicine even if it hurts.

Of course, they can say that in their books, but the sufferers have to do whatever they can. Still, the book had an effect on me.

I do think I've escalated my intake of meds to an alarming degree, so I may agree to allow some of that right-eye pain to run its course. They made this weird analogy in the book, saying that it is good to be in touch with your body, even when it's in pain, just as it's exhilarating to be in touch with the road when you drive a sports car. A sedan (like meds) doesn't allow you that in-touch feeling with the road.

But to get through my little Radhastami lecture, I may have to take an Esgic. We'll see if "it" comes. And tomorrow I have to give an informal lecture to the two married couples.

Dear Srimati Radharani, dear Srila Prabhupada, please accept this battered warrior. I'm still fighting the war of mortality, but of course I will lose. I don't care. I want only a Krishna conscious triumph, and that is a totally different thing.

* * *

6:50 a.m.

First the sky was bright pink all over above Govindadvipa. Now the sun has begun to rise and the sky is turning red. But those colors are short-lived. Already the sun is turning yellow and the sky blue. But that beautiful dawn made me feel the specialness of Radha's day.

* * *

8:04 a.m.

Kalavati and Bhaktin Nicole have arrived from France. Kalavati has been thinking about the Virgin Mary. She once asked, after a *Srimad-Bhagavatam* class at New Mayapur, whether the Virgin Mary was an expansion of Srimati radharani. The speaker didn't know. After the class a devotee approached Kalavati saying that she was, it says so in the *Caitanya-caritamrta*. This devotee, Maha-bhagavata dasa, had been cured of a bad case of hepatitis by wearing a medal of the Virgin Mary for only one day. Kalavati would like me to carry such a medal on my person. She says it pains my disciples to see me in such weak health, unable to travel to them, something that could revive our relationship.

She told me that her father carries such a medal and prays to the Virgin Mary that Kalavati be delivered from the Hare Krishna cult! She asked him for a medal so she could give it to me. He brought one, but she thought it was too big. Then he gave her his personal one. It says on it (translated from the French), "O Mary, who was conceived without sin, pray for us who are taking shelter in you and for those who don't, especially for the enemies of the church and all persons that we recommend to you."

On the other side it says, "All persons who wear this medal will receive great mercy. This mercy will be more abundant for those who wear it with confidence." (As spoken by the Immaculate Mary to St. Catherine Laboure in 1830, ruedubac, Paris.)

Yes, we can be Krishna conscious even when in pain. Don't be so afraid of the body's ills. Well-wishers want us free from pain. But perhaps the Lord has His own purpose in giving it. Perhaps my pain saves me from falldown or other painful forms of diminishment. Anyway, whether the pain is friend or foe, it doesn't ever seem to leave me alone.

O Lord, please lift me up into the company of Your *parisads* in the spiritual world, where we don't have to be afraid of draft boards or headaches or politics. We can't even imagine how nice it will be to serve You there without selfishness.

* * *

10:35 a.m.

I did it "*Krishna* did it "allowed me to lecture on Srimati Radharani. Some esoteric things, but I mostly covered the basics. Did I expect everyone to run up to me afterwards and fall at my feet to congratulate me on a great lecture? Did anyone find a way to break through into deeper Krishna consciousness from what I said? Anyway, I served the devotees as best I could. Now the rest of the day is mine.

But you see, I feel that twinge. Should I take the med or not? No more than one per day, they say. He asked, "Is this your anniversary?"

"Yes, it has been thirty-three years."

Then I changed the subject. One should not allow oneself to be the center of attention. At least I have my "two hots and a cot." That's all I want, and to be left alone. And to preach through publishing.

Srimati Radharani "it sure was a pleasure to speak of Her. Told a few jokes afterwards. Love of Godhead is experienced best in conjugal love. Krishna is the summit. Prabhupada gave it all to us when he said, "Radha is the best devotee of Krishna because She loves Him the most."

Hare Krishna. Each time we say the Hare Krishna mantra, we say Radha's name eight times. Radhanatha's father and mother were there. The dog wasn't. He was outside, lying on his side in the sun. O Krishna, please be merciful to us.

All glories to the Lord of the universe. Now let us massage and bathe Srila Prabhupada, Srimati Radharani's representative. I'm sorry for what I've done wrong and all the ways in which I've fallen short, but glad at least to be here on this auspicious day, still alive and kicking, still wanting to help others by offering words of encouragement.

May Krishna protect this Hare Krishna movement. Battered ISKCON, battering ISKCON, our faulty movement.

May the Lord do with us as He likes and give us an inkling of service in separation. Phew! Hare Krishna. The Vraja mood is barefoot love of God.

* * *

2:18 p.m.

I'm still on vacation, but only one full day to go. Not feeling impelled to write. Will I be back on duty when I get back to Wicklow? read the on-line migraine journal and appreciated the ventings of fellow sufferers. It helped me overcome that conservative book that says we should take only two pills a week.

Here's an entry from Carolyn of Washington, D.C.: "My situation may be different from other migraine sufferers, but my life is basically the same! We know all of the reasons for my dilemma, but we are still working on the treatment!! I've had daily head pain in one form or another since 1987, so I truly feel for everyone that posts here . . . it takes time to figure out what works best for any one individual, and I think people sharing their experiences is invaluable. You cannot put a price on empathy; I have found it to be the ONE best way to get some relief . . . I don't pay attention to their misunderstanding any more, and sometimes that is not easy to do . . . What I'm trying to say here is, we do what we have to in order to survive. One thing I have found that helps is daily exercise . . . Don't blame the medical profession. They just don't GET IT."

Is this what I'm supposed to be doing on Radhastami? radha's feet were showing on the big altar. Should I be hearing *rasika bhajanas*? Jagan-mata, I spoke a little bit in the morning. Now I'm taking it easy. Since I have taken meds for three days in a row, I thought it would be nice to have a clear day. I'm making that my priority today, even if it means not doing much.

Hear the bell ringing down at the quay? Think of M. at his competition. I bet he's thinking of us here and how he's missing Radhastami. Hare Krishna. This is the thirty-third anniversary of my initiation. May I have many more, then die in my Guru Maharaja's good graces.

* * *

4 p.m.

Took Esgic an hour ago. That's the story. So I don't do much at all when I have pain, and not because I'm on vacation. Who can understand what this is like? I simply have to do what I have to do.

But I'd like to squeeze in some writing. Some extra rounds would also be nice. Even nicer would be a chance to sleep and then be up at midnight. Not likely if this continues into the night.

I told them we could meditate for a lifetime on what it means to say that Radharani is the best devotee of Krishna because She loves Him the most. I say that every year, but that doesn't make it less true.

* * *

4:17 p.m.

Okay, old man, give a hearing to something nice about Radha and Krishna. You won't find Them in the art of the West.

O Master, your servant would like to be strong, but he is pinned down and can't move much to the left or the right. It's easy to see he's afraid of pain. He ought to face it more instead of cringing. That's quite easy to say, as easy to say he should reach Krishna in His holy names, driven by his own suffering.

O Master, let me sit quietly and remember that you are with me, way inside me, and that I cannot fail to receive your help. I wait for you to allow me to improve, and for *me* to allow me. I try to serve by such waiting. Hare Krishna.

* * *

5:15 p.m.

Getting near nightcap time. I really liked lecturing to so many people this morning "seeing Saunaka Rsi sitting on a chair, his wife present, and quite a few guests (although it was probably hard for them to hear such a confidential topic). I felt bouncy in the lecture hall, directing our attention to Radha's blessing hand and to the *tulasi* garland She held for Krishna. I spoke of love of God and how even that comes from Krishna.

August 31, 12:08 a.m.

This is my chance to be with Srila Prabhupada and his book. I'm turning to the recently manufactured *Quest For Enlightenment*, a collection of articles from *Back To Godhead* magazine. It may lack the vintage feel of his first written-in-India pieces or his opus purports, but I'm going to give it a try.

He spoke informally with disciples in April 1977 in Mumbai, India, and they took a piece of his conversation and titled it, "Understanding The Soul." Like Socrates, what he spoke was worth preserving. But we who know his life story know how poignant "April 1977, Bombay" sounds. It means he was deathly ill. He was soon to go to Hrishikesh to try to improve his health, but he would have a relapse there and ask to be taken to Vrndavana. "If the worst is going to happen, let it be in Vrndavana." It was in April 1977 that he called for the GBC members and that I went to him from Los Angeles.

A disciple says it's hard for people "to see" that they are spiritual beings and that the soul transmigrates from one body to another. He poses the question as a frustrated preacher. But behind our questions we often mask our personal frustrations with the things *we* can't understand. *We* can't understand the thing we are preaching either.

Srila Prabhupada (in altered, edited form) gives examples of other subtle things that we know exist, although we can't see them. Examples and analogies. Am I going to revolt? Feel this being shoved down my throat? Can I make peace with those years gone by?

We can know of the mind's existence by seeing its activities. Similarly, we can see the soul acting. Prabhupada then clapped his hands (like a Zen master?) and said, "*That . . . Sabda*, sound "sound is the proof of the existence of the ethereal element."

I always thought that example was far out, how he clapped his hands, but it puzzled me. Huh? Clapping your hands proves that air or sky exists? And listen to this trick: sound proves the presence of ether and the presence of the soul. "You need to hear from spiritually realized persons and authorized sources." Maybe that *is* important after all. Anyway, I'm willing to accept anything Prabhupada says simply because he said it, even if I don't completely understand it.

Boy, yesterday I didn't get any good questions after my lecture on Radha-Krishna. The first question was, "Are the souls expansions from Krishna, from Radha, *and* from Lord Narayana?" I laughed that one off. "From Krishna. Let's stop there. *Janmady asya yatah*. That's all you know and all you need to know."

Next question: "What is the relationship between Lord Nityananda and radharani?" The questions didn't get much better after that. They seem to assume that they already know everything important about Radha-Krishna and about surrender. They are just curious about a few minor intellectual points. Why not ask, "Could you speak more on how we can approach Radha through the spiritual master?" "Can you say something about how we may qualify to hear about Radha-Krishna?"

Bhakti-rasa may have asked a good question, but I can't remember what it was right now.

How about this one I'll make up now: "You say that the first thing Srila Prabhupada told you about Radharani is that She's the best devotee because She loves Krishna the most. *How* does She love Him better than all other devotees? Can we learn from Her

unique example how to increase our own love?" I didn't get questions like that, so I quit. Anyway, how much longer could I have gone?

In the 1977 talk a disciple asked, "So with these limited material senses we can perceive the soul only indirectly?" Out of so many things he said and wrote, it takes a perceptive editor to focus on something and present it as they did here, a little talk on "Understanding The Soul." We tend to get lost in what he said because he said so much.

He said we would have to learn by *Sruti*. "Modern rascals . . . are educated so grossly." Example: You learn who your father is by hearing reassurances from your mother, "Here is your father." He gives more examples and ends each one with, "And therefore you have to learn to see the soul by hearing from the authority, Lord Krishna." The examples tune in or train the mind towards the axiomatic statement "accept *Sruti*, *bas*."

Then Srila Prabhupada quoted Krishna directly: *apareyam itas tv anyam prakrtim viddhi me param*. "Beyond this material nature, there is another *prakrti*, another nature. It's nature is "*na jayate mriyate va*" "there is no birth or death." Srila Prabhupada quotes the atheist Carvaka Muni, who said that when the dead body is cremated, it proves there is no life. "Everything, including the soul, is finished."

But Krishna does not talk like this. He says the soul has gone to another body . . . Who can understand this fact? Only the sober, Krishna says. We can't convince a restless child about philosophy, but a sober, cool-headed, mature person can understand. Modern men or modern rascals over-identify with the body. The only hope for them is the Krishna consciousness movement.

* * *

4:25 a.m.

As long as you are feeling well, do you think you could write something? Is that not your duty? Caranaravinda wrote that she saw "big diggers," tractors, just over the wall by our house in Wicklow. I hope they'll be gone by the time I get back. But I won't wait to find out. I've already staked my claim. If for the time being I have to shut the window and put in my earplugs, then that's what I'll do. No place is perfect. Here in Geaglum, some devotees have been ringing the brass bell for fifteen minutes now. They want to attend *mangala-arati*, but no one is sending the boat over from Inis rath. Maybe they can't hear the bell from the temple room. Another one of those imponderable inefficiencies. Why keep up the farce? Why not improve the system?

We also have a small bell outside our gate in Wicklow, and we too can't always hear it from inside the house.

Now it has begun to rain. The devotees are still ringing the bell, standing in the downpour. I imagine they're beginning to get angry. Devotees on the island might be thinking, "If they want to go to *mangala-arati* so badly, why don't they live on Govindadvipa?" But that's not possible for the householders. There isn't enough facility for the children. They simply need a better boat system. But let me mind my business. I'm leaving tomorrow morning, and I'm not the temple manager.

Scheduled to meet at 8:00 a.m. with the couples who were married yesterday. I have an excerpt from a Prabhupada lecture where he says that householders should

become *paramahamsas*. He describes *paramahamsa* as a stage above *parivrajakacarya*. Yeah, he said that about the *grhastha-aSrama*. If you don't believe me, just look at his Vyasa-puja lecture from London 1973. I'll start with that, then say that some might consider that *radhastami*, the celebration of the internal energy, is incompatible with holding a wedding, which involves the material energy. Perhaps we'll talk about that.

Now I remember Bhakti-rasa's question from yesterday. I said that Radha expands as Durga in the material world. Devotees pray to Durga as Mother to get their material desires, but she also punishes them. He asked something about how to come under the internal energy rather than under Durga. I had already answered that question in the lecture when I said that we approach *radharani* through Her representative, the spiritual master.

Lying in bed last night waiting for sleep, I devised some opening lines for a letter I may send to the *Sannyasa* Minister at the end of the year when I have to make my yearly report. I would start out saying that I take this report as an opportunity to educate my Godbrothers on the GBC and the *sannyasis* about my headache condition and about chronic ill health in general. I identify with migraine sufferers all over the world. I know I'm not this body, but pain is pain. I'm in touch with other migraineurs, and sometimes I preach to them through the mail. There is a network of us (don't say it's on the Internet). Only those who suffer from chronic pain know what it's like to suffer from chronic pain. We face physical pain almost daily. It is impossible to say that this condition does not influence how I live my life.

Waiting for M. to return. We don't really think he will have placed in the all-Ireland competition. I just hope he was satisfied that he performed well and that he was accepted by the musicians and music-lovers. I also hope that he had a good day and developed new music contacts. The fact that he walked among them for two days with a freshly shaved head and a *brahmacari dhoti* is excellent preaching. They may have resented his presence at first, but I'm sure his songs will melt their hearts.

Pada-yatra, written in 1996, has been edited, and I'm reading it now before it goes into production. I like how it came out.

I will need to start packing today. That will take some energy. Hope I have it to spare. We travel in the morning.

Still feeling an inconvenient pressure in my heart region, but I am ignoring it. Still, it's yet another signal of the end. I won't be going on in this body perpetually.

Thinking of Dhira Krishna dasa, who is proficient in the martial arts, praying every day in his cell. He's in prison. He tells me he walks back and forth when he's chanting. How *dhira* he is to remain Krishna-centered in such a place. Let me send him some words of hope. At least he has a solitary cell. I'd want the same. How hard it would be to live in a six-by-nine-foot space with another person you don't even know. But that's prison life. You didn't go there to have a good time but to continually suffer.

* * *

10:35 a.m.

Madhu (Maurice Patrick Foley) won First Prize in the all-Ireland Sean-nos singing competition. He came back elated and carrying his championship plaque, which has the

names in silver of all the previous winners. The judges were unanimous. The crowd of four hundred people cheered and clapped with real enthusiasm when his name was announced. We are all proud of our man, who entered the heart of Irish culture and won this prize for Krishna. In the morning before he left, I asked him to sing for Srimati Radharani, since the competition was on Her appearance day. He said he prayed to Krishna.

* * *

3:00 p.m.

This morning I met with married couples, then with Caitanya-candrodaya, and spent time with Madhu while we packed our belongings into boxes. I took two feverfews at 2:30, then lay on my back to wait for the pain to subside. Now no time to write. EJW requires a quiet life in which the writing can flow. It's not like scribbling down hurried words coming out of nothing. The whole day is actually meant for EJW. If someone were to ask me, "What are you doing these days?" I'd have to say I am writing the one big book of my life.

"Is that full-time engagement?"

"Yes."

But not today.

* * *

4:55 p.m.

Passing my last afternoon here in a less than concentrated way. I'm packed and ready to go, except for things I can't pack until the early-morning Deity worship is over. It's raining. No one is around right now. I'm alive and still want to be a devotee.

* * *

Night Notes

The traveling *sankirtana* men are getting married one after another. The youngest writes me that he's the only unmarried man left, "An irresponsible seventeen-year-old *brahmacari*." But he is responsible.

Make a summary, a good-bye, because this is my last chance in this volume. The holidays are over. Did I have a good time? Did you go swimming? I . . . eased off my writing quota. Tomorrow I return to the Wicklow hermitage, but I don't know whether that means I'll write more. It's not necessary that I do. What is necessary is that I try my best. Tomorrow I'll look forward to a new day, a new September first, and a new volume of EJW "same old, same new Krishna consciousness.