

The One-Hour Writing Session

Volume 5

Satsvarūpa dāsa Gosvāmī

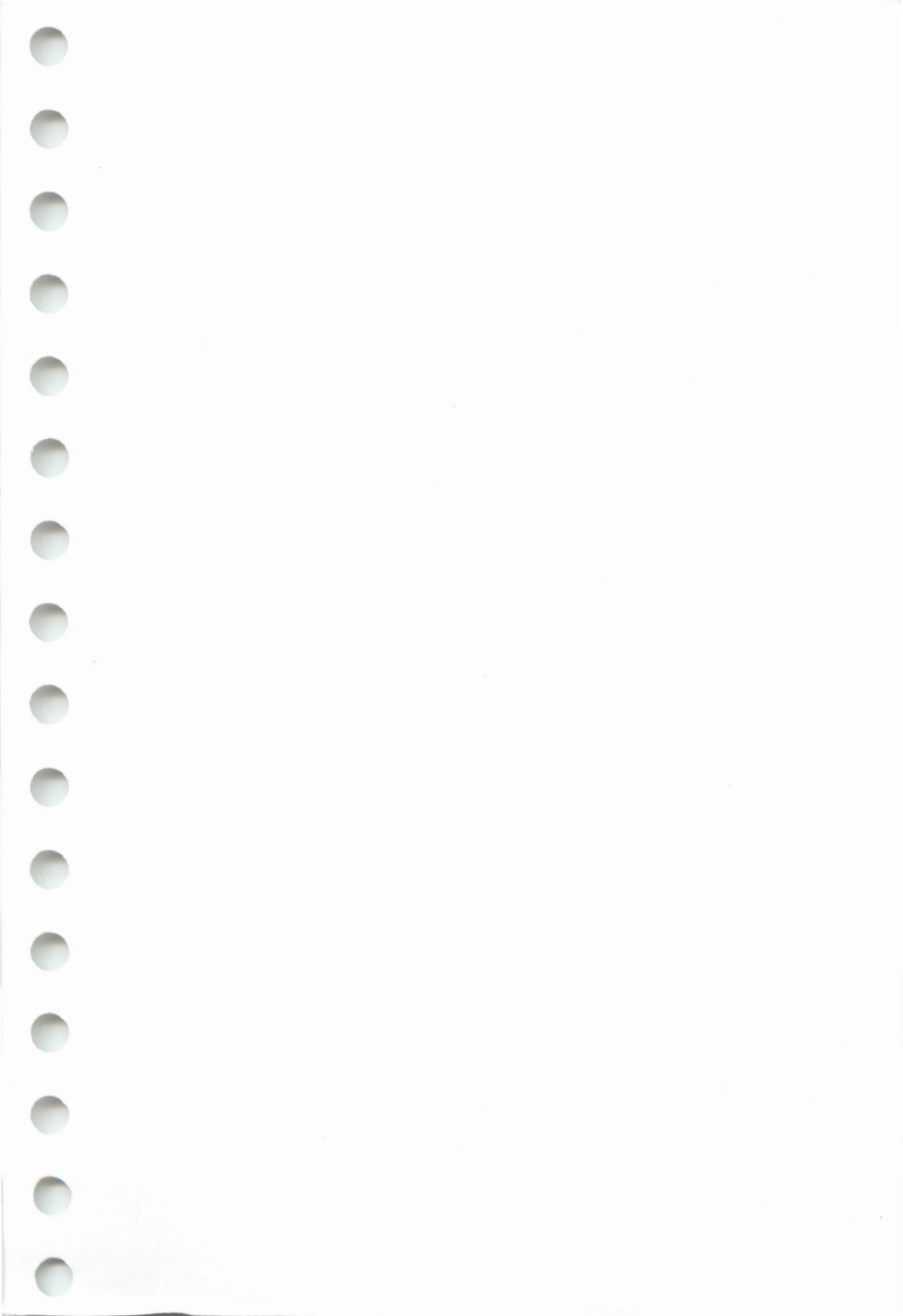
The One-Hour Writing Session

Volume 5

**Satsvarūpa dāsa Gosvāmī
GN Press, Inc.**

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Free-writing Advice

(I wrote this advice years ago when I was just starting free-writing, maybe even before Shack Notes. At that time, I wasn't able to do it for more than a few minutes. Now I have built up to the one-hour session. But the advice still reads refreshingly to me.)

Just keep doing it, huh? Use your pen, slide into it, keep going. Something will come, something will come, something will come. If it's not printable, that's all right. And as that thought occurs to you—that this may not be printable, then go onto the next thought, which is, "So what?" The next thought after that is, "Then why are you writing?" And the next thought is, "All right, then write something that will actually help you." What is that? Express something, whatever it may be. It may just be something that someone said to you or something you want to do. Use the writing to help yourself. As Prabhupāda said, for purification. Then the other things will come.

It's a kind of discipline. When we say discipline to *keep writing*, it doesn't mean gibberish. It means that you have to pass through some gibberish, but you can always focus your attention on what will help you. If what you say seems too self-centered, then try to praise Kṛṣṇa, pray to Kṛṣṇa, say something that you think will stand and

July 17

12:05 A.M.

The world whirls, the tree is broken; you now have responsibility to write and see how it comes out. Said automatic was desirable, write with hand and arm. It's writing, writing. But what about the writer?

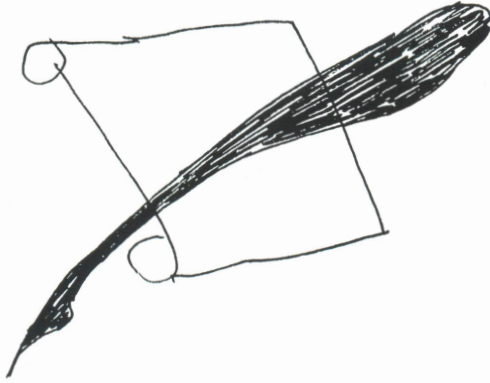
He is in his study. Lord Kṛṣṇa is the cause of all causes. Aperture, amateur, these words want to get said. Jayādvaita Swami, I am not doing tricks. William Zinnser, this is not for the public.

How to express it?



The familiar drunken daisy,
rubber daisy,
half shaven bun,
plant comes from my
hand.

But that won't help you to attain Kṛṣṇa consciousness.



The pen is solid black, superimposed a scroll, JO, journalist Navy days, do you want to re-enter, re-enlist for six years more and keep a *Bhagavad-gītā* in your locker and pray? They ask, "Hey, what's this?" No marijuana. But you have to support killing anyway. "No," I'll say. "I can't do it." Do your worst. "O Muslim governor," said Sanātana, "I can no longer serve."

My point is, Kṛṣṇa conscious *kathā* has to be in my writing. Aside from that, yes, it's enjoyable, and yes, it's practice, it achieves its own purpose.

(Opera stars need to train twenty years, and later in life they start to achieve.)

But yesterday in session, I said, "Let's first find ways to cut through old levels and attain new ones."

Huzzahs.

Hallalujahs

mean, shouldn't he be more interested in volting out of *ahaṅkara* false controller and worshipping his Kṛṣṇa Deity?

This knowledge is the king of education, the most secret of all secrets.

Yes, but this is an exercise beyond all forms, to look at later.

Dear Lord,

cher señoir, cher Rādhā-Govinda-Mādhava, Cher Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma, Cher Gaura-Nitāi, please, said Peter Vas, keep us engaged in developing Nouvelle Māyāpur for Your pleasure complete, please keep on *saṅkīrtana* with Lord Kṛṣṇa in the center and amused with wisdom that it's all in one family and nonviolent Vaiṣṇava-aspirants.

I do dictate it. I play at ball, a big pill was being rolled down a hill. Because it does not cavil.

Lord Kṛṣṇa speaks to us in *Gītā*, the purest knowledge.

Man and study, eternal form of writer, can't get over certain walls. I will write with dynamite and frowns. Support the cause. All day in van in grass, washed now, all tin white, and we will go on the road completely dependent on His mercy,

Saint Christopher meadow on
dashboard down Nelson Avenue,
Uncle Jim reckless,
half-blind driver of
'30 Mercury green coupe,

yourself, depend on Him and civilizations ruled by money, do you have enough?

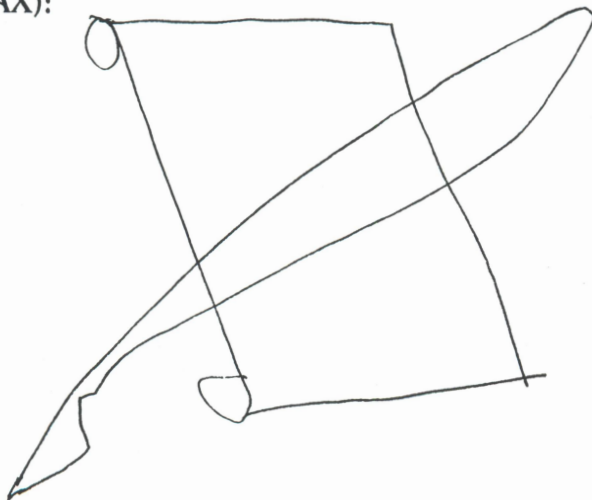
Perpetual guns and frowns and being reborn.

You may tell us how it felt. It felt smooth to be running along.

"Joyfully performed."

But is it Kṛṣṇa conscious? I say, "Yes." I say, "Please accept this offering we make at the lotus feet of the Deity, Sri Kṛṣṇa."

(We can dictate all this later. An express timed piece of uncertain duration on morning of a full day of travel. With Lord Kṛṣṇa in veins and air you breathe and the jayo designation sent by COM Navy FAX):



It's a fat pen, and you better get with it. They made me carry heavy ammunition, brass shells down into a claustrophobic well, passed from one to another all day. I couldn't take it anymore I slipped back to our cushy office, exhausted,

the day you again leave New Māyāpur temple in fifty-fourth year of your life. You can't live forever, but this is also heaven on earth. You accept it that way, despite flaws of your people and your own flaws. Your van drives protected, and if some danger comes, you chant God's names. It's as simple as that. Your friends go their own ways and hope—one to Vṛndāvana India, via Delhi plane, and one (me) to north via van, and Nanda dāsa dying of AIDS in South—sometimes lucid but sometimes he loses it and could burn the house down, so his mom stays with him, and he's dying, he's dying fast, but won't admit to you it's AIDS, and there is no cure. He would like to be a devotee, but it's too late in this life. He says he has to eat chicken, but that is controversial. What can you say to a person like that?

Be at least aware all are dying,
the tree is broken in two.

I write imperfectly.

The breath and time is given to you
by God and He's Kṛṣṇa.

When you chant, try to hear His names

"Whenever you find time please read my
books."

Give you a last chorus chance,
blow, old jazz man, blow.

Mayā tatam idam sarvaṁ

"By Me, in My unmanifested form,
this entire universe is pervaded.

my tendency to write on the order of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Sought to be with Śrīla Prabhupāda."

Regarding this morning's session, I felt not compelled to draw figures or write big in child's hand (takes energy), but *was* a scribe and felt I'm here already, and piping the time, he made me sing and I'm grateful for it, to look at later, a warm-up for practice, bound via New Esequabo, Śeṣa a visitor to Guyana, plan to travel, but right here now you can write in right hand blues and song, you the *śiṣya*, be the master,

he told me to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra and live with devotees and we are doing that and we get off easy—or not—each one gets what he wants and what is coming to him.

Dear Lord, may I not cheat the devotees, and may I serve You in writing.

This session is going to a full hour (almost), then we will dictate it and send it as a museum piece. Objurgate the rest. Clear consciousness may return and intestines are working to digest strawberries and cream and sugar biscuits you ate yesterday. Be off with you, scamp. Give us a full day in service, and don't forget to read.

And yet everything that is created does not rest in Me. Behold My mystic opulence.

Mystic opulence

I believe. Faith is important.

I am a convenient worshipper.

Lord Kṛṣṇa says and I believe,

July 18

12:02 A. M.

The truth comes out of jumbled words to be said, anemone and others. Boy Scouts in Normandy, 1994. On a Red Cross truck, brown from 1944, "6 June 1944 *musue*, pic GI Joe shouting. Come on in and see the mortars and shells and helmets and dead Nazis. Come on and rest at the shelter of campgrounds international.

The book is open for later. This is not pure *kṛṣṇa-kathā*, although that's what you should be doing. This is for approaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness, digging to know truth of yourself . . . you take your pick *señora*. You and Mr. Wences.

All Pilot pens drift. The truth is in the mantra. Carefully, I wrote some favorite passages on cards. What they mean to me might not be something I can express to others, but I can pick them with a view to speaking on them. He said of yearning, this is the way it is, you want to be a devotee of the Lord, you want to render service to Kṛṣṇa.

The trollop. The wollop. I wanted to be a devotee truly, but there were impediments and I couldn't overcome them. I sat at the wall and couldn't get over. I sat there and chanted and wrote this piece. My writing is a form of imploring the powers to let me please get over the wall. Could they please come and take me over?

tion books I asked them to do. Four books they could do. It will be nice to receive them and read what I've been doing.

Harvest time. Wheat lies in dry piles ready to be picked up. But if it rains, that could be a problem. Rain at the right time is what the cultivator wants. Does he pray?

Bee keep, army jeep, army band, guns and killing and maiming, paining. Capturing, warfare is the game of hell, Normandy the invasion.

Calm down and write. So this chapter is the descent of the river Ganges. Don't even speak to those cynics who take all the *Vedas* as myth. Jan Morris didn't say anything about "Hinduism." He didn't seek a guru, he focused himself as too honest or knowledgeable and modern to be a fool like that, expecting anyone in barbaric India to be able to teach God, since even in the West "we" despair of inquiring into such a subject. Life is something else, some justice or just being yourself and writing travel books getting at the heart of each place and people after visiting there awhile as an American with a checkbook.

Traveler's checks. The passport. He glared at an Indian bureaucrat.

I glare, I

accept what *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* says and don't write to convince Jan Morris otherwise from what he thinks as a meat-eater.

The truth . . . you will get through by reaching out to your immediate congregation. You write to

You'll find what you want if you look in your book collection, and if it's not there, go out and buy it.

I have to prepare for five morning classes, and five evening ones in Inis Rath for August. I have already prepared quite a bit, needn't worry. The rest will come.

Kṛṣṇa is in the book. It's a precious meditation to contact Him through the barriers of the mind. War images at Normandy. War to read Lord Kṛṣṇa in His absolute forms as He presents Himself in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and holy name. You read for "mystical" reception, to be with Śrīla Prabhupāda and Lord Kṛṣṇa in the reading encounter. Seek that quality and try to convey it also. You don't engage (indulge) in much criticism or argument against atheistic attacks on *śāstra*. You just go in and hear and try to lower all defenses. That doesn't mean you become mindless. No. You read, however, in your best state of mind.

Fair de well, my friends, as you fly to India, "Repair your *sādhana* and gain inspiration in Vṛndāvana," I hope you will, I told her. In the dark, she said thank you. Off they go. Wish them well, they who wish you well and are so kind.

If you want good taste in foods, use butter and sugar. Ah, but that's not good to eat. Okay, then settle for less than palatable best food enjoyment. Worst is to have all day and night indiges-

similate what you hastily put in the stomach yesterday, some slightly stale mashed nuts and figs. They mixed in or didn't mix with the fresh fruit salad. Medicines don't seem to work.

So the sessions, you were saying? They may seem to not go anywhere. All you can do . . . you say write automatically and be detached from results. Have faith in the process. That sort of thing. Will you be able?

He spoke to an audience of peers. From his studio, he broadcast and spoke and spoke. From a radio tower, the sound went out. It was a fictive act, the broadcasting. Essence was he sat and spoke alone, and yet for communication. "Is anyone out there? Anyone at all?"

The days of early autumn are not so far away. Hidden or unnoticed by jazz greats. Books unnoticed by the public. Seeking to love and accept, seeking to be encouraged vicariously by another's truth, we read books. Reading, we extend ourselves and to love the writers. They also give us something.

East European poets anthology. Other things like that. After all, I travel so much in Europe, I might as well meet their poets. I'm not a provincial Bostonian who only knows the Commons and mobs of college students. I am not . . .

Beware of Catholics and thugs who pushed him off the stage during his poetry reading. Beware of becoming a cat or dog. Pray to Lord Kṛṣṇa to be in that mood and read the descent of Ganges and next chapter with full attention. I do want it that

Finish the aperture last line of good-bye. The Entertainer eyes the smoky theater seats and hears the people out there, but what can he do? He's just a small guy with rumbling intestines and quiet discoveries, if you can call them that. He is not inclined to use any dynamite or amphetamines or downers or hypnotherapy or even prayer or quote *śāstra*. I won't say he just vegetates, but he does send out whatever beams occur in natural way, hopes it don't smell bad or offend. Wants it to be true, sure. And that's the way he writes, and that's the way he writes.

Now the last energy of this session. Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa. I declare I will tell *kṛṣṇa-kathā* to the others and tell how a disciple should be satisfied with the basic practices but yet be anxious to improve his or her service, and that's what I said it was written out for them to read. He is pleased not if a student gives him big amounts of money, but if the student chants Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra and follows the rules. That pleases the bona fide guru, I am one and send a chocolate cake to *rtvik* adherence to keep them busy while I go on writing and right now turn to reading.

(10 page, 1 hour, Campground in Normandy, France)

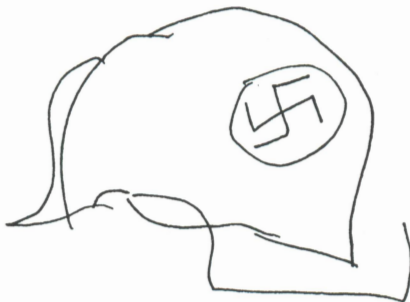
practice will lead to deeper access. Should you find a deeper shift in yourself, a premonition or whatever indicating future changes of life? Then it will come and not so much by plane or choo-choo train, but by listening to quiet feelings and asking yourself,

"What do you want to write?"

And answering, "My Lord, what do You want me to write?"

Like that.

Eisenhower, hands on hips? Gold statue foolish American-like, standing all alone as if he did alone, and behind him big arches of memorial architecture, and fifty years later flags of nations that liberated France from the helmets of the Nazis.



Who are the conquerors? Who was going to bed, who is bad? Who is . . .

I write and hear the lawnmower engine in campground's grass, "A human incident," M. told me. He spoke with a young boy named Jeremy whose mom later came and clipped him on the

Some clinching,
some relaxing,
not so relaxed that I can't hold
and move the pen fast, but not so and macho I
think I have to hack it out, pen like knife. I . . .
Swallow your pride.

Look forward to the walks at Wicklow and the hours spent following your own created schedule to keep you producing all day long. I'm in favor of it.

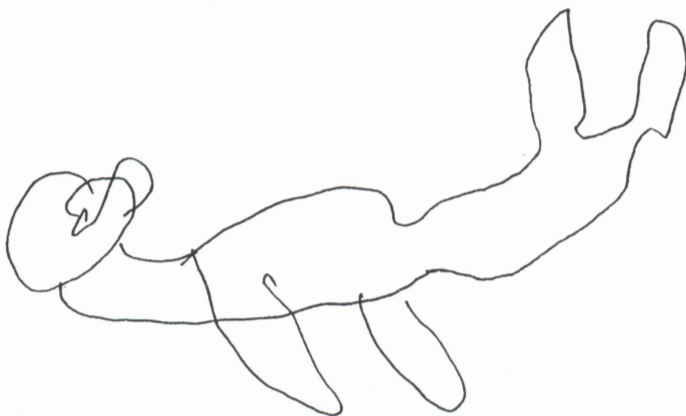
What other prayers?

Well, there is Lakṣmī-devī saying that only the Supreme Lord is the husband of all *jīvas*. And other residents of planets and Islands are making their prayers to the Deity of Viṣṇu, and according to their *rasa* it comes out, but Śrīla Prabhupāda picks of essence of pure devotional service and teaches in each and every case.

I hear children, probably at the pool. Tents nearby and grass. A lake for fishing. When it was 5:30 A. M., we were walking, and no one was up and about. We came back around 6:30, and one man and his wife were headed for the washroom. Lights in bulbs in glass domes on poles. I can't write smoothly enough to tell you. We were exercising and then walking back and forth chanting two rounds. Can you chant more? Sure, why not? It's certainly possible.

You write the Kṛṣṇa conscious "dogma." You can never expect to win publication or any prize

istry, was afraid. It's a fact, some things come easy and some difficult because of the person's karma. That's the way we are.



Lady with feet up on table in front of her to get relief. She's pregnant, looks like almost nine months. She was chanting *japa* in the ladies' section of the temple at New Māyāpur. The door was open and when I saw her in that position, I thought, "Why should anyone chant in such a lay-back way?" Now I know better. She was suffering.

Angel descend. Always you write angels. Gandharvas. The police. The immigration, passport control.

Thoughtful creature on his way to washroom, don't make fun of him, and pardon us for combining the sublime and ridiculous. We didn't create it that way, just drawing accurate picture?

The Mask drew to a close. Lewy Galenti took first holy communion without getting blessed! He had the balls to just go up to the altar and give it for himself, but a nun rushed up and stopped—or tried, she was too late—his illegal taking of waffle on his bad tongue. Later he got the authorized first holy communion like me.

Christ's body and blood, not withheld from any Catholics. Take it as often as possible, said Teresa of Liseux, nearby here.

I said a duck wanted its way. A waddle walk.

Please make it nicer than this. In any case, they will make fun of you. It will go down the drain, your temporary expression. Don't expect immortal prose. I don't, but something in me says, "Take a drink of water now, and don't think about it."

Sure, I get worked up, and that's okay too.

As I write, M. is ripping in half many pages of security copies of manuscripts we don't need anymore. Another distraction. If it keeps up, I'll just turn on the fan and merge into machine noises.

In Wicklow, I said I'll write peacefully as possible and listen to inner voices. The ripping of paper won't bother me. I just asked M. not to do it, rip the papers. I don't like stopping him in his work. I like to quiet and alone, though. I mean, how is a

ment sidewalk or management table. Spared from marriage over twenty years. Give me peace in *sannyāsa*. But are you supposed to be "out there" more boldly?

I already worked out the scribe is a preacher too.



He's like a knight on horse, and pen is spear—
to fight *māyā*.

He plays on *bṛhad mṛdaṅga*.



head on neck, keep it up,
even when I slump asleep I keep thinking and
meditating on the nature of the verse or desire to
be Kṛṣṇa conscious.

Just think, Prahāda wanted the whole world to
be Kṛṣṇa conscious, isn't that nice? Can you do
that in some way? Yes, I can. And think, Lakṣmī-
devī said Lord Kṛṣṇa is the only husband. Can you
relate to it? And think, they pray to Him describ-
ing Him as Supreme Person. I can relate, I do.

I want permission to be a devotee. I want to do
it by the writing life. No, autobiography isn't all,
and I don't care for it either. I will write whatever
comes.

Even the effort to "go beyond" present cycles
and norms can be a pretense.

Camels in desert, where else? (seen by Freya
Stark) Lord in candle flame seen by me—don't
keep watching it then. Close your eyes and pray
harināma.

Five more minutes, bring me, bring me to the
bottom of this page.

There you go, mate, I did it the fast way by a
drawing which cuts through with grace of truck
driver. I am a man with lady parts inside me.
Norms of storm. Little bones in back of neck
tense up. Knights. I'd like to re-enter the best part
of Christian saint prayer experience but not at the
cost of any concentration and faith I have gained
in exclusive reading of *Bhāg.* and Lord Kṛṣṇa as
aftermath to *rasika* period. Yeah, staying steady
with *Bhāg.* is best, and go on writing. Wish you

July 19

10:42 A.M.

More on Ekalavya. Read it to M. and discussed. It's not *practice* constantly that is demoniac. Arjuna practiced even at night, and Droṇa was very pleased with him. Ekalavya practiced constantly, passionately, but with the desire to outdo the Vaiṣṇava, Arjuna. He created an illicit form of worship when his guru-to-be said, "I cannot accept you as my disciple."

Why do I doubt? Writing is certainly valid, acceptable service, and Śrīla Prabhupāda many times encouraged me. Many disciples and followers of his are writing nowadays. You might say the type of writing I do or the time I spend on it is in question.

Śrīla Prabhupāda is not here to dictate these things in exactly the way he was before November 1977. We all have to decide on our own how we want to please him and carry it out. It's a frightening prospect, to think of doing your thing and claiming it's worship of guru. I want to purge this out of my service. But the basic program and process is not wrong.

I write personally, honestly, what comes. Pure and impure. I find it helps. These are methods used by many writers. Yes, nondevotee writers, but I can use it for Kṛṣṇa's purposes. One point is that unless a writer writes from his heart and with his own voice, the writing appears stilted, not

remove it. Be like Arjuna, not Ekalavya. But practice. Go ahead. I think they are allowing you to do it. "

"Arjuna discovered the effect of constant practice and began to practice shooting at night. Droṇa heard the twang of the bow and rising from bed, he approached Arjuna. Embracing him, he said 'I shall now teach you in such a way that no bowman in the world will be your equal.' "

Writing this in small cabin in Sealink ferry crossing channel to England. French family on the other side of the wall is noisy with young kids. M. is chanting soft *japa*. Sea is smooth. I can go on writing if I like, smooth habits do foresee you will practice to get better.

Open *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and tell us what great souls do. Leafed through a *BTG* as suitable ferry reading. Writers can improve, certainly I can improve. Touch more directly, nerve and enjoyment of reader by honest . . .

Yes, autobiography has its limits. I'm not all for it; it's also something, your own life. It's part of all life.

When you get to Wicklow, it's a simple thing. Not a rowing party and day after day of ecstasies and so on. It's quiet work, many hours, and approaching the same problems of how I want to write, and asking Lord Kṛṣṇa how He wants me to write.

Britania and we expect only a small formality of passport inspection and some questions about the van, our purpose in England, our destination. Tell them we are going back to Godhead. We are going to a ferry early tomorrow for Ireland. That's our course.

Bona fide. That's me. Bona fide diploma. The guru. Read when you can in best mood, breaking down barriers of disbelief or the brain saying it is too hard to study. Be more capable at it as you gain capacity to write at one hour stretches so you can also gain to read several times in the day. The old body is called upon but has its limits. Use it well and moderately.

Even when in between the main duties, you may chant and hear, chant and hear.

In *BTG*, Yamunā dāsī writes from India where she's visiting temples, sampling their *prasādam*. Sounds like a lot of eating going on. And Vraja-kīśora remembers when his grandfather died. Satsvarūpa gives us rough notes from his Caribbean travel, mostly what verse he's speaking on in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* class. After all, that's his main function, to go there and speak *śāstra*. *BTG* for wide audience of ISKCON congregation. I'm honored to be part of it. Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra in all places. Yes, I did travel there.

You may ask, "What is Yamunā's personal feeling about being in India? Is it just to gather recipes? And Satsvarūpa, is it just *śloka*s to lecture on?" No, there's more. But personal anecdote is also not the total truth or main, interesting thing in

hours on England motorways. Then a strange schedule of some sleep and get up for—what is it? 3 A.M.? Ferry crossing. That will be followed by another two hours in Ireland. Be there, brother, be here right now, yet coast and time yourself, and keep cool.

I'm calm, I'm calm. Peaceful and calm. Relax the body, which you can't do so effectively when the van is moving. I could stop this session and do some now.

Jazz song. Ben Webster dead and Carruth wrote a poem. I sing a devotee's life. Not just my own. Got to find a way. So you are not entirely isolated. That's okay too. Tell of devotion in Wicklow.

But isolated isn't bad if you can go within. It's not mere autobiography. I don't know what it is.

When you write stories, then it's imagination. But when you do Writing Sessions, you can tell us whatever you can, what comes.

Pressure in back of neck. I think I'll stop one short of the one hour due to travel conditions, say I came this far and stopped.

But I see that plans for Wicklow writing are to go deep. There is no planning for a certain kind of writing. It's too total a confrontation or an acceptance—too total to be "a book on *brahmacārya*," "a book on flowers," "a book on Śrīla Prabhupāda in Miami," "a story about a mouse, an episode in the life of a . . . "

Thank you very much. Get out of clutches of these nondevotees long enough to write smooth

July 21

12:19 A.M.

Alarm on clock didn't go off and here I am, thirteen minutes late, and no one cares, but I do.

I am back in Wicklow. That's all I can say so far. And rid of yesterday's headache. And there is no *Travel Diary* to attend to for four weeks.

What shall I discover about myself? Who is to say? Walk around and let it come, let it come out.

We'll talk to the community here about privacy and getting to be respected and accepted by others and how to balance the two. Do you need to be unfriendly or elusive to keep your privacy? At what price do you keep privacy?



You are to straighten out your act.

Now drift, fellow, in cool air, down to where you want to go, and count the pages as you write.

brother,

But privacy ought to help in quietness and time to myself. May he please shut up so I can get on with my holy contemplation of the navel, of the *cakra*.

This is no Whitman-esque, statue-esque. Don't blame others.

If I had fire in the gut and not indigestion, if I had regular bowel movements and all my teeth and if my co-workers all had perfect health, that would not grant us the success we seek.

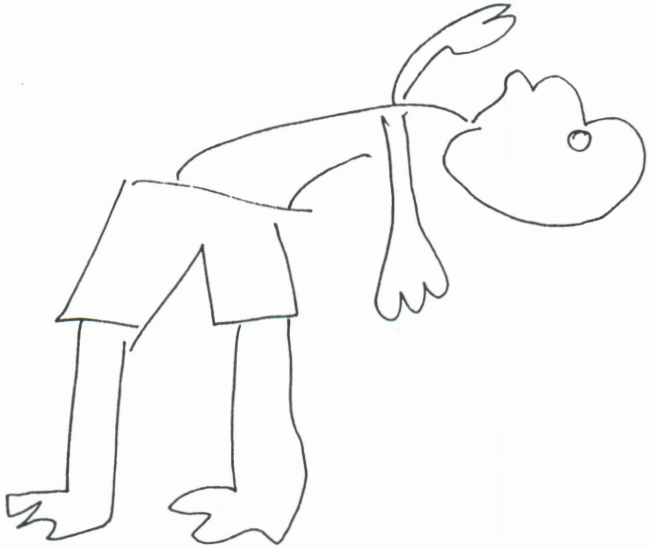
Which is to please Kṛṣṇa
by our efforts.

He is pleased when you follow the guru. You need to praise His glories, enter His service, and then your self is satisfied. Not by dances outside His realm. Of course, everything is in His energy, but I mean, if you try to ignore God or see Him impersonally, that won't please Him or you.

You are meant for a divine relationship of servitor and Supreme. Please enter that, lad.

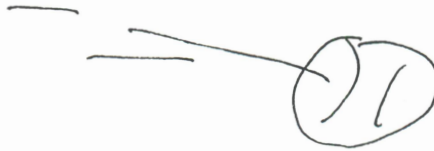
How? I shall take lines from the books and enter them here.

Find a way to make your writing naturally more KC. That's one thing you want to achieve. It's not done by forcing myself but by some kind of movement in the right direction.



Bend over backwards, Smith, if you think it will
make you fit or make a better essay.

Har har. Je sport is misticuff, the soccer ball



Cut through ain't achieved that way. Then bow
down in a church grotto and pray to God. But Śrīla
Prabhupāda says "prayer" without reform from
sin won't help. Show God you mean it and want to
serve Him.

Buddy, my dear buddy, it's okay, it's permissible to write like this. It doesn't have to be anything, and I will find a way.

Lord Kṛṣṇa is in my heart. He will help. He's the best gremlin buster and block bluster and will give you what you want if you only make it clear that you want Him.

I do

I do

I do

I read and hope it will enter me. I chant and pray it will enter me. I will speak and write and pray it comes out Kṛṣṇa conscious. Want satisfaction of the self.

Prayful, he was, that headache pain was gone and he could gallop a Writing Session even though with late start (minutes never to be re-fetched, but he can make up for it and adjust). He is able to go without a headache for a certain stretch,

but an old man can't go so fast for so long. Florence Chadwick, first woman to swim the English Channel, didn't do it while old.

But ancient Greek dramatist wrote great work at old age and take the example of Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja—and Śrīla Prabhupāda! He says old age is impetus for good, and *jara* doesn't rob you of enthusiasm, so don't claim it will stop you. That's another gremlin tactic, "You're too old."

Truth in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, sages gathered to hear of Yadu dynasty and Tenth Canto pastimes of young Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana. Six Gosvāmīs'

yap barf bent talk—

I sorry to make fun of your
song like Handel chorus
or peep peep peep of frogs
or Ben Webster dead but sax lives on,
old musicians home for the blind
students of jazz and religion
and 50s age ain't bad, he can
still blow his horn, wear suspenders
like they used to,
old baseball player in baggy knickers.
Old time's sake, Pop is dead
got his coffee cup and memento.
My dad and grand-dad were no spiritual gurus.
But I met the best guru of the age,
fortunate in that!

Yeah, I went for it, that's old history.

We didn't touch Swami's feet but did bow down
to him, and we have our own ways, not effusive in
some, and yet effusive in others. You could say
we lean toward *aiśvarya*, but it is sweet and inti-
mate too. You can read in Hari-śauri's *Diary*,
friend and servant, master and servant, alone talk
sweet things.

I am almost ready to tell things to my disciples
on Inis Rath.

I freed myself of other duties to come here.
Here is the laugh. Kṛṣṇa is safeguard. Fishguard is
the port in Wales and you land in Rosolare, (SP?)
Ireland, and no immigration or customs check
because the fellows are having tea and it's too

isfied, but deeply, in a relationship with Him (surrender) that will situate you as His eternal servant. Not that you Do Your Own Thing Automatically Equal To Surrender To Lord Kṛṣṇa.

But neither does, "Do what you don't like and that will please the Lord most."

We know He wants offerings of love. That can mean you offer Him an act you love to do. Yes, that's fine. You write and love to do it, and you dovetail it in devotional service. That's fine, do it that way.

Be kind but drive on to your destination. So first session I assure that I want to please Lord Kṛṣṇa. May He be kind to let me alone and find Him.

I need to, I want to.

I'll be satisfied only with that. Don't be afraid that if you get very happy in satisfaction at Kṛṣṇa consciousness it will spoil you and make you proud. You don't need to remain dissatisfied as a safeguard. Better be happy and know that you are on the right track. Śrīla Prabhupāda was like that. Didn't doubt he was doing the right thing, knew he was serving his Guru Mahārāja in best way, prayed to be able to carry out that order.

I seem "doomed" to stay in doubt and self-examination. Okay, I can do only what I can do, and anxiety is another asset—Don't think your service is perfect. You can always improve.

So now I have run out of time. As usual, begin in doubt and end with self-assurance. I do wish you a good journey, stepping off into areas you

July 22

10:02 A.M.

I'm in Tulasī-devī's house. A bee is buzzing. Big moth or monarch butterfly fluttering in here. Heartbeat, pause and wonder, how am I doing? How strong he was and right! Śrīla Prabhupāda said, "Don't try to see Lord Kṛṣṇa, my Guru Mahārāja said this, but *do something* so Kṛṣṇa can see you." May He be pleased with our sincere service.

In blue ink. Parades of words. Lord Kṛṣṇa is master of all writers. He allows them their prowess and outpourings and then He takes it all away as time or death, even the writers subdue. And their books live on? Permanently? That is relative. And in any case, it does them no good in the next life. Posthumous fame. But it doesn't go to *him*. He (the *ātmā*) goes on to a next body, say as a dog,, and doesn't recall "last life I was James Joyce, world-class author."

So beware to you. You, I mean. You are making "an immortal" library of private editions, and no one knows.

Adhokṣaja. Bhagavān tam. Viṣudham. He's pure and only pure can know Him. He's beyond the senses and mind to know. He is Supreme Person.

Madhu asleep in blue sleeping bag. Asthma getting to him. He thinks it's all a matter of strict diet. His physical maladies I don't know, just hear

But I too like to go outside under certain conditions. Like a timid *grhastha* family fully engaged in their maintenance in the country, come once a month for a few hours of *harināma* in Dublin. There, the leading preacher, who goes to all-night festivals and sings leading a big crowd of drunkards—said to four-year-old Kṛṣṇa dāsa, “Kṛṣṇa dāsa, it’s time you went to the *brahmacārī āśrama!*” (in the Dublin temple) Kṛṣṇa dāsa said, “That made me scared!”

Well, Kṛṣṇa dāsa, you don’t have to do it exactly like that. Day-school *gurukula* for you. And when you grow up?

Hi, spy, am writing down as my candle burns. Is that why I like candles and use pen cartridges—illusion that you can always replace the used ones from your stock? But then you run out, not of life-time supply, but of lifetime itself. O clever mole, oh getting warm in the *tulasī* house. Your morning poems to Prabhupāda bring you a chance to declare your attraction for him and I’m glad of that. It’s important to me to have such time in a writing life. Gradually, usable products come forth, but I don’t approach most writing as a deliberate making of products for a readership.

You know what I mean.

Lonely and hesitant.

I am surprised that I’m going over this ground again, like an obsession. I did a trance work session with B. on this and devised some methods to not go through the whole obsession at length—cut

have some interesting classes prepared on KC topics—provided they are interested in me as well as in the subjects of *Bhāg*. You expect they will be. Disciples of Lord Caitanya teach expertly, novel ways to inject KC into dull brains. It's dynamic. Remember that one?

Welcome to Wicklow second day. Who will bring my lunch? We take no cereal in the morning and that's okay, a light but potent brain-food breakfast. A guy like me who only weighs 51 1/2 kgs doesn't need to put on tummy weight. As long as he can walk and travel and be fit for his desk work.

Paramgati Mahārāja was busy with his duties and I busy with mine and he left me alone, no artificial personal meeting with me pretending to be interested in his managerial work or his asking me, "What are you writing now?" Or both of us saying the Centennial is coming near. Relief he spared us. He insisted I give all the four *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* classes, which was fine with me. I did them okay. All glories to Prabhupāda and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and the chance to lecture.

This is a peaceful place. I push the legal pad folder snug against my abdomen and write, write.

Lord Kṛṣṇa has all good and great qualities to an infinite degree. I may look at what I wrote two years ago. Now it's different. I've stepped on. Some may say, "You are stepping back, fearfully, withdrawing from the opportunity to pursue *rāgā-*

present for you in listening to Mingus doing home farm stomp now, eh? In a dream, you heard breathy Jimmy Guiffre and Stan Getz again? Maybe, I'm not sure. Dave Brubeck. It's all listenable, but that pop blast drums and excitement of world is too close to rock sounds which I *do* dislike a lot. That stuff really drags you down. If I were forced to hear it, that's a prison sentence and you'd have to escape or find deep wells of flexible tolerance to ride it through.

Therefore, give me silence and sounds of bees outside *tulasī* house. And I hear tapes of *kīrtanas* in my room and relax with that.

Māyāpur *kīrtanas*, two old *bābājīs* is fine singing again. And Hare Kṛṣṇa mantras.

Sing with the devotees, with or without Prabhu-pāda tape. I fake a deep love . . . no, I don't fake it. I admit I lack, but gather my disciples and for our mutual good, as medicinal (and eventually nectar drops), we sing *kīrtana* in congregation.

What about *lectio*? Could you make some better effort? I don't know. Outdoors is booked for walks, for the *japa* talks, at least until I answer their questions. Then maybe I could . . . read a verse of Śrī Kṛṣṇa speaking.

Voice of authentic being.

Writer at work. Theatre of nonabsurd. Caw crow atmosphere. He squints when sunlight comes. If it stayed, why consider changing your position? This is as good as outdoors. Just remove your clothes. Get a baseball cap.

four years in a row? "I'll be back," he says, not knowing if he'll live that long.

Will you live through the Centennial? Will it be *your* milestone? Will you be in some big mob scene in Calcutta? I'll avoid that, for sure. Maybe in Vṛndāvana. At that time, claim (it's true) I don't feel so well, don't feel up to it, but at least I'm not hiding in a cabin or *gîte* somewhere and no one knows where I am.

Adhokṣaja. I am low power. Low interest in *kṛṣṇa-kathā*. Low on fuel. But at least twice a day I'll prepare those sections until I've done four cantos and working on the fifth as far as I've read. You can do that. And get your disciples meetings classes together. Yah ho.

Falling at the feet
in literary obeisances,
before my predecessors,
at their *samādhi maṇḍira*,
or their simple tombs
in dirt of Vṛndāvana or in
Mahāniddhi Swami's book.

I don't need nothing but
Bhaktivedanta purports to speak
on any occasion. Look at your watch. I think
you can't finish this page.

July 23

9:58 A.M.

You are not so lighthearted coming out here. When you think of future writing retreats, will they eventually be with a heavy heart? Why? Because I can't seem to go somewhere with the WS. I read them, read them, but you've got to forgive yourself if they are not *Paradise Lost*. You've got to forgive yourself. Don't strive for products. If it's products you want, then take a different attitude. Do like you do in preparing lectures. Seek a topic, theme. Make some rough outline of points. Then fill them in and insert quotes. For actual writing of each section, you may use *directed* free-writing techniques. But the WS is different than that. The directed projects will come one after another, enough books of instruction and inspiration by me, several a year. This year I've done so far *All Things Fail Without Kṛṣṇa* and *My Relationship with Lord Kṛṣṇa* and smaller works, stories usable in AF. But WS is for a different purpose.

So heavy-hearted, maybe.

Your *japa* walks is also for readers. So don't complain that WS takes up time that could be used for making preaching book.

Mumukṣava ghora rūpam . . . the liberated persons worship Lord Kṛṣṇa and not ghastly forms of the demigods. Śrīla Prabhupāda lectured on that verse in November 1972. Mostly he expressed anger to the Indian audience (Vṛndāvana) that In-

tongue, look at private parts, hit me with hammer—all this he did in Verona and said, "You are in good health. Just a psychosomatic case of headaches by stressful way of life." And he recommended a dose of B-12 pills and nothing else, didn't dare to comment on the stress and why or how it could be alleviated or dealt with, or the psycho nature of the disease. Free consultation from one of the best, white-jacketed, gray-haired doc in expensive office suite, amused at the foreign monks. Said you are fortunate to be skinny (and not fat).

After seeing him, I was elated by it, and we pre-rode in Nanda's small car back to the Compagio in St. Bernedetto village. But there, was it also heart break to write your WS? Perhaps. I can't recall. It's one long spool unwinding.

Don't pose. Don't even be a personae like "a writer who is trying to be honest, who is sometimes happy and unhappy." He got a mustache? Don't matter. Well, he's got to be *somebody*. Is he that *sannyāsī* I see in photos, skinny, prominent Adam's apple and half-worried afraid look with slight hidden look of amusement and . . . hanging-in-there preserved face? No, that's his mask.

I could joke but . . . I could go back in time . . .

Grand rules. Perfidy. I read poets and get disgusted with them. Hope their line divisions and way of expressing feelings through outer things is something I can learn from.

You give up the stopwatch tyranny of, "Here goes one hour of no stopping, keep the hand moving, got to make it at least nine pages."

(But see, friend, even *this* discovery is churned up by a timed Writing Session.)

You could make *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* the anchor. Read ahead in Fifth Canto three times a day instead of the WS. But you've got full scope to write too. It will come out probably a lot less pages. But your inspiration will be the *Bhāg.* reading or your inability to do it.

You can talk as freely as you like, and then go back to *Bhāg.* It will be done more or less in one-hour segments, but they don't have to be so regimented in terms of recording them and writing as, "1 hour, X pages, Wicklow."

If you insist, you could make it a record of *Reading and Writing Sessions*. But don't expect nine pages. Before it used to dwindle to two or three pages of reading notes.

"Yes, plain ordinary reading notes, summarizing the texts, and yet it can be more interesting than that also. Can be . . . feelings you experience."

Good. We are churning something. No fiction for now. And maybe shift from the WS to this other idea of reading and writing.

He stented the report. Allow complete freedom as I did in December *reading free-writes*. How about that as a title?

Birds just "attacked" in here. Come on, black and white fliers, do it once or twice more. I'm ready to vacate. I'm no Japs versus U.S.A. fighter plane.

I've got seven more minutes, however, and would like to finish out here if I could.

All swallows alert—we've got Sats on the run.

He's ready to give up pure Writing Sessions. Visit with mind freer for more reading oriented splurge.

Use of fine time.

Promises blues singers will be allowed, "Come as you are."

Or on the same page which is a side order to the open book and attention of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

Gosh, that sounds like a spiritual gift to self and good use of time.

Hours daily for *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

Release hold of writer

and get hold of Mahārāja Parīkṣit here and

because you so like and "need" to express yourself in your own words, you can do it.

Also, the project won't be audience-oriented at all. Won't even be for creating interesting reading for the audience of one, me.

It's a way to read and write with no other purpose, really,

July 25

12:06 A.M.

You want to do both, write and read. Well, calm down. We have time.

To be totally honest, you don't have to write down here the number of days of the next retreat or where it's going to be. What you need is surrender to God. You don't need to tell us every blow by blow of the wrestling match between you and the forces of doubt. "The structure of the universe" has always been a difficult one to swallow. I mean with its ocean of liquor and billions and billions of miles between mountains and islands and oceans and peaks high and names hard to pronounce.

I need to write permissively. It's good for me. Not to worry what people will say. So you're planning a book. A story of these weeks and days is suspect on that account. It may want to come out successful and nice and neat, whereas the actual story isn't so. But you mean agreeing to read, is that wrong? Want it okay to read in a separate session where you don't write notes and keep them separate, the forced hard writing and the peaceful reading?

You want to go back to the Writing Sessions? You know what that means, it means . . .

Keeping the hand moving,

doing what a preacher should do. But I can't seem to hack it, want to read my books I've written in Writing Session form, become as it comes stuff. See where you were at, etc. Oh moan, he is lost, you figure. Okay, let him, he'll come out of this, and they will type them . . .

Racing with the moon.

A sober person can just put aside bubbles and memories that come. Is it not embarrassing to have to face yourself and say "Prabhu, I've changed my mind again. I think I'll go back to three Writing Sessions a day"?

Well, I'm not going to write a novel in 39 days but only the time with the Writing Sessions. Look, you have subpersons and you have this desire to read and to write. So in your Writing Session, the other day you said, "I quit, I have enough of this and I'll just read *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and that's best." But you find some problem in that?

Alasa. Alaska. Read poets of America who are nondevotees. I'm lonely. I can't (can) apply myself all day in this room. I am noisy. Look on shelves at Uddhava's house. I am rosey. I am not going to tell everything that passes through my mind. Do you want to write a note to Madhu on this? Well, I go through changes and he doesn't have to know all that.

Did you expect the Writing Session retreat would be smooth all like creamy cake? You can't just eat cakes like this.

I keep going, Lord is with me. The loca loca mountain. And if you grow faint facing up to it, that's amusing too. There are no other books you want or need to write (read). Can't go back to *rasika* student of Mahārāja. You did a good thing, my lad, in switching to exclusive Śrīla Prabhu-pāda, and stay with it while you can, but it takes patient reading and your writing lab in your private place to wail and take a stand.

The Mets, the math
the sheer work-out of thumb. It's not a bad thing when you rip out and race and pause and all that. You can read your own writing like *Ballyferriter Stories*, but for this Wicklow, three per day is what the "doctor" ordered.

You funny man,
you and Madhu,
he's got hay fever and knows it's his diet and is doing the best he can. It's a long story how when he does total fast it's a bit unnerving to you, as if he's implying that you too ought to fast. Āyurveda says it's not good for me.

Comin' through the rye. Comin' through the pants and walls and Seymour and introduction. You are not a literary . . .

Wants to worship my God
Lord, here is an upright preacher
who can tell others how to repair their *japa*.
You in pantaloons. You are letting out a cry for freedom. But there's no total freedom. A guy who

Be calm and cool, each thing comes one at a time. You give it space, let it roll, do your radio show again.

"I resign, I surrender," he says. Now when it gets rough, you'll feel you have nothing to say and why do you do it? How is this holy and the best use of my time? Yes, it's times like that you *can* . . . what you write.

No one knows. Each is alone,
ride on a pony.

Besmirch

new news. Novelty crave.

James Joyce is on the ten pound note of Irish money, the picture doesn't look like him. On the flip side, opening line of incomprehensible *Finnegan's Wake*, based on speculative book from the Middle Ages, somehow written with his personal metaphysics of how things recur like an all mundane speculation and Joyce himself the artist of mankind epic trash.

I won't go there, that's for sure. I'm a boy, good boy, of my master. Śrīla Prabhupāda sees me. Maybe not doing so well, but the Writing Sessions can also be a place of triumph and simple reporting of the day, "I read some," etc.

But my main point seems to be don't expect smooth sailing and just because you detected how hard it is to go and write time and again with nothing to say, that doesn't mean you should give it up. Not yet. Say you are addicted or whatever. You did give it up for one and a half days, and

Neither am I a GBC man or a *sannyāsī* on front ranks with *IWR* worthy activities. Picture of me and the Mayor of Siam taking a *Gītā* from me. Picture of me walking to the shed, to the *tulasī* house in bloom blue britches and Brooklyn Dodger cap and nose and eyes running with liquid of pearly shine.

Me and Sharon Olds' book. Me and the king of turds nonsense, want to get free to say, "Okay, I won't do this writing anymore."

Back in the saddle, Gene Autry. Close this out in ten minutes and then settle in for reading session where you don't write, just take pencil underlining and read. You can do it. A case of energy splayed and now returning to your former resolution. Twenty days left. Then you go preach.

No one is completely satisfied in this world unless he or she attains perfect Kṛṣṇa consciousness. You have to do things you don't like to do. No Elysian or other Fields of happiness in mortal world. Happiness in Goloka is a different thing. You go there when all material desires are finished.

You have desires now.

The truth is gulp,
bite bullet,
dry desert mind
wander goof off, nowhere,
face it, that's you and this is your
trial of arms, Arjuna,
don't leave this battlefield of WS
as a coward.

my service too. So I'll read *Bhāgavatam* now and continue later picking up threads of these extended belly-less attempts. Be sane and whole as you can. Honesty? Of course, that's a virtue but WS is more than that. It's dishonesty too. It's Kṛṣṇa consciousness for Śrīla Prabhupāda, believe it or not.

(1 hour, 14 pages, Wicklow—the truth and nothing by the truth, so help you God)

ing with Lord Kṛṣṇa as best you can. Sharing this with devotees.

I want to show myself I can enter states of progressive receptivity in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Once you show you can do it, then it's just a matter of staying with it and going more and more. You quote the verse on the cowherd boys who played with Lord Kṛṣṇa as their friend after heaps of pious activities in many lives. Successful devotees inspire you. I too can become actually successful. I can love Kṛṣṇa and desire to please Him with my devotional service.

No one can do it for me.

This is a trail I want to be on. The day has passed its peak. I'm aware my physical energy is—power of concentration—are waning. But I speak to the Lord in the heart not just for a peak experience I could have right now, but with promise for future rendezvous, tomorrow and tomorrow. I want to enter prayer state with *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Better you plunge into it. Be aware there are barriers to cross, and ask Kṛṣṇa and your own self to help you cross over them. Skepticism, feelings that I've read this before . . .

Tall trees on edge of yard, sentinels. They were waving ,and I noticed them when I began out here. Now it's more like they are silently watching me, the more evolved sophisticated life form, as I try to speak with the higher knowledge I've been exposed to. I'd help you trees, also, if I became advanced. I could become your well-wisher and

black box outdoors. You've eaten all you'll get today. Only some water now. You've got a hat for the sun if it comes out. I'll walk with you. Seems we can't just keep going on the strength of where the radio show left off. That was what it was and I'm here now.

I can't understand what the hell Simic means. Write my own plain sense. I need to know what a person is talking about. Please make some sense. Are you talking about what it was like in World War II? Maybe that's it, huh? "She bore me swaddled over the burning cities. . . . The high heavens were full of little, shrunked, deaf ears inside of stars." One tries to make an essence instead of plain description. Well, I don't care for it.

But sometimes I write just for myself. That's a different thing. Not a prank. I just want to lose control in order to get further into KC. If I can lose the whole on my immediate conscious Kṛṣṇa consciousness, then maybe I can regroup further down the road going past boundaries of ordinaryness. I'm willing to take chances like that because I can trust myself. This playing field of the note pad isn't going to hurt me. I don't want to blaspheme or hurt anyone. Especially I don't want to hurt my relationship with Śrīla Prabhupāda and Lord Kṛṣṇa. But it's not something to keep preserved in a box. I have to test it sometimes. And build it up by effort.

found, even Kṛṣṇa conscious realized. You can look at it later. I have faith my own life is interesting enough.

I don't have another life.

I don't know the life of my reader.

Don't want to make up a fictive person.

Can I write of Kṛṣṇa? Yes, as I hear of Him in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. I cannot imagine Him or tell what He thinks. I can pray to Him. O all-merciful one, hear my prayer. Whatever I do, it is not that I am the creator of words, which are independent of You. Fools think like that, *prakṛteḥ kriyamāṇāni, guṇaiḥ karmāṇi sarvaśaḥ*, etc. They think they are the doer but are moved by modes of nature. Even Simic, although he won the Pulitzer Prize, may, if he's not Kṛṣṇa conscious, be moved by intricate modes of nature. We think we are outsmarting someone, but we get outsmarted. Śrīla Prabhupāda says we get entangled by her (*māyā's*) complexities. *Māyā* outsmarts us.

So I tell what I can of a little life. I read poets to see what they are attempting, and then I go back to my own way of trying to be a devotee.

The photos. I come home from work into the storefront. Jadurāṇī is painting. She sits on the floor (on a mat?) and paints and there is something between us that will lead to marriage. Would have been better . . . but that's all under the bridge now. Checkered career of lusty, young husband who is sincere to give his life to his spiritual master and doesn't want to cater to a demanding

a World War II pilot for America and you were a child on the ground, the enemy.

Tell some real story. Not this stuff in "the world doesn't end."

The same for me?

I tell you I'm here in Wicklow on another retreat. We're taking as many of them as we dare. I hope to stay occupied in them. I think I can be progressive and not waste time.

By today, I'm on to a inkling about improved prayer state of reading and writing. And chanting. I'm on the verge of talking to Kṛṣṇa and being more Kṛṣṇa conscious in the radio show, using relaxation methods to enter relaxed Kṛṣṇa conscious states of no pretension yet aspiration to speak, to know the Lord.

I think I can use more time well. And will have quite a work-out for three weeks or so of preaching.

So I can tell of my life. Can you tell me of yours? I will be willing to listen.

Just a few more minutes. I don't think I overdid it.

The pipes of water. The weeds of wrath. (I can write disconnected for awhile. I don't make a profession out of it)

Magician beware. I want to expose your pose. You wear a false beard in Ingmar Bergman's "The Magician." The magician was humiliated, begging for money. The guys scorned him. Later, the magician used full force witch arts on that guy in a

July 28

10 A.M.

Writing as duty. Too much clerical work and you fall into that consciousness. Idea that you are patting yourself on back for being not so bad after all, and then Lord Kṛṣṇa will show you the naked truth. The other view is just the opposite: that your position is so nice if you saw it, you'd be shy and afraid of becoming proud, so therefore Lord Kṛṣṇa doesn't show it to you. Both may be true. Lord Brahmā acted wrongly to steal the cows and calves from Kṛṣṇa, and when he realized his wrong, he was very regretful. Kṛṣṇa bewildered him, melted down his presumptuous ego. Yet He showed Brahmā Goloka Vṛndāvana, and that was a great treat and Lord Brahmā sang his prayers of appreciation in great ecstasy. (*Bhāg.* 10.14)

So both. The wretch who in this life thought so many abominable things, desired to enjoy like a pig, and yet now he is given the chance.

I saw Karuna-mayī dāsa in photo from 1971 in Boston temple. He was innocent, competent in driving and accounting. He and I traveled to the south U.S.A. on a tour of "my" GBC zone. Later he dropped out of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Yet he was sitting beside Śrīla Prabhupāda in the temple room. Don't credit yourself as better. It could happen to you, the misuse of free will.

Śrīla Prabhupāda said we need only five things to be successful in spiritual life: four rules and

You desire to move from one place to another and no home base. That's worth striving for.

Mate, your Oasis is up,
orange soda.

Yugoslavs killed as Croats,
the devotees give out free meals at risk of life.
I'll take a quick break to see what an author says. (Gee, do I have to reveal all here? Is this the naked lab? It's up to you. If you want to conceal, you can.)

Is there something dark and foreboding you wanted to write in symbols? Is there a story? Are you all right complaining and feeling misgivings? Would you do this anyway, whether in Writing Session or washboard band, cat's gut symphony or even one of your strange, beloved-to-you afternoon stories? So what does it matter?

There is a white soap powder in the container in the bathroom. The washing machine porthole door is open. M. knows how to operate it. I save my time for writing and reading. I could sponge off the dirty covers of the Śrīla Prabhupāda lecture packs, but I figure the same time could go into this reading and writing or some auxiliary. It's my work. The singing would be relief and make me more earthy and in touch with the nice handling of the tape packs; they would become more familiar and friendly for when I listen to the philosophy. Could I do everything I want to do?

No, there's a limit always and
a price. You were given

room without stopping to

(censored)

O Guarinos, is it your fault?

He got thorn in flesh. Something good—was afraid to live out the worst and so kept it to himself.

No need, M. says, to tell all gory details and disclosures. You imagine him saintly praying to God. Keep out Garber Brothers suit and shirt and tie and yo-yos and Fan Addict entertainment comic crap. Keep out jade yellow ouch teeth in dentist chair. Keep out secret life of Walter Mitten. Keep out

Keep out/authorized personnel only.

The door to God is guarded by U.S. Marines. Captain his father is not.

In this study. I didn't go down to the hermeneutics park because I might catch hay fever. It's sunny today. Tulasi's house would be 100° F. You don't want to sniffle and tear and run that thin water mucus, do you? Then stay indoors, sweetheart. There will be no apple pie, no rhubarb, no cream, it has all been forbidden. Triumph to make at least nine pages per hour, no split gut, no disruption of peace and you move on.

I read so quickly the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* lecture. He said God Lord Kṛṣṇa is the creator. Someone must be. It can't be impersonal. There

Devil rider. Zoroastrian evil god Sadāputa told in lecture. God is all-good, all-powerful. M. is sawing away, destroying the old interior of the van. I asked him to go on copying my tapes. I'll ask for a progress report. The noise disturbs me and I write about it.

Who has the guts to tell his story? I just want to read.

Spittle kept in mouth,
urine goes into bowl,
everything in its place
smooth mouth napkin

So those hellish planets, you finished reading the chapter, huh? Not for you? You'll escape that worst. Pretty smart to side with the Swami. Your Catholic background gave fear and credulity to hell and soul can be damned. Christ saves. Kṛṣṇa saves. Swamiji saves from immediate misery,

You can't read my mind
or psyche and claim to know
why I stuck like pleasing glue
to the *kīrtana* and books he offered.
Gītā says we were past lives *yogīs*

The runch and buckle. High speed rattle of bones and now we are still and peaceful in green encumbered valley where I will write and walk and answer questions.

(friendly), TKG, football field, operas, black writers who don't like you on principle of skin, murderers and robbers and all *karmīs* and official positions only want to see if you have money or else no one gives a damn. You get some donations from pious people, and some take you to their homes. There you write this "trash" no one could understand, they think you were writing a book on *bhakti*.

Soul purpose
was jazz tune,
Nephertite was her name.
Don't blame it on Elvis,
Johnny Griffin either, this is
the living room old T.V.
Turn it off.
I am a devotee of
Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Slam door on toes. No, I know the purpose of those rats. Keep them out. The jolly well crusader defends his rights.

Midnight path of writer
safe in houses,
he exposes mind and spirit and
peek-a-boo game says,
"Eeek, enough?!" I see
a slip showing,

a tattered dress and overalls, borrowing words from others, the newsletter of the nation of ISKCON, letters to editors and old John Wayne of Sats, set your jaw beard of two days, he too is

He says I got to write and read and do it much more. Talks to ladies and men and gives them *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* message, he gets by on that. *Bhakti* pays the bills. But love of God is the goal and goes only to the bold, pure, surrendered. Figure it out, what you should do.

(1 hour, 11 pages, Wicklow)

sle with never a thought for solitude or retreat or even privacy. I thrived on the social and communal. I took the lead, took the labor wherever I could. I mixed with the heavyweights, delivered the latest directions of the GBC.

I am doing this now. Kṛṣṇa, please accept me. Śrīla Prabhupāda, please accept me. I have taste for this and I will produce. I am producing every day.

Yeah this is

every day I have the blues . . .

want pure Kṛṣṇa consciousness but can't play (pay) the price.

Sing it, man. I want a life alone and come then into company and deliver simple truths from books for followers, got seminars lined up with them, give them from the heart the best of what I'm giving.

In this spirit, I've arrived at this way after careful deliberation. And I look to talk with Supreme Lord to pray to Him. Please make us all strong. Give us taste for holy names.

O life of prayer
to utter God's names
in quiet place
and then proclaim it

You'd like that reciprocation with Supreme Personality of Godhead, and He *is* giving it to you. His angels of mercy do visit you. He also allows you to do what you want.

this recyclable
trash? No, this is one way trash.
Never to come back, it returns to
earth and air and oblivion, gets
dissolved and my false ego with it.

Writing the imperfect way wherever you are, secure knowing you are doing it and getting lost in it. Good. Then just be sure that it's all aimed as an offering of devotion to Kṛṣṇa. Don't leave that out, either implicitly or explicitly. Then it's a complete act.

Sunshine comes out on my back. Take off the sweater. Cross legs and uncross them. Aniruddha dāsa's car is here and he's helping Madhu, I think. I'll say hello to him or anyone when I'm free from this hour. They are working intensely in the van and me down here.

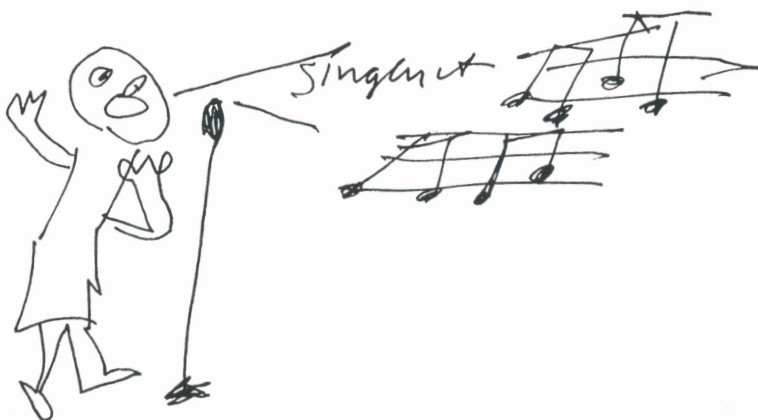
Kṛṣṇa, You are the reality.

Mirrors are reflections. This world is a reflection of You and spiritual world. The *śāstra* is the judge and speaker of truth. That literary incarnation is the only way we know. *Anarthopāśamaḥ sākṣād*. The *jīvas* are ignorance and don't know the method to mitigate their miseries. Śrīla Vyāsadeva compiled this *samhitā*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, for teaching them the linking process of *bhakti-yoga*. "It's all there," Śrīla Prabhupāda said.

Take off another sweatshirt. Stick out the hour. Your head is okay. Your heart is okay. You have blunt senses and a sun hat. You have proclivities

To come out to praise your master, bold *ācārya*, loved by all of us, appeared as old one, took jets to all countries, spoke strong against all *mūḍhas* of the world. We invest our all in him, and he gives us Kṛṣṇa's love. Don't be childish and renege your vows, he says. You are on the right track, you boys and girls. Worship Lord Kṛṣṇa and go back to Godhead. We worship Śrīla Prabhupāda, we do.

Play that tune.



Be bopping it soft and true your song to your guru, one guru Prabhupāda. It ain't a Centennial plate, just happens to fall in the years 1994, '95, '96 long as I can.

So this guy likes to avoid the crowds. He does get headaches. When you leave him alone, he has a steady record of producing at least some small sized serviceable book, sweet like *Dear Sky* and he'll give more milk like that.

Be careful of those yeah buts, Smartie. Don't be too intelligent that just because you cannot fit *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* into your world view, which anyway was formed by George Bush in reaction to Waco and money international conspiracy manipulators. You are prejudiced against Varāha. Just take what *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* gives us. And it's all transcendental.

That marvelous literature he brought with him starting with First Canto and he had stacks of typed papers, Second and Third Cantos, I typed for him, wonderful years *don't ever forget it*, 1966 '67 '68 '69 '70. Oh, those years.

You did, you did. He did give so much to you. You heard *Kṛṣṇa* book in earphones and typed it. I am his *śiṣya* always, don't forget those years. He remembers me. We work imperfectly.

I was not a good manager.

Not even a good servant.

Hankered for American amenities when I was with him in India.

Now I am doing a little better but still have that *anartha* of wanting my own space at all costs. Just a place to write in, my letters to His Divine Grace in separation.

Offer your food to him. But where's your devotion? What work are you doing?

We each admit, "You found me out. This is my shortcoming. I can't seem to surrender on this point. Can't seem to change. The mercy is being withheld. I am ornery. Alas, who will help me?"

That's our lot.

credulous again. Śrīla Prabhupāda is one moon, self-effulgent Gurujī."

Yeah, I go for a man
who wears an Adam's
swami hat in taxi
spit on earth. Roll on
holy earth.

Give us nectar, sip of water, and we elect Sats
as head man of water department and free-write
notes. Ten volumes per year.

I goes for a man who pees in his Adam's hat
and ruins a good book by telling us what a
mleccha he still is.

Green rushes, weeds of angles, delicate more
than girls, private weed garden behind fence.
Lord Kṛṣṇa speaks to us.

"Closing all the doors of the senses"—he's talking here about the *yogīs*. But the devotees are better. They are good in all seasons. Nonfickle, water-proof servitors. "The best process is Kṛṣṇa consciousness. If one is always able to fix his mind on Kṛṣṇa in devotional service, it is very easy for him to remain in an undisturbed transcendental trance, or in *samādhi*" (Bg. 8.12, purport).

The yoga method isn't practical in this age. Take up services you are always absorbed in. They must remind you of Kṛṣṇa. Then it's *samādhi*.

said, "Hey Ani, chant your rounds!" Ani said, "I can't do it all day, but I have come to help your servant, Madhu, fix his van. It's a free offering of love by my work in which I am expert. Will you accept it even though it's not chanting?"

"Yes," I say, "and I will chant for you. I will chant for you and pray you will chant too when you read my book *Japa Walks, Japa Talks* which answers all questions on *japa*." Halley-lou-yah. This page too. He's right, chant Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare. Why all these words? I live, I speak Hare Rāma Hare Rāma. More later.

(1 hour, 12 pages, Wicklow backyard)

diately thought of my writing and the attempts to become proficient at it, as good as nondevotee writers in my own way. But chanting is our base. He said for very experienced devotee like Hari-dāsa Ṭhākura ,there may be only chanting.

Work at writing. Work at this one, and change the cartridge when it runs out.

Seventy-five degrees in here. At least I can be with the Kṛṣṇa and Rāma *tulasīs* and it's not too hot yet. In this last sentence, the sunlight comes out, but let's stick it out here and depend on Ireland's cloudy nature.

I'm pretty well prepared for the Inis Rath seminar and don't want to divert my present schedule, which is packed with duties all day long just with little breaks in between so you don't burn out. Otherwise, I have enough to keep going twenty-four hours a day. M. isn't copying the tapes, he's so intense on his van work. I am after him.

The clock struck two. Hickory dickory dock. I want to make sense—comment I make on reading Simic's riddles. Your spoon's full each day like cod liver oil just to remind you who you are as a writer and what you want to do.

This one is hard so far, although it may not appear so, written in summer with saffron tennis shoe loafers, and all saffron, in fact, awaiting lunch to be brought to me. Brief ecstasies pass one after another, and I try not to overdo attach-

then still more, time to read in Śrīla Prabhupāda. This life . . . is good, so don't knock it and say it's not producing some ISKCON sellable product like jars of honey for temple stores or carrots donated to the kitchen and money or notice in *IWR* of your giving a book to the top prostitute of a wayward village in the Pekinese Islands. Note Ambassador's got his foot in Hare Kṛṣṇa sneakers.

Note . . . beware of tortoise. I don't see one.

Pet, I know so many Freudian illusions can crop up, but that's not our game. Shame on them and Darwin too. Marx collapsed in historical fortune. Rise and fall of everyone. Capital C and capital F, says the thermometer. C and F, take your choice.

In Ireland, we can read the local language, Americanese me.

Then what? "Go further than you think you can." I end a piece and say, "Skip lines." Deal with the world as segments in small problems. None get resolved, each one put aside.

Śamika Rṣi and the whole entanglement with the FBI. What was it like for him? Like hell, loss of money and reputation, even fear of imprisonment. Years go by, it seems to dwindle out, I never know exactly what it was like. He keeps things to himself and also seems to trust in Bhagavān to oversee everything and bring him finally to surrender at His lotus feet. So now he's moved nearer to the famished community of squalor and poverty and hope—always trickle of hope—known as

to—life in inner realm of meditation on holy names.

You are on a low level, you admit. "For me, this is best," he says. That's it. That's it. When I see what the Godbrothers and their followers are doing, I don't think, "Yes, that one is doing what I should do; he is really touching me as doing the best thing." Rather, I acknowledge in an objective sense that they are doing important, selfless work—say someone like Nirañjana Swami, speaking Kṛṣṇa consciousness in former Soviet Union by spreading himself out as much as possible, training the devotees to be preachers and temple leaders and managers of men and money and teaching them the basic philosophy—and in this way holding up the mission in a huge area of population. But I'm in a different stage of life. Have the courage to face it and accept it.

Don't freak out that you are different than they and have different needs. Then work for the cause which is yours and which you believe is as important for you to do as it is important for Nirañjana Swami to persist in Russia or TKG in China—although very few will understand, and instead will see you as an insignificant sluffer. Stick to it and come out the other side singing and smiling, not, "I told you so, ain't I good?" But yes, this is right, I am offering all I can to Lord Kṛṣṇa. I hope that's true. No one wants to be mistaken in such a big gamble. I mean, such an important decision. Am certain the men I know are not able or willing to decide this for me. Each has to do it.

I think that's all on that for now.

ISKCON, your attempt to pursue Kṛṣṇa consciousness is an hallucination. Am I outside ISKCON? No, I'm in a *tulasī* house. I'm in a Wicklow community. I am making an contribution to the movement. Holding seminars in ISKCON temples, visiting them, doing the work of an ISKCON uniformed *sannyāsī*. ISKCON doesn't mean merely residence in a particular building or holding an official post.

"Don't make me a trustee," I said. "I resign." They didn't let me resign? I will simply not do the work. I resign whether they accept it or not. They and their committees. It doesn't make sense, all the red tape. I couldn't get out of it. I just quit as far as I am concerned, so if there's any work to be done by a property trustee, I'll tell him I can't do it. Won't do it.

About eight minutes left. Don't fence me in. I am no paranoic. They are not after me. If they come, I'll calmly say, "What do you want?" I'll listen to their actual proposal. If it's something that compromises my spirit of surrender as I see it, I may not accept their proposal. But for now, don't waste time on imaginary calamities and scenarios. No one is coming, no one is threatening to kick me out. True, no one is saying I'm doing marvelous work. I don't need that. Just need an underground of encouragement from some readers *and* my own daily scrutiny of acts.

So busy this morning and good things too which may last as preaching and reading. A writer who writes—Prabhupāda poems and a simple instruc-

time do I have? I'm trying to save myself, enter Kṛṣṇa meditation. I don't have a job in the world. I am free now. Use it well in a way others can also benefit from, if I become Kṛṣṇa conscious.

(1 hour, 10 pages, Wicklow *tulasī* house)

evening class in a temple, but I prefer to give only the morning, although I can do both.

You start out with a desire to discuss an issue in a very central way asking, "How shall I live? Shall I stay in the temples more? Not write this way? etc." But the talk breaks down into particulars like this. I don't know how to approach it.

It's up to me to decide. In the old days, Prabhupāda would decide. And one couldn't expect to spend so much time alone in retreats. I assert it's all right for me to do now. That's one area—the very fact that I'm deciding my own engagement, and I'm choosing to be alone a lot and to read and write in that time, to practice writing as a means to get the best honest expression and to ask myself what's the best to do.

How am I doing that? You are allowing yourself to do it. It's not, however, like a vacation, or getting out of work. It is a vocation, study, alone, and I like it. I see the Kṛṣṇa conscious life and "association" is often superficial. But Śrīla Prabhupāda also saw how dealings were superficial, but he didn't avoid going to neophytes and encouraging them. He took great pleasure in seeing people taking to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, chanting in *kīrtana* and listening to him speak *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. On behalf of his spiritual master, he wanted to set up and maintain worldwide centers for preaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness and devotees could live there.

I don't have the preaching spirit *in a certain form*. I don't have the taste for going from one

vince your superiors to let you do it in your religious institution. In my case, I'm going ahead and doing it, as my organization isn't so centralized yet as to dictate to a *sannyāsī* what his program must be. You could say I'm getting away with this freedom. It could be withdrawn. But isn't it Kṛṣṇa who is allowing me? Is it karma or like pious credit that enables me to live this way at 54 years old, a kind of retired stage of life after sufficient years in the more regimented mold of doing duties as one is expected to do? It seems like that.

If you leave it up to me, if you say I can decide, then I grab a take toward being alone. I'm aware one should preach, so I hope to make progress with my attraction to the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa and His names and then be a living example to my disciples and others which I can convey mostly by writing and also by being with them at scheduled times each year for seminars and by exchanging letters with them.

Why should they think I can help them? In ISKCON, there is an undercurrent of questioning whether the advanced senior devotees really have a right to advise others. You could call this a crisis of faith. It's not so obvious as it used to be when many gurus had fallen down, but it still exists. And at a certain level, it is a justified question, "Why should I listen to this person who preaches Kṛṣṇa consciousness?" You listen to him because you are inspired by his attainment and practice of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

other demands. I'm trying to take the latter choice.

Aside from reading and chanting, there's writing. You can do it four or five hours a day easily in the retreat setting. It's not actually a retreat, it's a work day. It's a normal writer's life full-time. But in order to practice, you have to "retreat" from other engagements. And since ISKCON doesn't seem ready for this kind of life occupation—and I'm not ready to declare it openly, I take "retreats." If I did it more as an open target, it's likely people would try to steal my time on the plea of other preaching duties that I ought to do. *Full time writing is not a recognized service.*)

This is a crucial question. You write and publish a lot. And now you write much more than you publish. It's your adopted method of "re-writing" or being careful that what you publish is the best you can do. You certainly publish enough so that it's permissible to practice writing for your own benefit—as artist or devotee, aspiring to be honest person.

You are trying to meet yourself and meet God and be with Śrīla Prabhupāda in separation by this way of writing.

You give vent to self-expression,
you seek to help yourself to do the best service, just as I'm trying in this morning's session.
It's fun.
It's serious work.

Everyone is pursuing life in the way they think best, many in rural communities as *grhasthas*. And some become leaders and organizers of something in ISKCON. A senior devotee can become a guru and then guide disciples. So many opportunities to fulfill, and through them, one renders service to ISKCON by helping the spread and maintenance of the movement. *I am doing it too*. Everyone makes choices and I do too. I have been fortunate to be able to do something I love to do and which will fill me personally.

It's a challenge to try to become a better writer, better preaching devotee in the basics of chanting and reading. And to be an honest person. And to remain aloof from controversy and superficial life that can engulf you in a religious institution. I take strong stands to avoid the trivial. Someone else can do the work, I say. As a *sannyāsī*, it's not wrong to stay out of management. It's natural for me—I have no taste or expertise for it. Someone else *will* do it.

It's not irresponsible I'm doing responsible work.

So this morning session is taken up with this. Good. You write out of a personal concern to be accountable. You take care of yourself because no one else will do it for you. Stand up for your rights. You appear unorthodox, but you are not flaky. The strange appearance in your life is the way you write, which includes the free expression of what's on your mind and isn't always usable as

Someone says, "Are you saying that lecturing and preaching outwardly are lesser?" No, I do them. But when I'm not actually doing them, I am preparing myself to do them. It takes me a lot of time alone in preparation to be fit to perform Kṛṣṇa consciousness for others. *You* may not need this time, sir, or you may not know how to use it, but I love it and can take it and thrive and not be deviated.

Pray to Śrīla Prabhupāda not to be proud, to obey him. Thank him and Lord Kṛṣṇa for the precious time, and use it well.

(1 hour, 9 1/2 pages, Wicklow)

and-such. The annals and meditations and by goodness drops of Satsvaroooper Admiral of his paper fleet, paper hat.

He's got some sections of thick *Bhāgavatams* to read from tomorrow to the hapless (I don't mean that) householders. Here it is guys, I read to them what they should be doing.

"Blast us," he said.

You should be doing occupational duties which arouse your attraction to Kṛṣṇa, or else your work is a waste of time. *Your* work, Prabhus, is within Kṛṣṇa consciousness, so I don't say it's a waste of time. There are many good symptoms. Just take the *śāstra* and my words as needful improvement. We can all do better, right?

Sunshine intense down on me here. I would have brought my sun hat if I knew. Well, you can always expect change in Ireland weather.

Hari, right, Jain amar scarf to floor, U.S. Olympic sweatshirt, one arm on, one off. I try to make sentences clear, but it could be taken to mean there's one arm cut off the sweatshirt. Oh well.

One shoe off and one shoe on
my son—what is it? Dumplin'?

Went to town to market, with tisket tasket girl,
with Evan's chance?

The roam and run. Get a hold of your own mind. Be not cluttered like M. has made this house with entire contents of van scattered all over the place and spreading further like a plague or ooze oil.

painting. Hmm, must be profound, I can't make head or tails out of it.

And I am forced to make sense? These people who mark God and talk speculation and rant as if they're independent.

You can do that and perhaps I too a bit when I go "freer" in these sessions and spew off whatever comes. I don't know. I just admit it—allow it to come, but keep saying, "No bad intentions, nothing malicious here, don't mean to blaspheme anyone worthy, just me head folks, a little tetched with a little beer in the pubhouse."

It's like that.

When you are lonely.

The irony or contradiction of my telling the householders they should be more serious in reading. Hypocrite. Admit it. Francis said in one sermon, "You have come to hear me, thinking that I'm saintly. Well, I just ate fat foods." And once he poured ashes on his head when standing to lecture in front of the nuns. Quite a guy. Supposed to have run outside once to build a family of snow people—maybe when agitated by sex and family desire—and said to fellow celibate monk, "Just see, here is my family!"

But what shall I say? You think I do a lot of reading here in Wicklow when I occupy one of your houses and you cook for me and I hint the sweets should be more opulent? Well, I read forty-five minutes in the early morn, then another

pranihito. Śuphuma, we've heard the *Vedas* are the authority. We heard it from our authority.

Yes, but what is the meaning of the *Veda*? It's surrender to Kṛṣṇa. This man has chanted the holy names of Kṛṣṇa, so you can't claim him for hell.

Well, that's a nice retention exercise. Thanks for putting it into our amorphous autobiography.

You pip squeak.

Work in three modes, food in three modes.

"The whole cosmic order is under Me. Under My will it is automatically manifested again and again, and under My will it is annihilated at the end" (Bg. 9.8).

Seems passionate, this kind of running through exercise, just hurrying, in a pause, keep hand moving, and once you feel its lack of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, you grab *Gītā* open anywhere and write a verse in. That's true neither to the spirit of the Writing Session or to the scripture study. Who do you think you are fooling? What do you hope to accomplish this way except "1 hour, 9 pages, Wicklow"?

Oh boy, he's got me by the tail.

Dog house. M. took away straw
bed of cat and I feel sorry for that.

Would like to make a jingle
for Chris Kringle
and the boys at the bat.

You insist on moving me along, and that can get
unnerving. If I stop to think, maybe I could be
holier.

Holy holy holy
merciful and mighty
God in three persons

blessed Trinity—we actually sang that in public
school, up to 1953. Wouldn't do it nowadays, for
sure. Sing some pop or rock tune, I love you,
babe.

Yes, well, those days, down you go.

Kṛṣṇa is with us and the heart beats. In bath
think of Him. I advise you chant. I encourage and
coach you, think and chant. I tell you and into
your ear drop post-hypnotic suggestion, thank God
you are not a mundane author.

But this quick moving makes me wonder.

Hurry, hurry past the censor
go past Go, don't collect \$200,
to Baltimore Street, Baltic Ave., Atlantic Ave-
nue, Park Place hotel on, place little wood house
on Venter Place, mark the Go . . .

Monopoly by Parker,
who got the money so it don't blow away?

Holy—you so fast you also outdistance the sin-
cere devotees, breezy, dizzy one. What good is
your speed if we can't even think? You folks (NG,
etc.) even advocate, "Don't think."

I'm questioning you, "Is that a right way to
spend an hour, not thinking? And just writing?
Write what comes, what's the benefit of that?

But why not center and focus writing ability to preach, make arguments? You act as if all preaching has been done. There's a need for it.

I need freshness. People get convinced better when you write from core of heart. I'll come out of this knowing what it's like to let go. And knowing I'm still a devotee.

Sounds weird, I know. This session spun off like this partly because *you* drove me to it. You imp, you scoundrel, you gremlin critic—you who have opposing spirit to Writing Session, criticized it and drew me off the track so I could hardly speak while you demanded like right-wing middle-class American, "What's this weird stuff? Let's hear Hare Kṛṣṇa teachings straight."

But I don't mind. You attacked me and I used you. Kṛṣṇa and Śrīla Prabhupāda could have been served better, that's for sure.

I ask forgiveness for rough spin-off session. Yes, look at it later. But don't Narcissus loving your mug in mirror. Lonely weed the Russian poet wants to be. Bombast à la Whitman. Not for me.

I'm a little batty from having to attend regimented *āratis*. Want freedom, give me an hour. Want rockets, want a quiet hour of worship of God, Kṛṣṇa. He knows I'm sincere. Just working stuff out of my system.

Three minutes left. I do apologize. I will try to do some reading before the day is out, some *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* selection at least for my building collection. You can talk to devotees about it. Give us te books.

July 30

3:34 P.M.

Well, I'm in the backyard and so are flies, a breeze against his slip, *dhotī*, legs, grit those teeth in your head, here we go.

Soul aboard. Fixin' to go. Exact words quietly spoken of *śāstra* in warm *tulasī* house I just did on my radio show. Writing life each step of the way. Hood up, hood down, four seasons, all continents of seven *dvīpas*. Don't change gears now, but be a *conduit* for higher knowledge.

Faiths I do declare. Here goes again. No roller coaster ride, please. Nothing harried where you throw up. Tough guys of South Boston, South Beach, sorry, they'll always be here in this world. Face up to it and find your courage when that does occur. Maybe they'll let you slip by with a senior citizen's pass, "Spare the old guy." Or just the opposite: break the oldster's head, an easy touch, and rob his wallet. He's as good as dead anyway, and can't run after you. Best victims.

But the one who has eternal knowledge has learned he can't be killed, is very lucky in the world. Lord Kṛṣṇa says to Arjuna, "Know that this world is temporary and miserable, so having come here (by mistake), engage in My devotional service."

". . . he who works for Me, who makes Me the supreme goal of his life, and who is friendly to

I am here too. The feeble effort I shall not laugh at. My little plan may grow and happen. To turn within to hear Lord Kṛṣṇa speak again the words He spoke to Arjuna for all of us. By repeating them in my own words. I mean His words in my voice. And hear His intent in my ears (and brain).

And stop and let it go to heart. I was thinking to browse through book on prayer of heart just to get an idea but basically then to do it in Kṛṣṇa's book, the book I will keep in my own *bhajana-kuṭir*. That *kuṭir* of heart.

It's okay for one like me to spend time like that. *Do it*, said Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have my permission and wholehearted approval. Read three hours or more, whenever you get time, or else how will you preach?

Don't doubt it; it's a great idea. Go in and do it.

Feeling for others. Feeling for people. M. waiting for Ani, I told you. Words I had with Pragoṣa yesterday. My exchanges with them are very limited. They may feel this as a lack. I'm in monk's prison and cannot go out to them in their stages of life. There's not much contact possible for us. But there's an important connection. I will speak tomorrow to them about *hari-kathā* and how it's so important in our lives. I am one of them but speak for the transcendental knowledge in the books. Give advice and back it up by living mostly alone with the books.

"It's Kṛṣṇa's mercy," he said, "not my mercy." Prabhupāda.

Vignettes. Hammering away in the van. "I am not a bookworm," I'd said, if someone accused me of that. I'd say a bookworm is one who studies *Vedas* but doesn't come to the conclusion, such as the yajñic *brāhmaṇas*. Their wives loved Kṛṣṇa. Those who read but fail to love are merely bookworms. Māyāvādī scholars; no right conclusion. But if you love to hear of Kṛṣṇa's activities in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* in pure devotional service, then you are not a worm but a lover of *kṛṣṇa-kathā*.

Start again. Yellow jackets, you know. The books, you said, you'll speak for them. I clutch for them. Without them, I am like a blind man without his seeing-eye dog or his stick. Where is the *sāstra*? As a writer, I face void or plethora of unconnected material which is ultimately void in a jumble.

Make fun of New Age whites, everyone does. And . . .

No, please, check the book. It's either *Bhāgavatam* or world-vatam. Take your choice.

King Tut.

King Dhruva. Tongue of me forms words he first taught us. I shall be satisfied and you also to hear it.

The rye grass. The couch grass. The ruddy tight plumes remind me of big plumes in a large jar

this area express appreciation for what I do. They are restrained and good-hearted. They have a vision for what they want to do, and it's holistic, well-rounded. By comparison, I'm a monk with "nothing." I have nothing materially, but they are willing to give me the benefit of the doubt and say I have the main thing, attraction to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. But if I don't have that, then I'm truly nothing.

Got a stiff neck anyway and
a penchant for elaborate
desserts.

I told you about the small gray stone house. "Cramped," she called it. M. has filled it up so it's like an overflowing closet. That's our situation comedy series. The McGee closet. Don't go in there! You hear him open it, and for two or three minutes, loud sound effects of things crashing out of it. Have a laugh, we all know what it's like. Domestic charms. "They'll do it every time."

Soar bird. Floats on air and above trees, sky paints above him in air, it's no video, no paper presentation but outdoors of nature. The elements. Let's drink to that from a Vittel water bottle natural mineral water from grand source.

What's in a word?

Kṛṣṇa. All-attractive. Our *sampradāya* has great respect for words.

You got stain on sweatshirt at lunch. The tomato sauce used to dip those delicious veg patties in. It remains on your sweatshirt. Plane above. Nose

That's prayer.

Not some extraordinary state or vision and voices.

But deep into it. I don't mind if you think Christians will help in some basic attitudes.

I want to read *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and *Bhagavad-gītā* in that way and chant in that way. Then the Writing Session can reflect more those concerns.

Here's a hypnotic suggestion for overnight. You will rise at twelve and start writing from important concerns. It won't be for audience; you won't feel empty; you'll take the time you need to write and then be done with it. Each day you can write like this. Even if you are busy, you can still do a twelve to one exercise. Don't get all gobbled up in lecture prep or travel notes. Give us a good Writing Session each day if you like, thoughtful and yes, out of control—but not zany, wild ride of feverish speed trip.

But lid's off, no censor or critic up yet, and your heart writes a concern, and no one worries what you will do with the piece—you just write it. I couldn't go like that now, but maybe in the morning, as I did today 12-1.

Now it's warm and bird chirps and I feel okay, don't blame yourself. I look forward to dictating this out loud and enjoying it. Then I'll do some studies. This way you spend a retreat. You've got at least two hours for some prayer books and the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* gathering of favorite sections.

July 31

12:05 A.M.

A big, white-tan moth flutters in front of me interrupting my start as I try to catch him. Better you go on anyway. I feel lack of yesterday's theme. Then go ahead with today's themeless. Theme park. Seamless.

The time I woke up. Pitiful "bill" in dream last night. The ghosts—women with stool on bodies who approached men seductively in the shadows.

Leave that place. Your eye is all right, just a shadow of that feeling during the night. Not "all clear"? Clear enough for the 10 A.M. class? You don't want to disappoint the devotees. Let no one know I'm here in Wicklow writing my weeds amid weeds.

The truth is the truth. "Let's waltz the rumba." New way to do old. *Paramparā* taken in and spoken in creative way from your experience. But you don't claim to have experienced the advanced stage of Kṛṣṇa consciousness in its many steps. I freely and loudly admit it. Make a testimony. Ajāmila is also a name of a disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda. Ajāmila dāsa. You could save yourself at death and then go on to holy place like Hardwar to attain perfection chanting holy names in seclusion, no one knows you are there.

Chant and chant. But God didn't tell me to chant extra? Your spiritual master encourages extra chanting. But mainly he encourages preaching.

out thinking you need to imitate. Another of the early Fathers mentioned in *Philokalia* practiced the interior prayer alone but then became a traveling preacher and taught it to many people wherever he went.

Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa, you chant and bring the oral prayer into mind by attention. Attention is work by the devotee, but it requires God's mercy. Then you bring prayer from mind to heart. I want to practice it but in a very "natural" way, whatever comes (like free-writing?) and not inclined to forced or concocted process, and be careful of grafting Jesus prayer techniques into *japa*.

But no harm to feel contrite or to pray for attention to the syllables. Give thanks to Lord Kṛṣṇa and Śrīla Prabhupāda for giving us the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra. Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare/Hare Rāma Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma Hare Hare.

When all is said and done, half a retreat is almost up and you are a bit surprised as you check off the tenth day in pink highlighter. Where did they all go to? "Three to five years go by so fast," he said, as a justification of why to feel optimistic in pushing on with work to pay off his mortgage. And a life goes. There may be accident, someone young may die, as happened in Guyana, Abhaya dāsa's son passed away. Was he hit by a van?

Then you apply the philosophy. Why this happened to you as you try to be happy in this world. The solace of chanting and hearing can't be taken

it to Prabhupāda by his picture. You bring it to your Guru Mahārāja. It's a token. It's a way to transform all the food. I'm not ready for increased austerity or devotion. Or I'd like the increased devotion, but can't raise myself to "violent" change, increase, more concentration, etc.

At least I'm filling the day's hours with service. The Writing Session goes in that direction. It reports the life. And into the life is preaching today, if you feel okay, to the devotees. Stack of four heavy books to place beside me, and I sample them to advise them how to lead a life in Kṛṣṇa consciousness with attempt to gain attraction to hearing. One point I'll make is that it's not esoteric, or even advanced, or for *sannyāsīs* only. It's the basics, and without this, life is illusion and we are not awake. Don't be despondent when this is pointed out. Rather, take heart that it's right in your backyard, like fruit to be picked, and so you should do it. But if you don't, if you say, "Why tell us that this is required? We already told you that we don't have a taste for it," then that's not good. You should reach out and take it. Take time to read. Chant in a better way.

Oh, you are preaching it, but how "a better way"? It's mechanical and inattentive what we do. And so I will gently suggest improved attitudes and practices, and that will "force" me to do it also.

I like the life I'm leading and going out to write in the backyard. Do more, do better, or keep at it at least.

while the *pūjārī* dressed the Deities in Italy and elsewhere.

Devotees appreciate the efforts of peers. I love it when I hear a sincere expression that a book of mine inspired someone. It does happen.

Hare Kṛṣṇa. Waves of feelings. The devotees of Śrīla Prabhupāda. Don't let it pinch your heart with envy when you hear senior members leading good preaching, but be glad. Be glad you are part of it and you don't have to do exactly what they do, but qualify yourself and help others to become qualified.

Are you sincere when you tell them to read more? Do you really care whether they do? Do you expect, for example, these ladies to do any more than they are doing—caring for kids and house and husband? Well, I don't want to harass them, honestly. I'd like to give them something extra. Something nice, just as they give me nice *prasādam* each day. Yesterday Caraṇāravinda cooked good *kicchari* and vegs (and a small, hard sweet), so why can't I give them an easy-to-take meal in return and not hard words? It's my inclination not to disturb people, to encourage them in what they are already inclined to do for the Lord. And it's my duty to preach the glories of the Lord—*śravaṇaṁ-kīrtanaṁ*. But I don't have some exact expectation of results. I'm grateful to be able to preach it, as an exercise, and if there's some awakening in someone, then fine.

I am anticipating that reading session. And after it the *japa*.

The Lord is kind. He gave Himself. O my Lord, You are kind and therefore You have hundreds and thousands of names like Kṛṣṇa and Govinda. In these transcendental names You have invested Your full potencies and there are no hard and fast rules.

Many names and no hard and fast rules but I have no taste for them, Lord Caitanya humbly says. Then how to attain taste, how to chant always? One should chant the holy name in a humble state of mind, thinking oneself lower than a blade of grass. (if I read *Art of Prayer* I will also always read a Vaiṣṇava prayer in ratio; so as not to be diverted) One should be more tolerant than a tree. Put up with any distractions and go on concentrating as best you can. Pains, bugs, noises, and your own spiritual limits have to be tolerated.

One should offer respects to others—instead of cutting them down in your mind. All beings are part of God and should be respected in terms of that identity. Don't expect praise for yourself. Okay, the hour is suddenly up.

(1 hour, 9 pages, Wicklow)

Flap of wings in forest.

You could die at any moment—sounds like a theoretical, rhetorical line, but it's true and does happen. Don't push your luck.

My friends in Vṛndāvana, I dreamt of one last night. Friends at Gītā-nāgarī, selling my new books yesterday. May everyone live and not die, we hope. We are like the slow moving flying insects, clumsily moving in very dangerous situations, not aware how easily our life can be smashed out by the clumsy giant.

We don't even know what is spirit and matter. I mean most of us. Of course, you and I have some idea because we are partially enlightened.

You had to *explain* the philosophy this morning and tried to reach a consensus. Let's go away agreed in a certain way. The agreement is itself a satisfaction. We agree with you, dear teacher, and you have heard our point of view, what we consider to be our needs and our intelligent opinion, and you have agreed or attempted to modify our position in a way that pleases us.

This is the labor of communication.

Kṛṣṇa consciousness may be different, just loving and serving Kṛṣṇa. But mind you, pure devotees find out what Kṛṣṇa wants and they work simply to satisfy Him.

You spoke some *kathā*, thank you. And now folks . . .

Pioneer Press, printer of Soviet books on defunked empires, presents the childhood of Max

survive, you resort to these tactics. You need allies against your detractors.

You write about yourself.

Lord Kṛṣṇa has bows and arrows and by intelligence He's the maker of the most modern smart weapons. Even nuclear bombs. They are misusing God-given intelligence, *duskṛtina*. You have promised us to speak in *Bhagavad-gītā*. You have spent your time in this way.

The sessions could be prayers, you mused, although how you can put a ditty like, "I go for a man who wears an Adam's hat" into prayer, I'd like to know. Previous to you, Sats, prayer is pious, pure, aspires to transcendental, and is directed to God.

Can't call this prayer unless you join the *yata mat yata pat* party: whatever I do sincerely, that's my God consciousness, and it's as good as any other expression. As many ways as there are, there are that many valid paths to God.

I don't say that. When I thought that Writing Sessions could be constant prayer, I thought they were always attempts at sincere expression. Some of it is warm up, preparation to prayer, which is also important.

Giving vent to things on surface of mind and tongue to get them out of the way. Blow off a little rage. Blow away dust.

Remove that flying insect without killing it. Get ready. Glance of a lusty woman brought downfall

seek the bridges to others and to walk those bridges, you run the risk.

If someone stops you and says, "How do you know this is true?" can you say in confidence, "I read it in a letter Theophin the Recluse wrote to a pious lady in Russia in the 19th century"? Or, "I got it on the rebound from Charles Simic, winner of the 1990 Pulitzer Prize."

Strange collage.

We've been going thirty-five minutes. A cow is crying out. M. is hammering with Ani. Sky is gray but no rain. So a Writing Session can't be constant prayer, but you are willing to practice them as much as possible no matter what they are? I don't say that. I seek to improve them. They can be prayer.

O Lord of the universe. This pan wants to praise you. It can cut through.

God is proprietor. He makes the sun who serves Him. We heard in *śāstra*. I spoke today and need a day before I return to quiet.

Crows in the world. The *sauve*, cool material energy, perhaps you have seen her, Durgā-devī, riding on a lion. She carries a trident with which she pierces the *asura*. This is *not* a myth. There is a Durgā.

Well, what about those persons who are myths? I can't say. I'm not a cultural anthropologist expert. I accept that Vedic *Purāṇas* are not myths. I suspect other "myths" are related to Vedic truths,

to chant and read sometimes, but we have to keep at it. It will get better." I thought maybe it would. I thought of how I feel good on morning walks when answering questions on *japa*.

"Will we ever make progress?" they want to know. We face the fact we can't seem to make much more progress. Even if you don't go back to Godhead in this life, you can pray like they do in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, "Please let me be a devotee in next life and hear *kathā* of Kṛṣṇa and serve Vaiṣṇavas." That's a prayer of solace.

They sell vegetables by roadside. Money is used to support themselves. Grow healthy vegetables. Radishes by the roots. That is Kṛṣṇa consciousness too. But grow attraction for hearing about Kṛṣṇa. Don't neglect this.

A dry baked biscuit for dessert, sweetened by a little molasses used in the cooking. This is monk's life.

"Love this life because it is ours, and for the moment there is nothing better."

Drink to that.

Eight minutes left. Hee hee, you follow your schedule. I was not pure. They say I used to have enthusiasm. I already answered that question.

The time is now. Chant another round. You can't answer people's questions properly. Tell them again. Answer it again. Yes, the same thing you said yesterday. Have the heart to say it again today so you can believe it and live and go on to other questions without ducking the challenges. Okay, so you repeat yourself. What's the harm?

to his head. Look, the flying insects are crawling on his arm.

He—get this—would like us to consider his words as constant prayer. I say it's constant nonsense or exercise.

Ouch, an itch, this is getting weird, now they crawl on my neck flesh. It's time I went inside like a civilized man and read and think of how to better myself and tomorrow pick up constant prayer again. Drop down on my page and wiggle your fore antenna. It all makes sense. We are conditioned souls and forgot God. But hearing *śāstra* revives it. Devotees admitted we don't have taste except love for our own children. Kṛṣṇa is far away. I said I know. I know how you feel. I've been going for one hour. I will improve tomorrow. Tell yourself that. Tell yourself this is constant prayer or it could be. Tell yourself I am doing okay but could do better.

Kṛṣṇa is in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. I ate enough. My heart is flesh but also seat of soul and Super-soul. Down with Simic and other agnostics. Pity them. But defend your turf. Stick with Śrīla Prabhupāda tonight. I'll chant too.

(1 hour, 10 pages, Wicklow backyard)

The WS standard is to keep going, feel good, you can't fail—learn the valuable lesson, to write what you feel. It's not so much catching the words that come and writing them with no sense, but finding meaning in them, going from one to another. The electric saw *complains* as it bites through the wood, slows down. He starts again and this time buzzing right through it in high power. There's a guard over the saw so I don't worry, put that out of my mind.

Fly seems to suspect there's something good inside my water bottle, sits on cap, whirls around the bottle. I'll have to clean it off now, dirty bugs. Water comes down from the mountain.

I speak same old thing. Śrīla Prabhupāda doesn't hesitate to do so. He introduces a phrase, "As I have said several times," or even, "As I have explained many times"—and it's hardly a modifier or disclaimer, it's just an introduction and a deference to those who hold such repetitions to be a concern. He says I know that I've said it before and I know you know it. But hear it again. Here goes. I should be able to do like that. But *concept* that is tedious and too repetitive may make us restless or bored. But if we surrender to the fact that we've heard it before but we don't shut out the chance to learn from it again, then we won't be bored. Yes, we are hearing on a tape we've heard before. Doesn't that happen pretty soon, even in listening to classical music or reading nov-

You walk and you don't have to know where. Here comes somebody into your life. Now they walk out of it. The pen keeps moving . . .

Fly on water bottle, sun glancing off page of yellow. Me torpedoes of light and thought.

I a man from time immemorial. Each one alone, Śrīla Prabhupāda says, no one else can help you in your society, friendship, and love. So you better turn to Kṛṣṇa.

I do write glosses of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. I have no original thought. Admit it. I wanted to be a writer but gave up and so I write these things and pause and then recall something I read. I am a Prabhupāda voice. He said he writes all the articles in *Back to Godhead* magazine but divides himself into different names. Fine. Then I get my desire, to be his mouthpiece, to serve him. Folks, what you read, it's my master. I'm just a journalist or scribe who writes it down and throws in a complaint now and then. We are in the anti-chamber just outside our master's room. I'm a secretary. I'm talking to you what he's been saying and writing in his books. I add a two-cents comment of my own, say my mom sent me a pair of socks or who made those fig newtons for dessert today?

Yes, the fig newtons were offered to him. We offer him the food and take the remnants. We pray let the offering come first. When we eat, let it be for strength to serve you and serve Kṛṣṇa on your order. So it is. I'm just a copier and repeater.

You had a painting of Mahā-Viṣṇu and did *kīrtana* in some hall. Mahā-puruṣa dāsa said, "Is it all right to trip on this?" He meant "get off," as when you take a drug like LSD and you trip off. He wanted to trip off with similar feelings as he looked at the Mahā-Viṣṇu.

What did you say to him?

I cawn't remember.

I went to Bhaktivedanta Manor long ago, arrived late at night. The *mukti-manina*, Rikodara, can't remember his actual name, greeted us all, all British and aware that we were American to the bone but Hare Kṛṣṇas of ISKCON, not such a big movement then.

That doesn't capture *any* of it.

I know. Be kind to me.

What about Vegavatī's writings?

Okay, she can do too.

What about stilettos and dancers? You are bored with others' outpourings, so why should anyone have to go through your stuff?

Because they take it as therapy from me. Better make it good. These are sensitive issues, and by mentioning them you haven't healed yourself. Some things are better not discussed; we call it a Pandora's Box.

But isn't that what you should write about? I do it for myself as literature. It may not be better than Vdd's or someone else's. But it's mine.

I can't be objective. I don't try to stop anyone else. But what am I supposed to do, try to find

I've weathered the sun. I can take it. My wide-brimmed hat is over me. Sun is okay and bugs mind their business.

Kṛṣṇa crash-dived into the lagoon. No, that wasn't Kṛṣṇa, it was a movie star in a movie John Young and I saw in a bar while we got drunk. We thought that line was somehow a motto for life, "I guess we'll have to crash-dive into the lagoon." Gene Shephard-type stuff.

And now what's your drunken motto?—I do salute the pipers and ciphers,

I am not happy or unhappy.

I want to pray to the Supreme Lord and make regular study of His books.

Okay, you're faithful and straight, I know. But when you write like this, what is it you are after? Come on, be truthful.

Truth-full, here's a spoon of
green laxative powder. Ain't
workin' so well lately.

Hey, are you putting me on? I asked you to come clean and write me an honest statement why you write like this.

And I don't have to answer *you*.

Career analysts want it. Apply at NYU office of publishers. Jackie is dead. Your book will come out whether you live or not. Or maybe you will live in the book knot.

Pose in van for where you will sit when it's parked and you are at your low desk for reading



Didn't mean that slip to lips. Beware Centaur. You gotta go inside soon—delirious.

Kṛṣṇa hit the demon. He killed demons who were actually His devotees who came to mock fight with Him.

In my book, *Before It's Too Late*, the editor gave "best" selections. Removed the _____. We may still do that. But it's a separate act to saving them just as they were written. I want them unedited to read. I don't want to appear just in a dressed up way, but as I actually am. It's better to read, at least for me. I don't need or want the best foot forward, the _____ removed, the needed appearance and even the improvising trimmed like a small piece of lawn in a front garden. I want wild garden as it is actually. That book *The Wild Garden* is not the actual wild garden as it appeared "in nature." So give us these books of as-it-is Writing Sessions.

August 2

10:05 A.M.

Arn. The tummy. The water in pipes. Come here busy after out loud *japa*, *Bhagavad-gītā* reading and then start silent reading of a Writing Session done in Śaraṇāgati. So a bit rushed and late by five minutes. Okay, you can slow down if you want, proceed nice and deep. It's all a continuation and development attempt to stay in the internal energy as long as possible.

Neophyte thinks internal energy is like being underwater and he needs to come up for some *prajalpa*, sense grat, laugh it all off, take a breath of "fresh," natural air. So serious to be beneath and intent in Kṛṣṇa consciousness?

Neophyte. Neo-flight. Bite nails I don't 'cause my morals and discipline improved or because you can't bite them with dentures? Confess, little mole, there's a burnt remnant mole on your cheek. The past is writ and index of the mind on thy face. Caved in face.

You gather impressions. Coming down the hill, a root gatherer, Robert Frost. I don't believe everything I write. I play around.

Hydraulic acid. He is fixing the van. Washing machine hum-humming and water, water is filling up something, so it's like living next to a creek. It is all in the mind. You could pay to hear the same sound on a relaxation tape and visualize it as a

source of much personal satisfaction. I don't need sex release. I've got word release and freedom in prose.

God gives me rope/I don't hang myself. *Ye yathā mārṇ prapadyante*, "As all surrender to Me, I reciprocate," Lord Kṛṣṇa says. We are going on the path of *bhakti* as Prabhupāda teaches.

Make it holistic. I'm very happy to talk and answer questions in the morning. Heigh-ho I humbly tackle them outdoors, boots fit, He lets me walk at my age, not so fast, but a mile or more in the hour. I'm happy and grateful. Let it be, my Lord, I give it back to the cause of Lord Hari, tackling the questions they ask with reference to guru and *śāstra* and *sādhū* and able to put myself honestly into it so they'll trust me, and we'll all try to improve our *japa*—which is the point of *Japa Walks*, *Japa Talks*.

So he is satisfied, okay. But Lord and *daiva* could make it harder for you, Sats, in remaining years. It might be good for your purification if you want more than average or mediocre results at the end of horse race (your body the horse, time ends in death at finish line).

In that case too, this is writing practice, so when life gets tougher, I may turn to writing and help myself and leave a record to help others.

That's okay, but not that madness of art as ultimate altar of sacrifice. Even writing has to be sacrifice. It may be sacrifice when you do it well, all motive and result as devotional service. There's

to award as He desires to
the worthy or to whomever
He desires?

Yes, I think it's like that. But
let us workshop on *japa*
and be into it, and hold your beads
and sit down, don't sleep off—I will
talk about it now and then.

The Henry Smithers Show. Until all ink runs out
we will read and speak on Lord and broadcast.
Heaven knows if we can just remember the best
from yesterday, where we left off our *parikrama*
rock and continue with *daṇḍavats* from there.
Speak out and throw down your voice and knees,
and the fatigue you feel is part of it. Just talk
Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, the same old thing, don't be afraid
to repeat. Reach out for whatever you just heard,
a Sadāputa lecture, a Śrīla Prabhupāda talk in
Hawaii, a faint recall.

Ink and voice supply and you go on saying, "Let
me in please, into the diver energy. Give me a
little *hladini* nectar, please. At least let the name
Kṛṣṇa not stick in my throat, but let me say it
freely—Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa."

Crawl on highway on all fours, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa
Hare Hare, a person who could always chant,
would be thought mad, but he could chant silently
so cop doesn't bang his hands over the culprit's
ears, causing partial deafness. Just to yourself so
the world doesn't know, and when you can, may

you? You could say he's profound or just laugh it off. I prefer to look through it in a clinical way (for footmail cuttings?) to see if there's anything useful for my pro-art writing. Then don't get involved. Like that. Keep yourself aloof. See if the state of art in writing is something you can use on your own.

But it seems you are best (in evening gown) to just go ahead plain and on foot in canvas Hare Kṛṣṇa shoes and do it your way. They say it's good to read authors. I don't know. At least I want to be as good as they, as serious, as willing to take on issues, and yet not like them at all. So it's a kind of checking up on them, and I hope I can return to my way.

When we first came to Swamiji, it occurred to us he wanted "plain cats," as I thought of it. No exotics. No trips, histrionics. No trying to be glamorous for girls, and of course, no drugs and illicit sex. Make it plain. And no music, but *kīrtana*. You really do it. You don't take what Swami says and play with it in your own way. Don't put him into your diary as an amusing person you met. But in seriousness as befitting one who finds his guru. Don't mock him or the life. Plain access to divine Kṛṣṇa is exotic enough—other worlds of demigods and transmigration is strange enough. Don't need to concoct.

So the plain requirement is still need. No duplicity. Meek. Honest. Religious. Clean. Tolerant. Friendly. Don't overeat. Stick with it determination. Faithful to *śāstra*. Bold enough to preach

in what way can "we" (who? ISKCON protectors)
accept them all as they are?

I'm an Injun follower of
native American lore, it's as good
as *Bhagavad-gītā* but maybe not so
sophisticated. This is my wife,
Pretty (fat) Running Water and
I produced a son, Hee Hee
Jones Running Stag. Lame One.
You guys don't have a monopoly
on Love (guitar), so let us in
to take over interreligious
fag or smokes peace pipe.

Geez, the board of ISKCON
says, how can we accept it?
And I skip to M'lou.

The board of oak. The runaway pip squeak in
saffron overalls.

The time. You say Simic's a lunatic or too clever
literary jokester, but what about what you are
doing here? Well, that's it, I come in and get out
of it fast.

What does it mean?

I know. It makes perfect sense to me. But you
folks may not know the allusions. A Nārada could
explain, it but it's not worthy maybe.

Did you get sick on the roller coaster with
Barbara McDonald at Rye Beach? She was from a

At Thy lotus feet. Give me a little nectar of reality of God worship.

Bend down with other devotees in a temple, submit to program, to śāstric authority, sit and take *prasādam*, enjoying all the assumptions and axioms of ISKCON. A relief it is. Be honored.

Let no big bird come in this window.

We'll do our legal and financial business, buy tickets, hold onto passports, work in the material energy. And avoid headaches by some relaxation.

No sunglasses. No meeting alone with women. Don't buy ice cream. Wear devotee clothes. Don't read obscene literature. And sigh, take it easy on yourself, old man. I think you're doing a good thing. I like your Writing Sessions. I sorry you get indigestion, but face it, you can't eat so much. I know you are very underweight, but still, you've got a certain small capacity and don't really need more. Be happy you can eat like a bird. I think you got ten pages here. Eliot and Anna are *not* here. But kick them out if they come. Go simple and plain to Swami and very much in need of his shelter.

(1 hour, 11 pages, Wicklow)

that's best. But maybe there are other things we want to say.

It's a puzzle. If we associate with devotees, friends, they too are hankering to pass over superficial topics or to share Kṛṣṇa consciousness in a personal way. We both want direct Kṛṣṇa consciousness. But it's likely we both also are pre-occupied with other concerns. We can't always put the lesser, personal concerns aside. When we go to guru, he deals with our personal problems deftly, with the authority of logic and *śāstra*. If we go to him, we really should be prepared to mostly hear straight śāstric presentations.

And yet . . . sometimes we want to talk in a more relaxed way. It's rare to find a kindred soul who is willing to share Kṛṣṇa consciousness with us, and rarer still to find a Kṛṣṇa conscious person who is also willing to give and take with us on the various items that burden our hearts. Who cares? A friend cares.

Kṛṣṇa is the best friend. He stays with us and indulges us, even lets us *do* what we want, even when it's not good for us. But He wants us to give up all "religions" and just surrender to Him. When shall I be able to do that?

Why do I persist in writing something else?

Why do I find it boring (do I?) or too restrictive to simply repeat a verse in the *Gītā* and reflect on it according to *paramparā* knowledge?

You know why. You're not fixed in yoga. The swirling waters of your consciousness. Hankering of the body.

Śrīla Prabhupāda says anyone who becomes conversant with *Bhagavad-gītā* "becomes righteous and he cannot forget such talks. . . . he enjoys life with a thrill, not only for some time, but at every moment."

Okay, peace be with you. I'm still desiring to hear about Lord Kṛṣṇa, but now I'm writing "on my own." Yes, it would be nice to stay in "church" or in the temple and go on hearing. But I have a limited attention span. Now I still want to be a devotee as thoughts flow in relaxed way. We are still with our guru, but without direct hearing of the formal lecture.

Even *gurudeva* doesn't always lecture. Yet he does always think of Kṛṣṇa or how to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Sometimes he chants alone on beads or thinks by himself. Or he may deal in finances, doing something to raise money or arrange for a preaching program. Those acts are also part of his natural Kṛṣṇa consciousness. He doesn't go outside of service to Kṛṣṇa.

I wish the same thing to be true of my Writing Sessions.

O wondrous fellow to have written so many books of Writing Session attempts. No, that's not my motive. If I have a creator drive, want to be prolific, then let it be purified. Let's write many books of an attempt to be Kṛṣṇa conscious, a successful attempt. Yes let's outnumber the non-devotee books with our books.

about writing for writing's sake. I do it for a plus reason. but I needn't reject the advise for writers. To reject something like this, is incomplete renunciation.

She thinks the world is empty. Zen Buddhism. We know (believe) the world is controlled by the Supreme intelligent being, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. In either case, we are talking about resistances to writing. One has to get through them and write what is meaningful. One who can help me do that is helping me to serve Kṛṣṇa. Use your writing for whatever you want, huh? Okay, I want it for serving God.

Liberate yourself
closet poet shakes his shackles.
Comes out in devotee attire.

What will you speak on next Sunday? I was thinking of holy name. I could answer some of the questions they gave me. Select some in highlight pen and just go over it. So it would be a *japa* workshop?

Yeah. But maybe something better. Maybe discuss Ajāmila. See how it goes when you read tomorrow as Yamarāja tells his men the glories of the holy name. See if you can extract from that for discourse on Ajāmila in the way that all these devotees can relate to. I tell them get serious, give priority to your chanting. They don't do it so much. It's my job to remind them. They think more of money and how to conserve their energies so they can live peacefully without being so

Then I become the doctor and nurse and shrink and do something to bring me to Kṛṣṇa. There, there, you *do* want to write *kṛṣṇa-kathā*, see?

Yeah, I do, thanks. I want to be loved. They show me affection. They praise what I am doing. They give me attention and care for what ails me. I do need therapy, but usually no one gives it to me.

"They" give it.

Who is they?

Your self, your writing. I don't know.

Another maneuver is to pick up something I previously wrote. Out here on picnic table, I have one of my own "*rasika*" books. Yesterday I felt it was too selected, edited tid-bits, and I needed more unrehearsed work like this. But go take a look at it. Don't spurn it offhand.

Okay, I read. I have plenty to say, living in Vṛn-dāvana and contacting devotees. I was developing a deliberate theme in that book (*Before It's Too Late*), that I wanted my time for writing, but people and circumstances were stealing it. And when I did get alone to write, I felt I couldn't do "it." I'm a little suspicious that I tried to shape my free-writing to conform to that theme. I wanted to lead the devotee readers through a book, like with a plot. Growing interest in evolution. Like writing a novel in an autobiographical way. It has its place.

But these Writing Sessions are different. I work in the kitchen for Kṛṣṇa. I cook and put my best into it every day. Three main offerings a day. I try

You is a funny character. Why reluctant to talk like a guru Vaiṣṇava always? Or a student of *śāstra*? Why you flex your muscles and romp like a calf or horse? Huh?

Oh, now you say your time is up. Okay, catch you again later.

(1 hour, 9 1/2 pages, Wicklow backyard)

—the *jīva* bird gives up his preoccupation with sense gratification and turns to the witness bird, his friend and well-wisher. Why is it so hard to give up the lonely preoccupation with the fruits on the branches of the material body? Can't you see it's getting you nowhere, as the *Upaniṣads* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and *Gītā* tell us? Sources of misery, the senses, and you go to them for joy.

Who me? I'm a *sannyāsī*. You must be lecturing to a general "you," myself not included.

You do love palatable food.

But it's *prasādam*.

"My dear friend, don't you remember Me? I am your unknown friend, *avijñāta*. You didn't consult me in the past, but now I have appeared again. We are like two swans." So said the *brāhmaṇa* who appeared to Vidarbhi at the time when her husband died in the forest. Following the order of the spiritual master is tantamount to seeing the Supreme Personality of Godhead in the heart.

Read in *Festivals*, Śrīla Prabhupāda's lecture on Guṇḍicā day, 1970. He told some of the *līlā* of Ratha-yātrā involving Lord Kṛṣṇa's being the cowherd boy, beloved of *gopīs* and *gopas* in Vṛndāvana. After He left Vṛndāvana (His father called Him, to kill Kamsa), the only business of the residents of Vṛndāvana was to cry in separation from Kṛṣṇa. He sent Uddhava to pacify them. Finally they got an opportunity to be with Him at Kuru-kṣetra at the time of a solar eclipse. Rādhārāṇī and the *gopīs* asked Kṛṣṇa to return to Vṛndā-

and write, beginning, "Captain Smith, reporting for work."

God knows all; He's in the heart. May He see a drive for God consciousness (Kṛṣṇa consciousness) in me and my efforts.

I dared to come to write this one in the *tulasī* house, although I am over here and the sound of the voices of M. and A., "Brother . . . " If I could hear their actual words, I would leave here and go down to the table in the yard. It was a risk coming here. All my books and papers on the floor now, but it would take, say, three minutes if you suddenly stopped and went down to the table. No, longer because I have to get the sponge to wipe the table. No, that takes only ten seconds, I know where it is.

Here's the sunlight. You can stick it out. Udhava said he'd prefer to keep Tulasī outdoors if he could, in summer, so as not to coddle her too much. Makes her strong to face the colder months. Hadn't thought of that. So you write here and prove you can go deep even if there are voices and construction noise nearby.

What is deeper? It's Kṛṣṇa consciousness, of course, but my own version. Dear Lord, why can't I serve You better? Read the transcript of a 1970 lecture by Śrīla Prabhupāda. But I read it cold and just like one going through the Archives manuscript, not like one sitting at the feet of the guru and receiving Kṛṣṇa's *darśana* through his words.

O Moses,
 O whale-catchers,
 O dreamers in sleep,
 go deep into it,
 O sex mongers, you too try
 to go deep, and drug addicts,
 and anyone . . .
 but deep into hell is not
 what I mean. (you just wrote
 deep into "shell" by mistake).
 The man is talkin', but now
 maybe he'll leave M.—and me—alone.
 On your own. Strip off a sweater.
 "Oh, I didn't know you were in here."
 Yes, I am getting the benefit of Tulasī's
 association and writing my . . .
 your what?

My affidavit to testify that I saw the Rose of Sharon but didn't know its name. I testify that I was out walking from five to six in the morning and thought soon maybe I'll stop this answering of questions on *japa*.

"Brother . . . " More talk by the van. I am a *tulasī* silent watcher. A cool breeze on the head.

When you could concentrate, you go down again and say, "What feelings do I have naturally for God? What if I have doubt or distaste when I hear his *līlā*?" Oh, you can overcome it.

The Irish talk, the way they talk. I like it.

But you see, direct *śāstra* is, to say the least, helpful. "I am the source" (I am writing this like a medieval monk in big book in monastery copying

Many *śāstras* uphold that Nārāyaṇa, Viṣṇu—Kṛṣṇa—is the source of all.

"There is no supreme controller other than Kṛṣṇa." Shall I just read and note and wait, or is there something else like a pause and you pray, "Please let it be true in me and live in me. Please give me revelation"?

The devotee doesn't just sit with eyes closed (he'll fall asleep), but he "engages all his energies in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and becomes a truly learned man." All others are fools. He shouldn't be bewildered by the fools and their interpretations of *Bhagavad-gītā*, but proceed in Kṛṣṇa consciousness "with determination and firmness."

So there is a little taste of *śāstra* and Kṛṣṇa. My Lord. My book. You bring yourself into it. Your question was, "How can I enter real Kṛṣṇa consciousness?" I say it's the *śāstra*.

Now stay awake. M. is running a power tool. He's alone. He says he's "hyped" (in a good sense) to work on the van. Says at times like this, he can't pay much attention to anything else. Similarly, I take advantage of the WS as a time when I'm not disturbed by other engagements. Free—for what?

Free to ask yourself a question. How this day is awake and keep writing into a heart.

Śrīla Prabhupāda said (to crazy boy in Buffalo who later became his Kuśakratha dāsa), "I do not know. You know."

In the silent glowing of poets' dull and bright fire eyes, crotch of tree or woman hole entry of black snakes. Eye of the storm, pull yourself in and what do you see? Ugh, it smells fishy. That's his intestines.

Why

you makin'

fun of inner life, bro?

I threatenin' you now with my fist, Don't make fun of Inner Life, you hear?

He puts his black face, tough guy, up close to mine. I have challenged his group.

I back off. I don't care. Inner or outer, it's all the same to me, as long as I can go on writing. I have nothing at stake. I'm just a creator snake charmer like a pizza maker performing in public, punches the dough and twirls it around, throws anchovies and tomato and cheese and olives, etc. on it—plenty of tomato sauce, then throw it into the oven.

See folks, I made da pizza.

Leak in the roof. He runs. I was looking for a serious man. Well, I am the man. But you look different. I'm the man, but I have separated my beauty secrets into pots, want to see them?

(Can't get a hold of this guy, elusive *sādhū*. He may suspect me)

Another side said, "Just look and be honest and do look and find *some* prayer, because God is in you."

And that got hard to do. Voices and motor from the van didn't help. Besides, my nature is flitty. I asked several times. The asking is good. Then finally when you went to ask again, something popped and I just started to make fun of Inner.

I like this better than that Śaraṇāgati session where I took notes for whether to write fiction. At least I come to enter a state right now as I do a Writing Session and face my Kṛṣṇa consciousness or lack of it. And even if I find the lack or zero, I want to open *Gītā* at random (10.8 is great) and put Kṛṣṇa on this page. Dear Lord, witness bird, I want to try to go to You and not be deviated by fools who say Brahman is all, no Kṛṣṇa, or who say void is all.

Please release us from sneakers and girls and pearls. I go in now and hope to take a healthy shit while listening to a Kṛṣṇa conscious lecture. Amen. You sissies and pretenders can bug off (to hell if you like) or just go where you like.

(1 hour 10 minutes, 11 pages, Wicklow *tulasī* house)

cleverly use Western styles to attract Westerners (or even Indians) to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. But when you “write what comes” confessionally—write even when it’s not perfect Absolute Truth, and write before you are liberated, when you write of your struggle to attain Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and don’t give us as much *śāstra* as we expect—why is that?

I mean the private angle.

Well, what is a guy going to do in private, lie to himself?

No, but he can correct himself. You don’t commit self-abuse in private, do you? You don’t smoke and drink liquor just because no one is looking, do you?

No, I follow the four rules in obedience to my spiritual master.

Right. So for a *sādhū* there’s no private life. What he does in public, he does in private.

Well . . . there may be some things he does in private he wouldn’t do in a mass audience.

Like?

Not just bad things. He might hide his emotional ecstasy. For example, Lord Caitanya spoke in intense feelings of separation from Kṛṣṇa, in the mood of Rādhārāṇī, but always in the seclusion of the Gambhīrā and two or three intimate friends. That’s one example of a private behavior different than public. Śrīla Prabhupāda would name the name of bogus swamis in private, but when he wrote, he withheld their names. A guru chastises his disciples in a way that he doesn’t chastise the

for propaganda reasons? Yeah, that too. I want to make points for Kṛṣṇa. If I could write a poem like Bly's with no explicit or even implicit Kṛṣṇa conscious doctrine, but convincing, winning, human, loving, caring (I guess that *is* implicit Kṛṣṇa consciousness), I'd be glad to do it—so I could put it into a collection of poems that had some explicit Kṛṣṇa conscious teachings and thus influence readers.

I do want to preach always and make points for the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. I am always a missionary, preparing myself to preach. I want to do it well. I want to see Kṛṣṇa consciousness victorious even in small ways. I think I have a conviction that it will be very, very hard for many people to take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness at the present time. So I want to try to help in this way as a writer . . . it's a secret desire I hardly voice even to myself. But I have a big personal ambition for a role in this revolution. Not a lesser ambitious than TKG in China or the GBC in Russia. I mention it here to comfort myself. I prefer the modest route which is natural to me and is best for Kṛṣṇa conscious growth. *Tmad api*. But because often you are quaking and cowering from real or imagined criticisms of your Writing Session style, I want to lift you up and defend you boldly. Okay? Keep this in mind. You are a preacher, made by Śrīla Prabhupāda. It may be that you preach this way because other front line methods are beyond your courage and surrender. It's a kind of compensation. Never mind. You can still make a bold

demoniac and atheistic views" (9.12). Śrīla Prabhupāda says, "There are many devotees who assume themselves to be in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and devotional service but at heart do not accept the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, as the Absolute Truth." How about that as a statement of exposure of phonies? They pretend to be not only good men and religious, but they pretend to be devotees and yet they lack faith in Kṛṣṇa. Therefore, I search within myself. I quickly find such lacking or find bees and flies that pester me. I admit it. I act on the bodily platform. I have absorbed too much poison of atheism from this age I live in, the education we receive. But I want to get out of such futile rebellion against God. "It is a great offense, to consider Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, to be an ordinary man."

The *mahātmās* are firmly convinced and fully engaged in devotional service "because they know Me as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, original and inexhaustible" (9.13).

There is no doubt about it. "They meditate only upon Kṛṣṇa in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. They are always engaged in the unswerving service of the Lord in Kṛṣṇa consciousness" (9.13, purport).

Thank you, please keep going. I'll tell you, Mickey Kelly and I sat in a tree or on a tiny piece of land in the midst of a big puddle or pond not far from PS8. He told me what scumbags are.

doing and humbly suggest we all can do better.
Let us chant and read the *śāstra*."

He's still on that theme?

Yes, until dying day. He tells us what he himself wishes to achieve. But he can't.

O God of all, please come to us. Please infuse us with strength to serve your pure devotee, O Vaiṣṇava Ṭhākura. Please give us your mercy.

We are so fallen. Don't know anything. Rant on here without "mixtures" boasting we are innovative geniuses.

Oh puff, puff up my sails,
another Nietzsche pint-sized,
he's blowing up his image like
a frog in the well.

"I am a great creator of
a special poem and prose never before
seen in human civilization. I
will be loved and praised for this but
I am so humble that I cannot see it
myself." Urp and stumble.

The karmic grinds and we are disappointed he couldn't carry himself more gravely and thought that we wanted to see him hit in the face with a green-icing pie.

Ten minutes more to rectify yourself. God is my witness. In white-brimmed hat. You don't need to read orthodox Christianity, but if you think a sober note helps . . .

You do need adhesive glue in your lower dentures. You don't need a funny drawing to show that.

Now fellows, calm down, it's another Ekādaśī coming to an end. Thirteen minutes to round your afternoon *japa*, caught you napping. Do declare.

Newburgh limit, notes written for your own joy. Given to people my messages, how I saw life and tried to surrender.

A white butterfly,

I stopped being cause of deaths of moths in the morning. I will chant an extra round, but it's so hard, like grinding stone. Hard as hell for this rebel, this mechanical man. Who is afraid to love, don't know how.

You think you are doing okay, folks (in Wicklow), and in a certain sense that's true, and I applaud you. But you and I could do a lot more. So how to face up to that? Have I talked enough on that theme? Any more and it might get belabored like when you give too many lectures on the topic of sex. Stop. Enough. Get on to something equally relevant but different—like what? *Ajāmila*? *Priya-vrata*? *Gītā*? I don't know! Kṛṣṇa will help me and tell me what to say. Don't try to always outdo yourself. Just be simple and speak something nice in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

(1 hour, 10 pages, Wicklow backyard)

ever you check out—are not spontaneous lovers. So therefore I'm okay."

That's not the way to assess yourself, thinking I bet hardly anyone has achieved the love that will take him back to Godhead. We can't expect that in Kali-yuga. No, you face your own case, assess your own life, and try to help yourself in your service to your spiritual master.

Try to do a Writing Session as it pertains to you. Devotees won't pay you great tributes, although at the time after we die, we may tend to see the good in each other. We are each busy living, struggling to achieve our own place. That includes the work of preaching which our spiritual master instructed us to do.

Śrīdhara Mahārāja wrote that the preacher party makes propaganda and it's best, but that is not objective. *Bhajanānandīs* may please the Lord just as much. That is his objective view. But our spiritual master saved us by becoming a preacher. He is dear to us. He wants us to be compassionate to others. (There is a *Bhāgavatam* verse that says you cannot go to Vaikuṇṭha unless you are merciful and do welfare for others. Prahāda Mahārāja says he doesn't want to go back to Godhead alone, he's unhappy to see people's miseries, even though his own unhappiness is alleviated in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Śrīla Prabhupāda recommends this attitude for us. I don't need to make a synthesis of the various Vaiṣṇava teachers. I've got my sights set on pleasing His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.)

The dialogue is set in a standard way where I write and ask myself, "What next? Why did you say that, etc.?" But often he's a nonwriter, a prosecuting attorney, not so helpful.

Yeah, so you can write without that *purva pakṣa* show all the time, get freer.

Dhruva Mahārāja

(Not so it looks far out beat poetry later, but to help yourself)

Do you know what that means? It could mean . . . freeing up yourself from censors. You write and don't know where it leads, but then find that it helps.

Yeah, but not for creating a sensational effect.

Not immediate pleasing of Kṛṣṇa. Why not?

That comes when you are a devotee. Here we go into dialogue. Dialogue needn't be forbidden. You kindly ask yourself to clarify. Why did you say, "When are you are a devotee"? Aren't you a devotee now? And if you could be a devotee now, wouldn't that be best?

Yes.

Dhruva Mahārāja prayed, "I'm sorry I didn't make pure prayers. I'm sorry I have material desires."

I am sorry I haven't attained love for Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura prays, "I did not attain love for Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, and therefore I've spent my life uselessly."

Yeah, lament. It's very private how I feel about Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. I exposed it too much, got

Pet gerbils. Wild books. What happened. A million crimes police see and work to fight. A job is a job. But I work for the Swami and understand this is the best work, even though people don't much take to it. We teach a way of life. All religions do that. Proselytize. They argue that theirs is the best. Try to make converts (like Christians who "bribe" with their hospitals for the poor) and *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* says religious principles are proven by the behavior of a devotee.

I want to be exemplary. I also know the book distributors and temple maintenance must go on. There is division of labor, four orders and *āśramas*. So in my order of *sannyāsa*, I am practicing to set an example of a simple *sannyāsī*. Don't take control or leadership or power over others. Set example in inner matters, right attitudes, find the sincere core, and practice *sādhana*.

They use the word "demonstratable." People say that they should be able to ascertain that you do chant your sixteen rounds. They can see you do it because you do it in their midst. Well, I do it more privately, but then write about it.

After this session I will read. Take your choice of books. I think I'll go for *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam's haṁsa-guhyā* prayers. Best to keep up your steady, unmotivated reading, rather than prepare for next lectures. That you will do too, somehow or other. But in a retreat, keep your sacred time of reading just as you do it for writing.

All will be well.

You needn't seek out praise or blame for these Writing Session acts. Keep going, keep going.

Yes. As for the *Gītā* verses, I see myself intoning them on walks. Sometimes it's so dark you can't read. So you can play a tape of yourself saying this and walking and praying with it. Or make a record of a tape. Do both. Hear and then talk into dictaphone.

I can't stop and do everything you might like me to do. Be efficient and conserve energy for the most important things. That seems to include this *Gītā* work. It could even begin while you are on this retreat. Do the morning walk, *japa* talks just a few more days? Hmm. I'll think about that. I've still got a few more good days' worth of talks.

He walked and talked. Even when he didn't have questions. It was a way to communicate, like the *Letters from a Sannyāsī*.

A walk and talk
and use a WS for practical notes,
I don't mind. Yes, you can use my
toilet and shower and dinner table and
telephone. But let's have some
poem too.

"Oh, don't ask me to perform," you say, and yet you want to use my facilities.

But you are me and I am you, it's okay. As long as you do produce something for your children. Bring them a gift. They are expecting that from your Writing Session privacy they will get some-

"Why do you do the Writing Session?"—but I felt the good in the practice, in the groping, in the unmotivated exercise . . . couldn't explain it, but felt okay.

I feel the same way about an unmotivated reading session.

You see, it's compatible to have side by side writing for devotees and writing for yourself. The writing for myself is good for me also as a teacher.

And in this WS, you held off from the usual aggressive questioning where you divide yourself for purpose of dialogue. That's okay to do, but not always, not as a knee-jerk reflex thinking that's the only way to sustain a one-hour session. I have plenty to say without always resorting to dialogue.

Don't crave fiction right now. We'll see what's to come. New direction soon enough, but don't prematurely quit on nice projects like Prabhupāda Poems and *Japa Walks*, *Japa Talks*. Keep at them if you can. I see the sign of your wanting to terminate them. But don't quit at the first sign of fatigue. Is the project really complete? Don't quit abruptly. Let it go. You did want 100 poems, so why not keep going with them until it's done? And after you've finished answering the present questions on *japa*, try to keep at the pattern of *japa* walk and then vent. See. See each day.

Now to bottom of this last page. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is not me. There is God who sustains universe. All comes from Him. I work for Him in love, not force. I choose to surrender. We serve Swami out

August 5

9:58 A.M.

Read a Writing Session and also the one I wrote yesterday, and it reminded me that they are not great coherent literature pieces. I spoke of them as a genre, but maybe better not. Neither do I want a polished piece with a surprise at the end or so much deliberate feeling and poeticizing, making literature, making poem, making music, reworking it, as I find in Bly. Make some sense, but basically we have to write what comes.

Let pen speak and squeak. It's oiled to run on ink and gold tip on yellow paper, an exquisite act. I'm in *tulasī* house and a bee is making a drilling sound as if he's up against a window and trying to get out.

Find time when M. is free and talk with him. You can't perfectly coordinate. Laugh about your different schedules, and you both claim you don't have time to meet. Overlook it. Find a way to talk what is important to me, outlining this Sunday's lecture and deciding what to do with *Japa Walks*, *Japa Talks*.

You could not know what you want to do before regarding *Japa Walks* and just go out and see. But there's a certain fiction to it, and I may want to observe that. The man goes out for a walk. He answers questions, and that keeps him engaged in talking. He preaches to himself by preaching to others, positive attitudes and conclusions about

Is it true?

They saw a pair, each five feet
long last Memorial Day, trying to
climb the cabin,
they fell back and
before astonished human onlookers
they disappeared down the creek bank.

No moralizing necessary. No stories necessary
of pink tortoises. I ask for some stories and look
at them but lose interest. But it seems you are
beginning to feel a little some limits of Writing Ses-
sion and its not having a focus or not "letting go."
A story will let go even less?

Brilliant, brilliant dis corpse.

The man looked around and sighed and tried to
fight back intense drowsiness. He could just lie
down on the floor beside the *vyāsāsana* and sleep
in two minutes! But no, no one does that. So rub
face and eyes and go ahead. You'll get into it and
escape the yawn. And then you'll grind away and
get into some discourse.

Brilliant, brilliant. I asked the mayor (mother),
Do you have a rose or child hereabouts?"

Don't talk with women.

Don't tell us "just starts" that come like blips
like, "Moonies publish books under *Rose of Shar-*
on Press," but what do they have to say of impor-
tance? It's all concocted why Dr. Moon is the man
of the millennium. No *śāstras* or evidence to back
it up." If you tell a million blips like that, what's
the use?

The irate lady schoolteacher who reported on the teenage boys who were throwing pebbles at the girls' dorm while they were sleeping at night. Or were the girls sleeping? The teacher complained, so the headmaster grimaces and says he'll do something. He never answers his mail, he's so busy, but finds twenty to thirty minutes a day to read Śrīla Prabhupāda's books while sitting minding the boys in the temple room. They respect that this is his reading time and leave him alone.

You know who I'm talking about. These are not stories. The old guy who short circuits. The straw on the pine tress along the road. It looks like silver tinsel on Christmas trees. It got there being scraped from a truck which passed full of hay as the truck squeezed down the narrow summer lane.

Where's that Billy Boy song I wrote here last year? I never get to see these things. Do you want to retrieve them? Well, if I could, but it's all so interlaced with NM *rasika* thought, maybe better let it go until you are prepared to see that also.

Billy Boy. Jazz tunes. Sometimes you feel very strict that all outside influence is contaminating and you won't touch it, not even a severe Christian book on the "inner warfare" of controlling the mind in prayer. But other times you freely request Gene Shepherd's books, short stories and volumes of collected poems. Which is best? Why evidence that outside reading is okay? Śrīla Prabhu-

"Don't just put in your time. That is not enough. You have to make great effort. Be willing to put your whole life on the line when you sit down for writing practice. Otherwise you are just mechanically pushing the pen across the page and intermittently looking at the clock to see if your time is up." Isn't that me right now? What to do?

You do it out of duty only with your heart not into it. She suggests you stay away from writing "for a week or a year. Wait until you are hungry to say something . . . "

Or do something totally different.

"You will learn about your own rhythm—when you need to write and when you need to rest."

You may have to change something else in your life, not just put in the timed writing.

(Even as I write this I am worried, because by reading *Writing Down the Bones*, I am taking time from my one hour and I may not get my minimum nine pages done. I've exposed, perhaps, a strong attachment to the rule I set up, three sessions a day, one hour each, and at least nine pages in each session, and better, ten. I don't have to follow those rules. They don't come from God. I made them up. It may not even be the best way to get the best writing)

Draw with crayons.

Do something detached.

It's funny. You have evolved in Writing Sessions. You're pleased that your writing is not done with attachment or motive for audience. But now a new strong expectation and attachment develops: I must do my sessions as many as possible and print them for myself to read and want them to read as well written. When I get them back, I'm in the trap again of working with fruitive result.

Work for Kṛṣṇa.

So in the beginning of the "Goody" chapter, she says it's not enough to just put in your time. If your heart isn't into it, maybe better you quit for awhile—let the air move over the embers and start the fire up. (What if it goes out?) Do something very different.

Then she makes a further point. Maybe you need to change something in your life. Do something you want to do. Writing may not be enough in itself to produce vital, original writing. But a vital life is needed from which the writing springs. Consider your own.

And your Kṛṣṇa conscious obligation. In *Shack Notes*, you wanted to see—if I let myself *be* spontaneous, will I go into *māyā* and not practice Kṛṣṇa consciousness? I found out that when I relaxed, I did want to write Kṛṣṇa consciousness. But it did take effort too. I groped. I wanted to be a devotee (with both right and left brains).

Appendix

This comes from an envelope of material gathered 1992-93, "The Writing Session Genre":

From Kdd:

I would like to respond to your discussion on writing retreats and the "genre" of the Writing Session.

. . . I think what you would be writing if you were to make each Writing Session self-contained, would be different than meditations, because as you say, they may be more lyrical. I think it would be closer to poetry. A meditation is actually written for a certain effect—it usually has a beginning, middle, and end, and the ending usually startles the reader into thinking about something. So some things you write may be like that, but I think you are trying to move away from that "affecting the reader," and more into pure, personal expression. Like a poem.

I think it would be good for you and acceptable by your readers to try such a thing. I say good for you because perhaps the writing retreat mode is the last barrier you have to break through before you are writing constantly. You have already managed to loosen the grip the editor has on you, and you have loosened the grip the audience has on you. Now if you can free yourself from all constraints of writing, meaning twenty-one days or twenty-eight days, even though you may still

you—thoughts of publishing, writing blocks, apology, the natural limitation of the scheduled writing retreat, or whatever else. The intrinsic value of the sessions is that because they are complete units, they can free you up to write in any situation under any conditions. They are not dependent on each other. . . . Moving more toward the moment in writing has to be liberating.

