

Brahma-vaivarta Purāṇa - Chapter Three

Śrī Rādhā-Śrīdāmā-śāpodbhava

The Cursing of Śrī Rādhā and Śrīdāmā

“Listen and I will tell you in detail what before you heard me tell only briefly in the story of Śaṅkhacūḍa’s death. Śrīdāmā quarreled with Rādhā and She cursed him to become the demon Śaṅkhacūḍa. Then Śrīdāmā cursed Rādhā: ‘Go to a human womb in Vraja! Become a girl of Vraja and walk on the earth’s surface!’

“Afraid of Śrīdāmā’s curse, She went to Śrī Kṛṣṇa and said: ‘I will become a *gopī*! Śrīdāmā cursed Me! What will I do to prevent it! O breaker of fears, please tell Me! How can I live without You? O Lord, without You every moment will become a hundred *yugas*. My heart bursts into flames when the blinking of My eyes separates Us. O Lord glorious as the autumn moon, using the *cakora* birds of My eyes I drink the nectar of Your face day and night. I declare that You are My heart, My self, My mind, and My body. You are My eyes and My power to see. You are My life. You are my treasure. Awake or asleep, I always meditate on Your lotus feet. O Lord, without serving You I cannot live for a moment.’

“Hearing these words, Lord Kṛṣṇa held His beautiful beloved to His chest. He reassured Her and removed Her fears. He said: ‘O girl with the beautiful face, during the Vārāhakaḷpa I will go to the earth. You will go with Me and also take birth on the earth. O goddess, I will go to Vraja and enjoy pastimes (with You) in the forest. You are more dear to Me than life. If I am present why should You be afraid? Saying this, Lord Hari, the master of the universes, became silent.

“Śrī Nārada said: ‘Why did Śrīdāmā quarrel with Rādhā? What you briefly told before, now please tell at length.’

“Śrī Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi said: ‘One time, in a *rāsa-maṇḍala* in a secluded place in a great forest in Goloka, Lord Hari enjoyed pastimes with Śrī Rādhā. Overcome with bliss, Rādhā could not understand Herself or anything else.

“Leaving Her unsatisfied in the midst of Their pastimes, Kṛṣṇa went to enjoy amorous pastimes with Virajā, another *gopī*. Beautiful Virajā resembled Rādhā. She had a billion beautiful *gopī* friends. As she sat on a jewel throne, this *gopī*, who thought Lord Kṛṣṇa more dear than life, and who was fortunate and glorious among women, saw Lord Hari approach. Lord Hari looked at her, her face glorious as the autumn moon, and she smiled, and with crooked eyes gazed at Him.

“She was eternally sixteen years old, in the full bloom of youth. She wore exquisite garments and Her beauty was enriched by jewel ornaments. Seeing that she was being tortured by Kāmadeva’s arrows, Lord Hari at once enjoyed pastimes with her. Seeing Lord Hari embraced by this *gopī* in the jewel pavilion, Rādhā’s friends at once told their mistress.

“Hearing their words, Rādhā became angry and lay down on Her bed. Her eyes like red lotus flowers, the goddess wept bitterly. The great goddess said to them: ‘Show Him to Me.’ If you speak the truth, then come with Me. I will give Kṛṣṇa and this *gopī* the result They deserve. Don’t bring that smiling, crooked-hearted, nectar-mouthed pot of poison to My home. Instead, take the Lord to My beautiful pavilion and keep Him there.

“Hearing Rādhā’s words, some *gopīs* became frightened, and they all folded their hands and humbly bowed their heads and necks. Standing before Her, they all said to the Lord’s eternal beloved: ‘We will show You the Lord with Virajā.’

“After hearing their words, beautiful Rādhā ascended a chariot. She departed with unlimited (1,630,000,000) *gopīs*, traveling on a chariot made of many regal jewels, and as splendid as millions of suns.

“O sage, quickly descending from the chariot thus described, Lord Hari’s beloved goddess Rādhā, at once went to see Him in the pavilion of jewels.

“At the entrance She saw a handsome, smiling, lotus-faced guard accompanied by a hundred thousand *gopas*. To that *gopa*, who was Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s dear friend named Śrīdāmā, Śrīmatī Rādhā, Her eyes now like red lotuses, angrily said: ‘Go away! O servant of a rake, go away! I will see what kind of beautiful lover Your master has now!’

“Hearing Rādhā’s words, strong and fearless Śrīdāmā, holding a stick in his hand, did not allow Her to enter. Their lips trembling, Rādhā’s other *gopīs* angrily pushed the servant Śrīdāmā.

“Hearing a great commotion from the people of Goloka, and understanding that Rādhā was angry, Lord Hari disappeared. Hearing the word “Rādhā”, and seeing Lord Hari disappear, Virajā became afraid. By practice of mystic yoga she gave up her life. Her body at once became a river circling Goloka.

“O sage, when She went to the pavilion of amorous pastimes Rādhā did not see Lord Hari. Seeing the river that Virajā had become, She went home. Seeing that one of His eternal beloveds had become a river, Śrī Kṛṣṇa loudly wept on the beautiful shore of that Virajā river. After a while, Lord Hari went to see Rādhā. As the Lord of Her life stood before Her, Rādhā spoke to Him words that were inaccurate, not worthy to be spoken, improper, and very harsh:

‘O Kṛṣṇa, O lover of Virajā, get away from Me! O Lord Hari, O restless debauchee, why do You trouble Me? Again and again You act like a low-class human! Oh Rake, enter a human womb! Leave Goloka and go to Bhārata-varṣa!’ After hearing Rādhā’s words, the *gopīs* spoke to Lord Hari words that were beneficial, truthful, gentle, sweet, and appropriate to that circumstance. Some said: ‘O Lord Hari, for a moment go to another place. When Rādhā’s anger subsides we will bring You here.’

“O sage, out of love for Rādhā some *gopīs* said to Lord Hari: ‘For a moment go to Vṛndāvana forest until Her anger subsides.’ Forced by the *gopīs*, Lord Hari, who is the first cause of the world’s causes, left.

“His lotus eyes now red, Śrīdāmā angrily spoke to Śrī Rādhā, whose lotus eyes were also red with anger. Śrīdāmā said: ‘O mother, why do You speak these harsh words to my master? O goddess, You rebuke Him without any consideration and for no reason. You mock the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the master of Brahmā, Ananta, Śiva, and Yama, who is the first of all the world’s causes, who is the master of Sarasvatī, Lakṣmī, Layā, Māyā, and Prakṛti, who is beyond the modes of material nature, who is self-satisfied, and whose desires are all fulfilled. Know that it is only because of Your service to Him and Your worship of His feet that You have become the best of goddesses and the queen of all. O beautiful one, You do not understand Him. How can I have the power to describe Him? O goddess, with his four heads powerful Brahmā, the father of the *Vedas*, glorifies Kṛṣṇa. Brahmā serves His lotus feet.’

“Hearing Śrīdāmā’s very harsh and forceful words, She became suddenly angry. She stood up and spoke to him. Going outside, Her hair loosened, Her lotus eyes red, and Her lips trembling, She harshly spoke to him. Śrī Rādhā said: ‘Rogue! Fool! Servant of a rake! Listen. I don’t know your master? You know everything about Him? O lowest wretch in Vraja, Śrī Kṛṣṇa is your master and not Mine? You praise your father and rebuke your mother. As the demons always insult the demigods, so you always insult Me! Therefore, O fool, become a demon! *Gopa*, leave Goloka and go to a demoness’ womb. Fool, now I have cursed you. Who can protect you?’

“After hearing Her words, his lips trembling in anger, Śrīdāmā cursed Her: ‘Go to the womb of a human woman! You are angry like a human woman, therefore become a human woman on the earth! Mother, I have cursed You. Of this there is no doubt.’

“After speaking these words and after bowing down before Rādhā, Śrīdāmā went to Lord Hari. Bowing down before Lord Kṛṣṇa, Śrīdāmā narrated the story of the cursings. Śrīdāmā wept as never before. As weeping Śrīdāmā was about to go to the earth, Lord Kṛṣṇa said to him: ‘You will become the king of demons. In the three worlds no one will defeat you. After fifty *yugas* with My blessings you will return to Me.’

“After hearing Lord Kṛṣṇa’s words, grieving Śrīdāmā said to Him: ‘Please never transform me into a person who has no devotion for You.’

“When Śrīdāmā had left, Śrī Rādhā approached Lord Hari. She told Him everything and Lord Kṛṣṇa told everything to His grieving beloved. Everything was resolved, but in the course of time, Śrīdāmā became the demon Śaṅkhacūḍa and then later returned to the Lord.”