

Chapter Ten, *Brahmā-vaivarta Purāna* *Pūtanā-mokṣaṇa* The Liberation of Pūtanā

Śrī Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi said: As, surrounded by his courtiers, he sat on a golden throne Kāmsa heard an eloquent disembodied voice in the sky.

The voice said: Fool, what are you doing? Now you should worry about your fate. Your killer is now born on the earth. O king, do something to stop him.

Helped by Goddess Māyā, Vasudeva gave his son, who will kill you, to Nanda. Then he took Nanda's daughter and gave her to you.

Nanda's daughter is Goddess Māyā, and Vasudeva's son is the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself. Vasudeva's son will kill you. At this moment He is growing up in Nanda's house.

Devakī's seventh pregnancy was not a miscarriage, as you heard. Her child did not die. Goddess Māyā placed the unborn child in Rohiṇī's womb.

That child was born. He is powerful Balarāma, an incarnation of Lord Śeṣa. He and Vasudeva's son, who will both kill you, are now growing up in Nanda's house.

Hearing these words, Kāmsa bowed his head. Filled with worry, he pushed his meal away.

Calling her to the assembly, King Kāmsa, who though himself a great moralist, spoke to his good sister Pūtana, who was more dear than life to him.

Kāmsa said: Pūtana, go at once on a mission to Gokula. Smear poison on your breasts and give them to the infant in Nanda's house.

Child, you can travel as fast as the mind. You are learned in the science of magic and illusion. O mystic *yoginī*, transform yourself into a human being and go to Vraja.

O famous one, because of a great *mantra* you received from Durvasa Muni you have the power to assume any form and go to any place.

O Nārada, after speaking these words King Kāmsa stood up in the assembly. Then Pūtanā, who had the power to travel wherever she wished, bowed down before him and left.

Then she transformed herself into a girl fair as molten gold, decorated with a jasmine garland and many ornaments, with beautiful braided hair, happily decorated with a musk

dot and red *sindūra*, and wearing a belt and anklets that softly tinkled, and traveled to Vraja, where she saw Nanda's beautiful palace surrounded by a series of impassable deep moats, a palace Viśvakarmā had built of sapphires, emeralds, rubies, and other jewels, a palace with splendid wonderful, and elaborately detailed golden domes, with great walls touching the sky, with four gates, with iron doors, and with gatekeepers, a palace beautiful and charming, filled with beautiful women, filled with golden domes, precious pearls, rubies, *cintāmaṇi* jewels, with ten million cows, and with a hundred thousand *gopa* servants and a thousand maidservants eager for their duties.

Then beautiful smiling Pūtanā, who was actually a great devotee, entered Nanda's palace. When they saw her, the *gopīs* did not think that she was a demoness. They said among themselves, "Is she Goddess Lakṣmī? Is she Goddess Durgā come to see the infant Kṛṣṇa?" All the *gopīs* bowed down before her, asked about her welfare, placed her on a throne, and offered her *padya*.

Saintly Pūtanā asked about the welfare of the *gopas* and of the infant Kṛṣṇa, sat on the throne, smiled, and accepted the *padya*.

All the *gopīs* said to her: O goddess, who are you? Where do you live? What is your name? Why have you come here? Please tell.

Hearing their words, beautiful Pūtanā said to them: I live in Mathurā. I am a *brāhmaṇa*'s wife.

I have heard the good news that Nanda now has a great son.

Hearing this, I have come here to see and bless Him. Please bring Him. I will see and bless Him, and then I will go on my way.

Hearing the *brāhmaṇi*'s words, Yaśodā became happy at heart. Bowing down, she placed her son in the *brāhmaṇi*'s lap.

Saintly Pūtanā placed the infant on her lap and kissed Him again and again. Making herself comfortable, she offered her breast to the child.

Pūtanā said: Oh! He is wonderful. O beautiful *gopī*, your boy is very handsome. He is like Lord Nārāyaṇa Himself.

Infant Kṛṣṇa happily drank from Pūtanā's poison breast. Cradled on Pūtanā's chest, He smiled and drank both the poison milk and Pūtanā's life as if He were drinking nectar.

O sage, pulling back from infant Kṛṣṇa, saintly Pūtanā suddenly died and fell to the ground. Lying on the ground with her face up, she suddenly changed into a gruesome monster.

Suddenly leaving that gigantic body, she manifested a spiritual body and entered a chariot of precious jewels, a chariot decorated with ten thousand white *cāmaras* and ten thousand mirrors, a chariot whose passengers were many effulgent associates of the Lord, a chariot splendid with fine cloth pure as fire, a chariot decorated with jewel domes wonderful with colorful designs, a chariot beautiful with a hundred wheels and splendid with the light of many jewels. The associates of the Lord placed Pūtanā on the chariot and took her to the realm of Goloka, the highest place in the spiritual world.

Gazing at this wonder, the *gopas* and *gopīs* became filled with wonder. When Kāmsa heard of it, he also became filled with wonder.

O sage, Yaśodā took her boy, placed Him on her lap, and gave Him her breast. Then she had the *brāhmaṇas* perform auspicious rituals for His protection.

When Nanda happily burned Pūtanā's monstrous body, it became fragrant like sandal, *aguru*, and musk.

Śrī Nārada said: O sage, who was that woman in the form of a demoness? She must have been a great devotee. By the power of what pious deeds was she able to see Lord Kṛṣṇa and then go to His transcendental abode?

Śrī Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi said: When King Bali's daughter Ratnamālā saw Lord Vāmana's handsome form in the *yajña* arena, she at once felt for Him the love a mother feels for her son.

She thought: If I had a son like Him, I would cradle Him to my chest and give Him my breast.

Understanding her mind, in another birth Lord Kṛṣṇa drank from her breast. An ocean of mercy that fulfills all desires, He made her His mother.

O sage, the demoness Pūtanā gave a poison breast to Lord Kṛṣṇa and still she attained liberation and became His mother. Except for Lord Kṛṣṇa, whom should I worship?

O *brāhmaṇa*, thus I have described Lord Kṛṣṇa's transcendental qualities. The pastimes I tell you are supremely sweet at every step.