

## **CHAPTER FORTY-SIX**

### **Uddhava Visits Vṛndāvana**

This chapter describes how Śrī Kṛṣṇa sent Uddhava to Vraja to relieve the distress of Nanda, Yaśodā and the young gopīs.

One day Lord Kṛṣṇa asked His intimate friend Uddhava to take news of Him to Vraja and thus relieve His parents and the gopīs of their misery caused by their separation from Him. Riding on a chariot, Uddhava reached Vraja at sunset. He saw the cows returning home to the cowherd village and the calves jumping here and there as their mothers followed slowly behind, weighed down by their heavy milk bags. The cowherd men and women were chanting the glories of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, and the village was attractively decorated with burning incense and rows of lamps. All this presented a scene of exceptional transcendental beauty.

Nanda Mahārāja welcomed Uddhava warmly into his home. The cowherd King then worshiped him as nondifferent from Lord Vāsudeva, fed him nicely, seated him comfortably upon a bed and then inquired from him about the welfare of Vasudeva and his sons, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma. Nanda asked, “Does Kṛṣṇa still remember His friends, the village of Gokula and Govardhana Hill? He protected us from a forest fire, wind and rain, and many other disasters. By remembering His pastimes again and again, we are relieved of all karmic entanglement, and when we see the places marked by His lotus feet, our minds become fully absorbed in thought of Him. Garga Muni told me that Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma have both descended directly from the spiritual world. Just see how They have so easily dispatched Kaṁsa, the wrestlers, the elephant Kuvalayāpīḍa and many other demons!” As Nanda remembered Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes, his throat choked up with tears and he could speak no further. Meanwhile, as mother Yaśodā heard her husband speak of Kṛṣṇa, the intense love she felt for her son caused a flood of milk to pour from her breasts and a torrent of tears from her eyes.

Seeing the superexcellent affection Nanda and Yaśodā had for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Uddhava commented, “You two are indeed most glorious. One who has attained pure love for the Supreme Absolute Truth in His humanlike form has nothing further to accomplish. Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma are present in the hearts of all living beings, just as fire lies dormant within wood. These two

Lords see all equally, having no particular friends or enemies. Free from egoism and possessiveness, They have no father, mother, wife or children, are never subject to birth, and have no material body. Only to enjoy spiritual happiness and deliver Their saintly devotees do They appear by Their own sweet will among various species of life, both high and low.

“Lord Kṛṣṇa is not merely the son of you, O Nanda and Yaśodā, but the son of all persons, as well as their mother and father. In fact, He is everyone’s dearest relation inasmuch as nothing that is seen or heard in the past, present or future, among the moving or nonmoving, is independent of Him.”

Nanda Mahārāja and Uddhava passed the night talking about Kṛṣṇa in this way. Then the cowherd women performed their morning worship and began churning butter, singing the glories of Śrī Kṛṣṇa as they busily pulled the churning ropes. The sounds of churning and singing reverberated into the sky, cleansing the world of all inauspiciousness.

When the sun rose, the gopīs saw Uddhava’s chariot at the edge of the cowherd village, and they thought that Akrūra might have returned. But just then Uddhava finished his morning duties and presented himself before them.

Text 1:

Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: The supremely intelligent Uddhava was the best counselor of the Vṛṣṇi dynasty, a beloved friend of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa and a direct disciple of Bṛhaspati.

Text 2:

The Supreme Lord Hari, who relieves the distress of all who surrender to Him, once took the hand of His fully devoted, dearest friend Uddhava and addressed him as follows.

Text 3:

[Lord Kṛṣṇa said:] Dear gentle Uddhava, go to Vraja and give pleasure to Our parents. And also relieve the gopīs, suffering in separation from Me, by giving them My message.

Text 4:

The minds of those gopīs are always absorbed in Me, and their very lives are ever devoted to Me. For My sake they have abandoned everything related to their bodies, renouncing ordinary happiness in this life, as well as religious duties necessary for such happiness in the next life. I alone am their dearest beloved and, indeed, their very Self. I personally sustain such devotees, who for My sake give up all worldly duties.

Text 5:

My dear Uddhava, for those women of Gokula I am the most cherished object of love. Thus when they remember Me, who am so far away, they are overwhelmed by the anxiety of separation.

Text 6:

Simply because I have promised to return to them, My fully devoted cowherd girlfriends struggle to maintain their lives somehow or other.

Text 7:

Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Thus addressed, O King, Uddhava respectfully accepted his master's message, mounted his chariot and set off for Nandagokula.

Text 8:

The fortunate Uddhava reached Nanda Mahārāja's pastures just as the sun was setting, and since the returning cows and other animals were raising dust with their hooves, his chariot passed unnoticed.

Texts 9-13:

Gokula resounded on all sides with the sounds of bulls in rut fighting with one another for fertile cows; with the mooing of cows, burdened by their udders, chasing after their calves; with the noise of milking and of the white calves jumping here and there; with the loud reverberation of flute-playing; and with the singing of the all-auspicious deeds of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma by the cowherd men and women, who made the village resplendent with their wonderfully ornamented attire. The cowherds' homes in Gokula appeared most charming with their abundant paraphernalia for worship of the sacrificial fire, the sun, unexpected guests, the cows, the brāhmaṇas, the forefathers and the demigods. On all sides lay the flowering forest, echoing with flocks of birds and swarms of

bees and beautified by its lakes crowded with swans, kāraṇḍava ducks and bowers of lotuses.

Text 14:

As soon as Uddhava arrived at Nanda Mahārāja's home, Nanda came forward to meet him. The cowherd King embraced him in great happiness and worshiped him as nondifferent from Lord Vāsudeva.

Text 15:

After Uddhava had eaten first-class food, been seated comfortably on a bed and been relieved of his fatigue by a foot massage and other means, Nanda inquired from him as follows.

Text 16:

[Nanda Mahārāja said:] My dear most fortunate one, does the son of Śūra fare well, now that he is free and has rejoined his children and other relatives?

Text 17:

Fortunately, because of his own sins, the sinful Kāṁsa has been killed, along with all his brothers. He always hated the saintly and righteous Yadus.

Text 18:

Does Kṛṣṇa remember us? Does He remember His mother and His friends and well-wishers? Does He remember the cowherds and their village of Vraja, of which He is the master? Does He remember the cows, Vṛndāvana forest and Govardhana Hill?

Text 19:

Will Govinda return even once to see His family? If He ever does, we may then glance upon His beautiful face, with its beautiful eyes, nose and smile.

Text 20:

We were saved from the forest fire, the wind and rain, the bull and serpent demons — from all such insurmountable, deadly dangers — by that very great soul, Kṛṣṇa.

Text 21:

As we remember the wonderful deeds Kṛṣṇa performed, His playful sidelong glances, His smiles and His words, O Uddhava, we forget all our material engagements.

Text 22:

When we see the places where Mukunda enjoyed His sporting pastimes — the rivers, hills and forests He decorated with His feet — our minds become totally absorbed in Him.

Text 23:

In my opinion, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma must be two exalted demigods who have come to this planet to fulfill some great mission of the demigods. Such was foretold by Garga Ṛṣi.

Text 24:

After all, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma killed Kaṁsa, who was as strong as ten thousand elephants, as well as the wrestlers Cāṇūra and Muṣṭika and the elephant Kuvalayāpīḍa. They killed them all sportingly, as easily as a lion disposes of small animals.

Text 25:

With the ease of a royal elephant breaking a stick, Kṛṣṇa broke a powerful, giant bow three tālas long. He also held a mountain aloft for seven days with just one hand.

Text 26:

Here in Vṛndāvana, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma easily destroyed demons like Pralamba, Dhenuka, Arista, Tṛṇāvarta and Baka, who had themselves defeated both demigods and other demons.

Text 27:

Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Thus intensely remembering Kṛṣṇa again and again, Nanda Mahārāja, his mind completely attached to the Lord, felt extreme anxiety and fell silent, overcome by the strength of his love.

Text 28:

As mother Yaśodā heard the descriptions of her son's activities, she poured out her tears, and milk flowed from her breasts out of love.

Text 29:

Uddhava then joyfully addressed Nanda Mahārāja, having clearly seen the supreme loving attraction he and Yaśodā felt for Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Text 30:

Śrī Uddhava said: O respectful Nanda, certainly you and mother Yaśodā are the most praiseworthy persons in the entire world, since you have developed such a loving attitude toward Lord Nārāyaṇa, the spiritual master of all living beings.

Text 31:

These two Lords, Mukunda and Balarāma, are each the seed and womb of the universe, the creator and His creative potency. They enter the hearts of living beings and control their conditioned awareness. They are the primeval Supreme.

Texts 32-33:

Anyone, even a person in an impure state, who absorbs his mind in Him for just a moment at the time of death burns up all traces of sinful reactions and immediately attains the supreme transcendental destination in a pure, spiritual form as effulgent as the sun. You two have rendered exceptional loving service to Him, Lord Nārāyaṇa, the Supersoul of all and the cause of all existence, the great soul who, although the original cause of everything, has a humanlike form. What pious deeds could still be required of you?

Text 34:

Infallible Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of the devotees, will soon return to Vraja to satisfy His parents.

Text 35:

Having killed Kāṁsa, the enemy of all the Yadus, in the wrestling arena, Kṛṣṇa will now surely fulfill His promise to you by coming back.

Text 36:

O most fortunate ones, do not lament. You will see Kṛṣṇa again very soon. He is present in the hearts of all living beings, just as fire lies dormant in wood.

Text 37:

For Him no one is especially dear or despicable, superior or inferior, and yet He is not indifferent to anyone. He is free from all desire for respect and yet gives respect to all others.

Text 38:

He has no mother, no father, no wife, children or other relatives. No one is related to Him, and yet no one is a stranger to Him. He has no material body and no birth.

Text 39:

He has no work to do in this world that would oblige Him to take birth in pure, impure or mixed species of life. Yet to enjoy His pastimes and deliver His saintly devotees, He manifests Himself.

Text 40:

Although beyond the three modes of material nature — goodness, passion and ignorance — the transcendental Lord accepts association with them as His play. Thus the unborn Supreme Lord utilizes the material modes to create, maintain and destroy.

Text 41:

Just as a person who is whirling around perceives the ground to be turning, one who is affected by false ego thinks himself the doer, when actually only his mind is acting.

Text 42:

The Supreme Lord Hari is certainly not your son alone. Rather, being the Lord, He is the son, Soul, father and mother of everyone.

Text 43:

Nothing can be said to exist independent of Lord Acyuta — nothing heard or seen, nothing in the past, present or future, nothing moving or unmoving, great or small. He indeed is everything, for He is the Supreme Soul.

Text 44:

While Kṛṣṇa's messenger continued speaking with Nanda, the night ended, O King. The women of the cowherd village rose from bed and, lighting lamps, worshiped their household deities. Then they began churning the yogurt into butter.

Text 45:

As they pulled on the churning ropes with their bangled arms, the women of Vraja shone with the splendor of their jewels, which reflected the lamps' light. Their hips, breasts and necklaces moved about, and their faces, anointed with reddish kuṅkuma, glowed radiantly with the luster of their earrings reflecting from their cheeks.

Text 46:

As the ladies of Vraja loudly sang the glories of lotus-eyed Kṛṣṇa, their songs blended with the sound of their churning, ascended to the sky and dissipated all inauspiciousness in every direction.

Text 47:

When the godly sun had risen, the people of Vraja noticed the golden chariot in front of Nanda Mahārāja's doorway. "Who does this belong to?" they asked.

Text 48:

"Perhaps Akrūra has returned — he who fulfilled Kāṁsa's desire by taking lotus-eyed Kṛṣṇa to Mathurā.

Text 49:

"Is he going to use our flesh to offer funeral oblations for his master, who was so satisfied with his service?" As the women were speaking in this way, Uddhava appeared, having finished his early-morning duties.