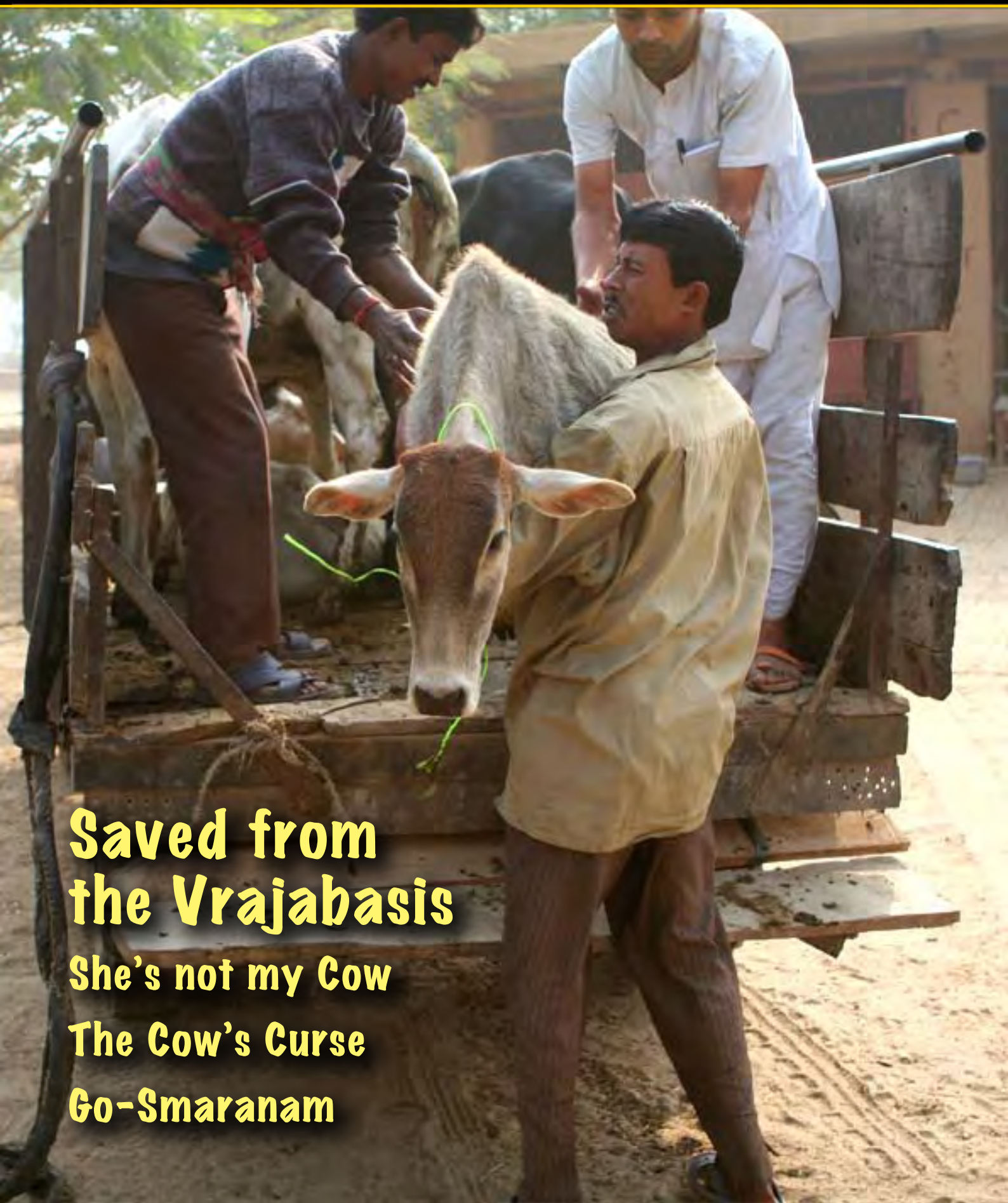




CARE FOR COWS

IN VRINDAVAN



**Saved from
the Vrajabasis**

She's not my Cow

The Cow's Curse

Go-Smaranam



She's Not My Cow

A beautiful, healthy white cow lay on her side, her eyes closed, one of her slender front legs now a short stump, wrapped in a blood spotted bandage.

Beside her, her newborn calf, just out of her reach, was tied to the wall by a short neck rope. This was how Sanjivani and her calf Jiva were first seen by CFC staff at the Mathura University Veterinary Hospital three months ago.

Sanjivani was recovering from amputation surgery, the doctors unable to save her leg after sustaining a compound fracture. "Does she have someone to look after her, an owner?" we inquired of the group of surrounding

groundsmen. They thought not, as no-one was bringing her proper food, the groundsmen were feeding her the left overs from a horse patient's bowl. Then a man arrived carrying a pack of gauze bandages and introduced himself as her owner. We chastised him for not giving her food and he responded by saying she was fine and to prove it he jabbed her in the ribs with a stick, which shocked her into a sitting position. As we told him to stop the next jab prompted her to stand and she was very uneasy balancing on her three legs. Understanding the rough character of the owner and not wanting the cow to suffer any further trouble from her owner,

especially on our account, we quickly left the scene. Following up the matter with Sanjivani's doctor, we learned that her owner was bringing bandages and medicines, but not food. He suspected the owner was only interested in her milk, but as she was not officially abandoned he could not release her to our care.

Then two weeks ago Pushpa and Kala Krishna were taken for x-rays at the same Mathura Hospital. It was then we noticed a thin, white three-legged cow grazing in the compound accompanied by her 3-month old calf. Inquiring about them the doctor explained that they were the same ones we'd met three months ago. We were shocked to see how much



Bone fragments removed from Sanjivani's stump



Small wounds after the bone fragments were removed



Sanjivani and Jiva on arrival in the CFC ambulance, after the hour long ride from Mathura University Veterinary Hospital where they were abandoned



Five men carefully lower the 500kg cow to the ground



Sanjivani's first steps bless the CFC go-sadan



The hungry pair share a bowl of food

weight the cow had lost, and could hardly recognize her. The doctor explained that her owner had continued to come every day to milk Sanjivani, while she was recovering from surgery, and when her milk dried up he declared "She's not my cow!" and was never seen again. Thanks to the medical care she received at the Hospital Sanjivani's wound was fully healed and she was

adjusted to walking on three legs. We arranged our CFC ambulance to collect the mother and son the next day, and the doctors bade them farewell, happy to release them into our care. On arrival Sanjivani and Jiva were fed without a moment's delay and they ate bowl after bowl of nutritious cow food. Soon the afternoon feed delivery arrived and they kept the cowherd men busy

filling their bowl again and again with fresh green grass.

Since their arrival at CFC two weeks ago, Sanjivani had a minor operation where two bone fragments were removed from the stump. Her wounds have almost fully healed and she and Jiva have settled into CFC very comfortably, spending their days together, in the company of other recuperating patients.



Relaxing together at Care for Cows

Saved from the VRAJABASIS

At mid-day a couple who regularly serve at Care for Cows walked along on the Parikrama Path in Raman Reti when they noticed a parked truck with what appeared to be a pile of animals in the back. Thinking it unusual, they

approached to get a closer look and were shocked by what they saw—eight cows in great distress, each tied by a one foot rope to the sides of the truck. The bed of the truck was slick with diarrhea and urine to the degree the cows could

not get their footing even when the truck was at rest. Hence all but two were in a heap and the three calves on the bottom of the pile were in shock.

The couple demanded the driver to explain what was going on and why



A youth tries to untangle the cows in the heap



The calves at the bottom of the pile were in shock

the cows were in such a neglected state. The driver became very nervous and told the man sitting next to him that they had better run before the police arrived, and they fled.

A woman stopped and inquired as to why the cows were piled up so cruelly in the back of the truck. The couple responded that the drivers had run off when asked the question and thus they suspected that the men were cattle

rustlers transporting them for slaughter. Upon hearing this the concerned woman ran to notify Balarama Baba, a respected sadhu in the neighborhood and the distressed couple called Care for Cows to request help.

Within a few minutes the Parikrama Path became filled with curious onlookers, the most concerned, a young man, climbed on the back of the truck and tried to untangle

the mass of legs and torsos and free the calves from under the pile. Owing to the slippery bed each time



one cow made the attempt to rise, she would collapse on top of the others instigating grunts and alarm calls from those on the bottom.

After briefly seeing the truck and the condition of the cows, Balarama Baba immediately summonsed the police who were sitting at their post 200 meters away. Together they arrived just when the driver returned with the man who had organized the transport and an intense exchange began drawing a crowd which now completely blocked the road.

The organizer of the transportation, despite being impeccably

dressed and his forehead decorated with orange tinted sandalwood paste announcing the completion of his daily *puja*, was visibly nervous. He told the police that a few nights before a number of cattle rustlers had attempted to abduct some abandoned cows in their village and thus out of concern, he



thought it best to transport them to a *goshala* in Vrindavan.

Two cowherd men from Care for Cows exclaimed, "Look how the cows are piled in the truck! Only fools will accept that you are trying to protect them! You are treating them just like butchers!"

The transporter blamed the driver for trying to save diesel by moving all the cows in one instead of three or four trips. As others voiced shrill disapproval at the pitiful condition of the cows, the driver and transporter became tense.

One man screamed, "You're not protecting



Balarama Baba summonsed the police

cows! You're butchers!" and ripped the tulasi beads off the neck of the culprit who did not retaliate but only showed the ground his decorated forehead while the driver trembled.

In the heated and potentially explosive gathering the cowherd men from CFC told Balarama Baba and the police that they would host the cows. Immediately everyone organized to disperse the crowd so the truck could be turned around and driven to our facility under police escort.

Upon arrival at CFC we began the task of cutting the cows free and attempting to unload them safely. As each was released they bolted in all directions until they settled in among the least hostile members of our herd. It was obvious that they had had enough "protection" from their Vrajabasi "well-wishers". Unfortunately their naturally peaceful eyes now reflected great



apprehension upon seeing any human. We were relieved that all of them could walk and decided it wiser to let them calm down and delay giving each a thorough examination for injuries until the next morning.

Next we went to the police post to make a complaint as there are laws in India preventing improper transportation of animals. The transporter was already there with several supporters he had gathered. Three policemen sat nonchalantly watching the traffic anticipating our arrival. One supporter of the culprit said, "We are Vrajabasi, so we know what is cow protection. What do you care how we move our cows here and there?"

We responded, "There are laws prohibiting cruel practices in transporting animals and you have violated them."

The police retorted, "No crime was committed. If

you do not like the way we treat cows in Vrindavan, then you can just return to your country! Case closed.”

He then spat red slime onto the dirt and resumed observing the traffic.

We thought it wiser to distance ourselves from such “law-enforcers” and as we bowed out, the culprits stood with their heads held high while the police smiled.

The first few steps along the Parikrama Path fell heavy with disappointment—not resulting from the failure to get justice—but from having to witness such a degree of deterioration in the culture of cow protection in Raman Reti; from having our hopes to change it deflated; from having met face-to-face

a graphic example of how the sand of greed has blinded the eyes of the locals despite the great opportunity afforded by their fortunate birth.

Victimized by the mass media the values of the majority have changed to the degree that they are now willing to sell their mother to get money to purchase plastic or electronic devices which offer nothing but illusory fleeting pleasure and don’t help them in any way whatsoever.

As we shuffled along, peeled paint on a forgotten wall faintly announced, “Service to the cow is service to Isvara.” Twenty meters ahead another faded inscription whispered, “Cow protection protects Dharma... nay,

it protects the entire universe!”

The Truth is still visible to those who want to see it, but the majority have chosen to close their eyes. “Sacred Cow” and “The Cow is our Mother,” have become meaningless clichés for the majority who drive in their imported cars intoxicated by their newly-acquired wealth wishing the cows were off the street so they could drive to Hell faster.

As we turned left at the Krsna-Balarama tree and started for Care for Cows, our steps became light and our eyes cool as it started to dawn on us that WE had been victorious. We had saved eight abandoned cows in one day.. a new record for us! And they were anxiously in need of



service, battered, afraid and covered with diarrhea as they were. Now our feet carried us hurriedly home anxious to comfort, feed, and to get to know them.

Upon arrival we saw a commotion outside the gate. The cowherd men and women were trying to corral a group of cows back into the barn yard. They called us to help and explained that someone had left the gate open and all the new ones had run out still confused as to whether we were trying to help or harm them. In a few moments we got them

in and when we counted up, there were not eight, but ten! In the frenzy two more abandoned calves in the field opposite CFC got swooped up!

That afternoon many visitors came to admire our newly-acquired treasures. They counted seven cows and three bulls and jabbered, "Hey that one looks just like Gauri Priya... and these two just like Radhe Syama... and look at that one! She has white eyelashes and a pink stripe on her nose! We should call her Shweta..."

The *darshan* of our

new residents sparked spontaneous excitement at CFC and dispelled all negativity.

Within a few days the new residents understood they were in a friendly environment; that they were welcomed, appreciated and thus have settled in. And already people have come forward to adopt them.

We pray to be protected from the influence of Kali so we do not, like the majority, become victimized by the materialistic propaganda and lose our better judgement.



Below are the eight cows and bulls who were piled in the truck.

Left are the two that joined CFC by accident.

Right is Sarasvati Stein from Los Angeles who happily adopted the cow directly below her photo. Sarasvati noticed how shy she is and thus named her Lajja Sila.





The abandoned young bull would daily frequent the fruit stand to maintain himself. We were told he was hit broadside by a police car and left laying flat. We brought him to our clinic and tried to comfort him. He suffered for half an hour and then left. A Diety garland, Ganges water and incense is all he would accept from us. Abandoning a cow or bull on the street is to kill them slowly.



FMD

Foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) is a highly infectious disease with a short incubation period. Cows affected by FMD are dull, off feed, and drool saliva. Some are lame.

On opening the mouth sores can be seen on the tongue and hard palate, and can appear on the lower gums and inside the lower lip. On the hoof, ulcers can appear along the interdigital space and the soft skin above the heel. These lesions easily become secondarily infected.

In many so-called 'developed' countries that are also FMD-free countries, FMD outbreaks are managed under the slaughter policy, which means all infected cows, bulls, oxen and calves are slaughtered if they show a single sign of the virus. Any animals within two to five miles of the infected site are killed by order of the Government.

FMD is however easily treated and we had a minor outbreak of FMD at CFC this month. Salt mixed with mustard oil is rubbed on the tongue, hard palate and inside the lips twice a day for as long as the lesions are present - most cases clear within ten days. The Indian Government offers free FMD vaccination services and visits our go-sadan for this purpose every six months.



Rubbing a mixture of salt and mustard oil on the tongue of a mild FMD case



The mixture is applied inside the lips and to the upper palate where FMD blisters burst causing lesions



The whole herd from 6 months of age up receive a quick injection of the FMD Vaccination

What's My Fault?



Two weeks ago Saligram was just another unnamed, unwanted six month old calf begging for food in the street. His coat of hair was falling out in large patches, his pot belly full of worms, and his overall condition poor.

A kind soul arranged for him to be brought in to CFC, and as the CFC rickshaw arrived to collect the calf he was sighted behind a small street stall eating from the rubbish bin. Just then a local man approached the calf and lashed him across the back with his leather belt. The startled calf ran out onto the road not knowing what he had done wrong, which of course was absolutely nothing. The man was chastised by the CFC team, but neither he nor the other by-standers saw his act as wrongful or unusual.

Saligram was quickly bundled up and brought to his new home at CFC just in time for dinner. He is receiving medical attention for his various conditions and is a model patient with a very gentle nature.



Saving Saligram from the busy streets and abuse at the hands of the locals



Welcome Home! Saligram arrives at CFC after a 15 minute ride



Saligram has extensive hair loss caused by a skin fungus which is easily treated

Did You Know?

Cows can perceive higher and fainter noises than humans can, and they can smell scents that are up to six miles away – if the wind is right !



The Cows Curse



There was a rich vaisya family who were very prosperous. In the joint-family home there were about seventy-five members and many cows. Among the cows there was one who always kicked when she was being milked so the family decided to sell her.

One day a butcher came to the village and the family sold the cow to him. The villagers tried to stop the family from selling her explaining that she is like Lakshmi the Goddess of Fortune. But owing to greed, the family didn't listen and the cow was taken to be killed.

That night the same cow appeared to the businessman in a dream. She was visibly disturbed and cursed him thusly: "You have not understood my worth and have put me in the hands of a cruel butcher. Therefore you too will soon suffer complete destruction."

A few days after the dream their village was inundated by a flood and all the grains the family had stored were lost. Their ornaments, expensive utensils and mortgaged possessions were stored in the granary and they were also washed away.

After the flood a plague spread and within one week sixty members of the family died untimely. Thus the prosperous and happy family were destroyed by their sinful neglect of Mother Cow, and until this day that family has still not overcome misfortune.

Excerpt from *Go Seva Chamatkar, The Miracle of Go Seva*. Testimony of Shri Hariprasadji Gupta.

Astha-kaliya lila

Go Smaranam

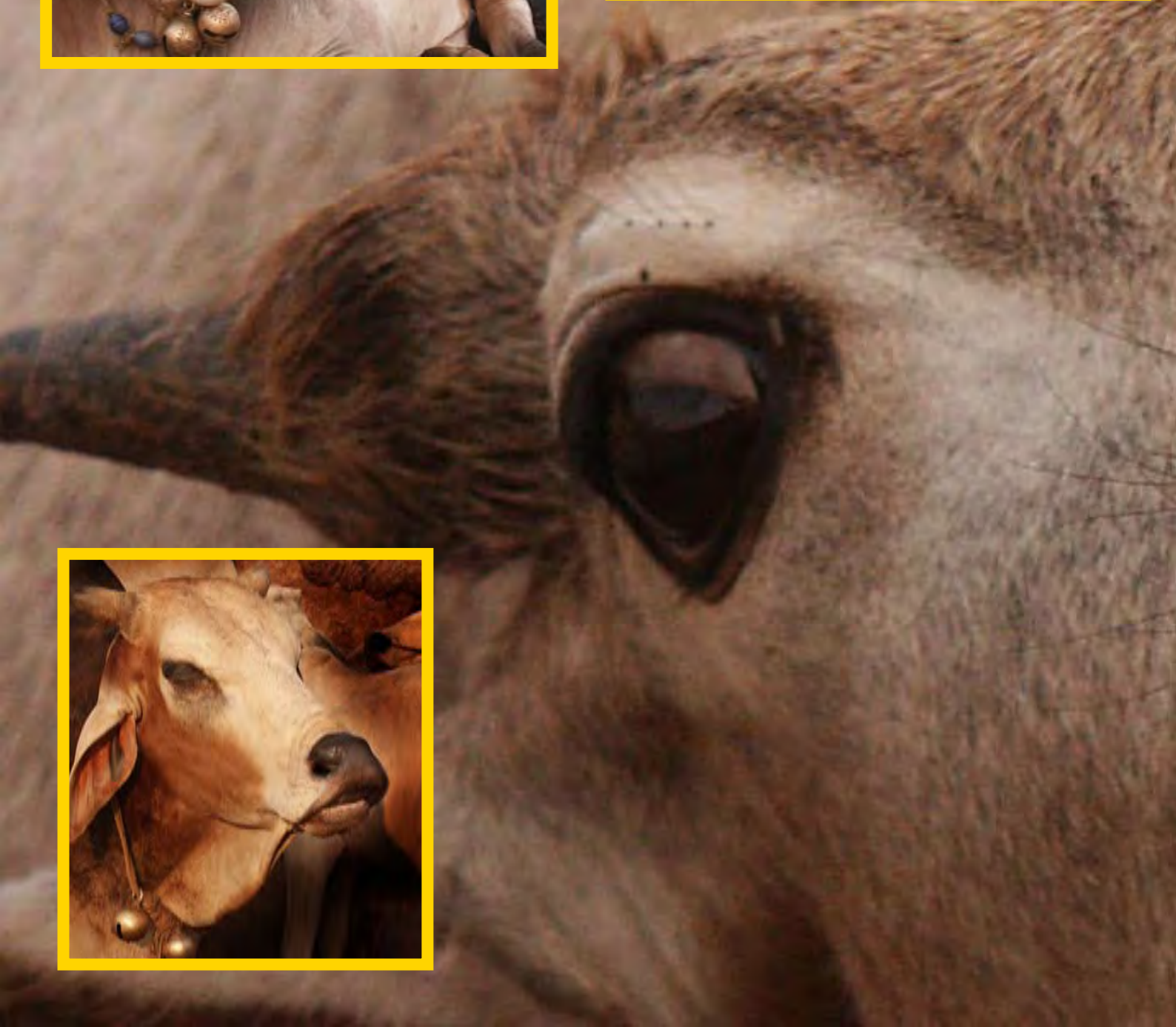
Meditating on the eight-fold daily pastimes of cows

SMILING

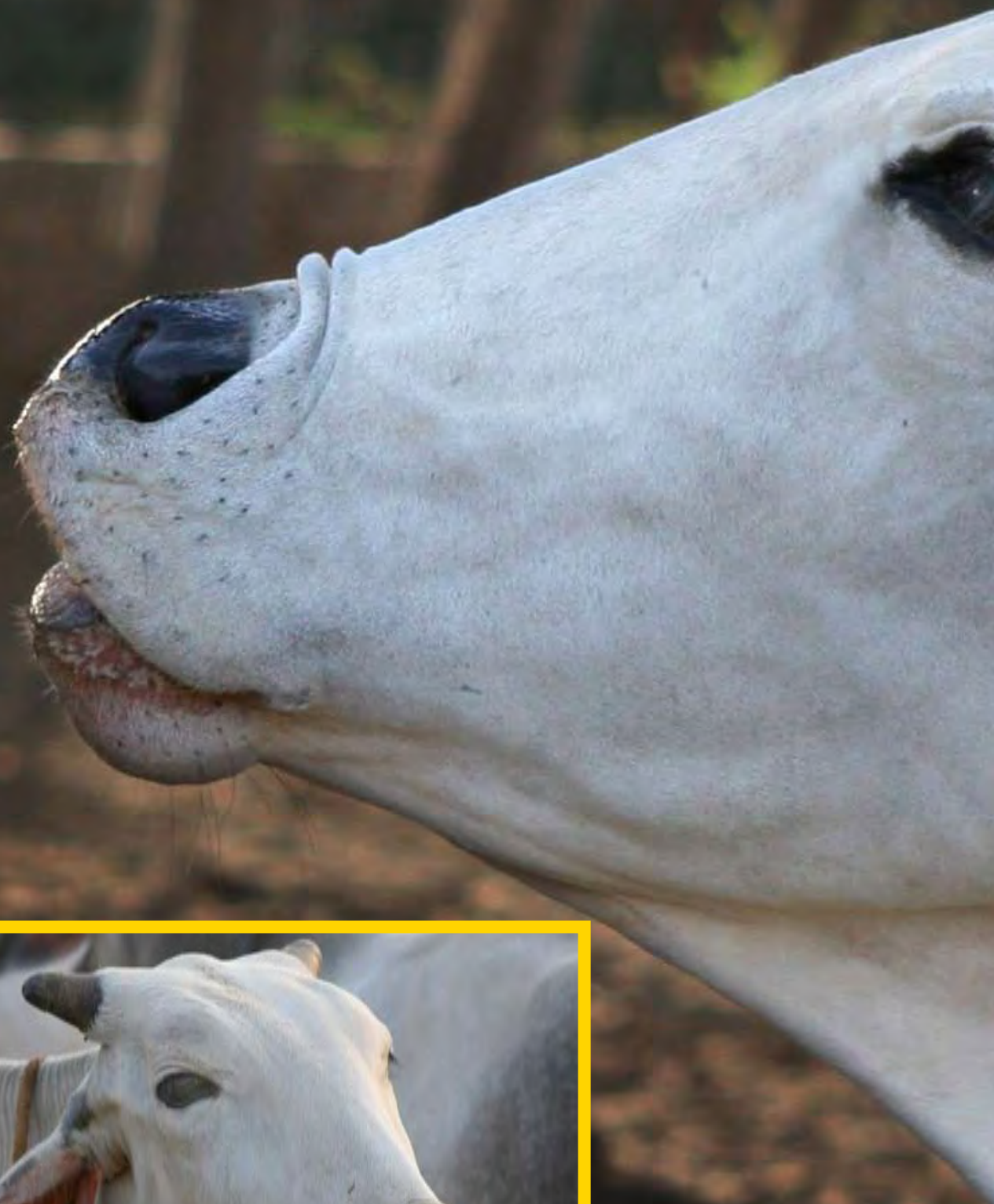


This is the fifth of a series of eight photo essays illustrating the daily activities of cows. We hope this serves to endear them to you.













When I joined I was malnourished, unwanted and insecure. Thanks to Care for Cows I have become strong, healthy, confident and furthermore, my dignity has been restored.

(Govinda is sponsored by
Sacimata devi dasi, USA)

Thank You From the Cows



The cows send their heartfelt thanks to those who assisted during December 2006

Alessandra Petrassi, Italy
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Anonymous, Singapore
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Bhaktin Setsuko, Japan
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Damayanti Dasi, UK
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Prasana Ceta Dasa, USA
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Radha Jivan Dasa, India
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Sarasvati Stien, USA
Shelly Sookraj, Canada
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Sunil Singh, USA
Tanno Gerritsen, Netherlands
Vaninatha Dasa, USA
Vicky Alhadeff, UK
Vishaka Dasi, Denmark
Visnu Priya Dasi, UK
Wenda Shehata, UK

May cows stay in front of me; may cows stay behind me; may cows stay on both sides of me.
May I always reside in the midst of cows. — *Harī Bhakti-vilas* 16.252