

Vraja Vilasa Stava, verse 38
(Srila Raghunatha das Goswami)

tāmbūlārpaṇa-pāda-mardana-payo-dānābhīsārādibhir
vr̄ndāraṇya-maheśvarīm priyatayā yās toṣayanti priyāḥ |
prāṇa-preṣṭha-sakhī-kulād api kilāsaṅkocitā-bhūmikāḥ
kelī-bhūmiṣu rūpa-mañjarī-mukhās tā dāsikāḥ samśraye

"I take shelter of Śrī Rādhikā's maidservants, headed by Rūpa Mañjarī, who always engage in serving betel leaves, massaging the feet, serving water, and arranging for the Divine Couple's secret trysts. These maidservants are even more dear to the great Queen of Vr̄ndāraṇya (Śrī Rādhikā) than the prāṇa-preṣṭha-sakhīs (the girlfriends who are dearer to Her than life), and She is therefore not at all shy before them!"

Stavāmr̄ta Kaṇā Vyākhyā:

In this verse, Śrīpāda Dāsa Gosvāmī praises the mañjarīs, the maidservants of Śrī Rādhā who have a greater love for Rādhā and who are led by Rūpa Mañjarī.

Of the aforementioned five kinds of sakhīs, they are the prāṇa-sakhīs and the nitya-sakhīs.

yāḥ pūrvam̄ prāṇa-sakhyāś ca nitya sakhyāś ca kīrtitāḥ.
sakhī-snehādhikā jñeyās tā evātra manīṣibhiḥ

(Ujjvala Nīlamaṇi Sakhī Prakaraṇa 134)

"The sakhīs who I previously glorified as prāṇa-sakhīs and nitya-sakhīs are considered to be more affectionate towards the heroine."

tadīyatābhimāninyo yāḥ sneham̄ sarvadāśritāḥ.
sakhyām̄ alpādhikām̄ kṛṣṇāt sakhī snehādhikām̄ tu tāḥ

(ibid. 131)

"Any sakhī who thinks 'we are yours', who thus always shows affection for Śrī Rādhā, and who has a little more affection for Śrī Kṛṣṇa's beloved Śrī Rādhā than for Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself, is called sakhī-snehādhikā."

Śrīmat Rūpa Gosvāmīpāda has given this example:

viramatu tava vr̄nde dūtya cāturya caryā
sahacari vinivṛtya bruhi goṣṭhendra sūnum
viṣama viṣadhareyam̄ śarvarī prāvṛṣeṇyā
katham iha girikuñje bhīrur eṣā praheyā

(Ujjvala Nīlamaṇi Sakhī Prakaraṇa 132)

"One of Śrī Rādhā's foremost prāṇa-sakhīs forbade Vr̄ndā to send Her on Her love-journey, saying: 'O friend Vr̄nde! Let your clever message-carrying rest here! Go away from here and tell Goṣṭhendra-Nandana that this is a monsoon-night and there are poisonous snakes slithering around! How can we send our frightened friend Śrī Rādhā to that mountain-cave? He is able to defeat snakes like Kāliya, so let Him come this way Himself in secret!'"

These prāṇa-sakhīs and nitya-sakhīs, who have a greater love for Rādhā, are known as mañjarīs. Although they belong to the five classes of sakhiṣ they are maidservants who are always engaged in the service of Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava. Hence it is said:

tāmbūlārpaṇa pāda-mardana payodānābhīsārādibhir vṛṇdāraṇya maheśvarīm priyatayā yās
toṣayanti priyāḥ

"By offering Her betel leaves, massaging Her feet, giving Her water and escorting Her on Her love-journeys, they always satisfy the great queen of Vṛṇdāvana!"

Śrīla Ṭhākura Mahāśaya has written:

caudike sakhīra mājhe, rādhikāra iṅgite,
ciruṇī loiyā kore dhari
kuṭīla kuntala sab, vithāriyā āñcarab
bonāibo vicitra kavarī

"While I am surrounded by sakhiṣ, I take a comb in my hand, and on Her indication, I start to comb all of Rādhikā's curly hairs with a comb, binding it into a wonderful braid."

mṛgamada malayaja, sab aṅge lepabo,
porāibo manohara hāra
candana kuṇkume, tilaka bonāibo,
herabo mukha sudhākara

"I will anoint Her whole body with musk and sandalwood pulp and adorn Her with an enchanting necklace. I will make a tilaka for Her with sandalwood pulp and vermillion and look at Her moon-like face."

nīla paṭṭāmbara, yatane porāibo,
pāye dibo ratana mañjīre
bhṛngārera jale, āṅgā caraṇa dhoyāibo,
muchāibo āpana cikure

"I will diligently dress Her in Her blue silken sāḍī and place jewelled anklebells on Her feet. I will wash Her reddish feet with water from a jug and dry them off with my hairs."

kusuma komala dale, śeja vichāibo,
Śayana korābo doñhākāre
dhavala cāmara āni, mṛdu mṛdu vījabo,
charamita duhuka śarīre

"I will make a bed of soft flower petals for Them both and then I will make Them lie down, bring a white whisk-fan and start softly fanning Their exhausted bodies."

kanaka sampaṭa kori, karpūra tāmbūla bhori,
yogāibo doñhāra vadane
adhara sudhārase, tāmbūla suvāse,
bhokhabo adhika yatane

(Prārthanā)

"I will fill a golden box with camphor and betel leaves and place these delicacies in Their mouths. Afterwards I will enjoy even more diligently after Their lip-nectar has scented these betel leaves."

The mañjarīs consist of nothing but the transcendental mellow of devotional service. Their hearts are dedicated to devotional service, and without service they do not know anything else. Because of their steadiness and fixation in the mellow of service, we can see that they are even more trusted by the Yugala in Their coming and going to Their private places of kuñja-vilāsa than the samsnehā parama-preṣṭha-sakhīs like Śrī Lalitā.

prāṇa preṣṭha sakhi-kulād api kilāsaṅkocitā bhūmikāḥ keli bhūmiṣu. The purport of this is that all the five kinds of sakhīs that we have discussed in the past are happy to arrange for Śrī Rādhārāṇī's meeting with Śrī Kṛṣṇa and none of them either desire or endeavour to have independent meetings with Him. Nevertheless Śrī Rādhā sometimes desires to arrange for Śrī Kṛṣṇa to have intercourse with Lalitā and the sakhīs -

yadyapi sakhiṛa kṛṣṇa saṅgame nāhi mana;
tathāpi rādhikā yatne korāya saṅgama
nānā chale kṛṣṇe preri saṅgama korāya;
ātmā-kṛṣṇa-saṅga hoite koṭi sukha pāya

(Caitanya Caritāmṛta Madhya Chapter 8)

"Although the sakhīs have no interest in personal intercourse with Kṛṣṇa, still Rādhikā carefully arranges for their meetings with Him. With different pretexts, She urges Kṛṣṇa to have intercourse with them and thus She attains millions of times more happiness than if She would personally unite with Kṛṣṇa."

But although the mañjarīs are in the class of the sakhīs, they never have sexual intercourse with Kṛṣṇa, due to their fixation in a pure service-attitude. Even if Śrī Kṛṣṇa makes a pass at them or even if their own Yūtheśvarīs are eager for them to do this, they never desire personal intercourse with Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

ananya śrī rādhā padakamala dāsyaika rasadhī
hareḥ saṅge raṅgam svapana samaye nā'pi dadhati
balāt kṛṣṇa kūrpāsakabhidi kim apy ācarati kā-
py udāśrur meveti pralapati mamātmā ca hasati

(Vṛndāvana Mahimāmṛta 16, 94)

"The maid-servants, who are exclusively devoted to the service of Śrī Rādhā's lotus feet, which are like an ocean of nectar, do not enjoy with Śrī Hari even in their dreams. When Kṛṣṇa forcibly pulls at their bodices, they cry out: 'No, no!' while Rādhikā watches and laughs."

By laughing, Śrī Rādhā shows that she approves of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's actions.

In his Ānanda-Candrikā-ṭīkā of Śrī Ujjvala Nīlamaṇi, Nāyaka-Sahāya-Bheda-prakaraṇa, verse 15, Śrīmat Viśvanātha Cakravartīpāda has written –

yadyapi sakhyo hi sva sva yūtheśvarīnāṁ śrī rādhādīnām eva śrī kṛṣṇāṅga saṅga-sukhena sukhinyaḥ na tu svāsām, tad api tāḥ sāmānyato dvidhā bhavati - prema-saundarya-vaidagdhyādīnām ādhikyena śrī kṛṣṇasyātī lobhaniya gātryas teṣāṁ nyūnatvena tasyānati-lobhanīya gātryaś ca. tata eva sva yūtheśvarīnāṁ apyāgrahādhikyāc ca kadācit śrī kṛṣṇāṅga saṅga sprhāvatyo'pi bhavantī, tāś ca lalitādyāḥ parama preṣṭha sakhyādayaḥ. uttarāṁ tu tad dvayābhāvāt kadāpi kṛṣṇāṅga saṅga sprhāvatyo na bhavanti, tāś ca kasturyādayo nitya sakhyāḥ

"Although the sakhīs are happy when they can arrange for the meetings of their Yūtheśvarīs with Śrī Kṛṣṇa and do not desire the bliss of personal union with Him, still we can generally distinguish two kinds of them. To the first belong those who have bodies that are very attractive for Śrī Kṛṣṇa because they have more love, beauty and cleverness, and to the second belong those whose bodies are not so attractive to Him because they have less love, beauty etc.

Of them, the first are Lalitā and other parama-preṣṭha-sakhīs, who desire bodily intercourse with Śrī Kṛṣṇa because of the great eagerness of their Yūtheśvarīs, and the second group is never eager to meet with Kṛṣṇa, even if He requests it and their Yūtheśvarīs are eager to accomplish their meetings also. They are the nitya-sakhīs or mañjarīs like Kasturī."

The purport of this is that, according to the kind and the amount of the devotees' love, the Lord is greedy to taste the flavours of his/her love. The love of the sama-snehā-sakhīs can allow their Yūtheśvarī Rādhā to agree with their bodily intercourse with Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and the desire to unite with them may also awaken in the heart of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

But the love of the mañjarīs, who are exclusively fixed in a service-attitude, will not make them desire to unite with Śrī Kṛṣṇa even in dreams, what to speak of in a wakeful state! Therefore Śrī Kṛṣṇa will also never desire to unite with them. If He requests them to unite with Him, than it is only an external show, or done as a joke, it is never real.

Śrī Rādhā's efforts to make them unite with Kṛṣṇa should similarly be seen as an external act or as a mere joke.

Because of the complete purity of their attitude, Śrī Rādhā has accepted the mañjarīs as Her own Self, so that they automatically gain free access to all the places where the Śrī Yugala meets and performs pastimes.

The Śrī Yugala considers them to be like the embodiments of Their absorption in Their erotic pastimes. Because of this exclusive privilege, the mañjarīs are situated in the highest position in the kingdom of prema. The Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas perform their bhajana in allegiance to them. This is the unprecedented merciful gift of Śrīman Mahāprabhu.

Śrī rūpa mañjarī sāra, śrī rati mañjarī āra,
labaṅga mañjarī mañjulālī
śrī rasa mañjarī saṅge, kasturikā ādi raṅge,
prema sevā kore kutūhole

"I will eagerly render loving service with Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī, Śrī Rati Mañjarī, Labaṅga Mañjarī, Mañjulālī Mañjarī, Śrī Rasa Mañjarī, Kasturikā and others."

e sab anugā hoiyā, prema sevā nibo cāiyā,
iṅgite bujhibo sab kāje.
rūpa guṇe ḍagamagi, sadā hobo anurāgī,
vasati koribo sakhi mājha

"Following all of them, I will beg for devotional service, understanding what to do simply by receiving their hints. I will always float in the forms and attributes of the Divine Pair and live amongst the sakhiś."

vṛndāvane dui jana, catur dike sakhi gaṇa
samaya bujhiyā rasa sukhe
sakhiā iṅgita hobe, cāmara ḍhulābo kobe,
tāmbula yogābo cāñda mukhe

"The Divine Pair of Vṛndāvana is surrounded by Their girlfriends. Understanding the time has come, I will, by the indication of the sakhiś, fan Them with a whisk-fan or place betel leaves in Their moon-like mouths in rasika-bliss."

yugala caraṇa sevi, nirantara ei bhāvi,
anurāgī thākibo sadāy
sādhane bhāvibo yāhā, siddha dehe pābo tāhā,
rāga pathera ei se upāya

"I will always think about the lotus feet of the Yugala Kiśora and remain passionately devoted to them. Whatever I think of during my practice I will get in my siddha-deha. These are the ways of rāgānuga bhakti."

Śrīpāda Raghunātha says: "I take shelter of these maidservants of Śrī Rādhā, headed by Rūpa Mañjari!"

In many ways and many places in this Stavāvalī, one can see Śrī Raghunātha thus speaking of the Yugala-sevā and Śrī Rūpānugatya-bhajana. All this will become known to us at the proper places.

tāmbūla dāna, pāda mardana, jala dānādite;
nitya abhisāre rādhāya kore paritrpte
prāṇa preṣṭha yoto sakhi lalitā pradhānā;
tānhādera ho'te yārā sevāte pravīṇā
niḥsaṅkoca citte tāi rahaḥ keli sthāne
sevā kārye kore yārā gamanāgamanē
śrī rūpa mañjari ādi rādhā dāsīgaṇe;
āśraya loiyā bhaji ei mora mane

"In my mind I worship Śrī Rādhā's maidservants, headed by Śrī Rūpa Mañjari, who satisfy Her by serving Her betel leaves and water, massaging Her feet and escorting Her on Her love-journeys. They are even more expert in devotional service than Śrī Rādhikā's heart's friends, headed by Lalitā, and they can freely come and go in and out of the places, where the Divine Pair perform Their intimate pastimes, to render their services there."

Vilapa Kusumanjali 16
(Srila Raghunatha das Goswami)

PĀDĀBJAYOS TAVA VINĀ VARA DĀSYAM EVA
NĀNYAT KADĀPI SAMAYE KILA DEVI YĀCE
SAKHYĀYA TE MAMA NAMO'STU NAMO'STU NITYAM
DĀSYĀYA TE MAMA RASO'STU RASO'STU SATYAM

"O Goddess! I shall never pray to You for anything else but the excellent service of Your lotus feet! I offer my constant obeisances to the idea of becoming Your friend, but I really relish the idea of becoming Your maidservant!"

Explanations:

The transcendental revelations do not fade away from Śrī Raghunātha dāsa. Svāminī stands before Tulasī and wants to offer her a friendly relationship, saying: "Tulasi! Please accept My friendship! You can become equal to Lalitā and the others and serve both Me and Śyāmasundara!" Tulasī then says: "O goddess! I don't want anything else but the excellent service of Your lotus feet! I offer my obeisances to Your friendship! Let it stay on my head! I only want to serve You!" No one but Dāsa Gosvāmī is so fixed in that desire for Śrī Rādhā's service! That should be our target! Such sincere eagerness cannot be found anywhere else! Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī is an eternally liberated maidservant of Śrimatī Rādhārāṇī, so he is the greatest authority, the ācārya of the (Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava) sampradāya (tradition) and by following in his footsteps one will surely attain this service. He gave the perfect example to the practising devotees with his sādhana-maya jīvana, his life, which was full of devotional practice. "I want to think of myself as a follower of the Gosvāmīs like Rūpa and Raghunātha dāsa. What can I do to accomplish that?" Hearing and chanting of the mahā vāṇī (great words) of Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī will awaken that identification as follower of Rūpa and Raghunātha. His very powerful words are even greater than the words of the Ṛṣis of yore, for these words are filled with the

līlā-rasa of the most confidential Vraja nikuñjas to which even the great sages did not have access. The kiñkarīs know even better how to attain Rādhārāṇī's foot-service than Rādhārāṇī Herself! The six Gosvāmīs are all eternally perfect maidservants from the groves of Vraja, therefore it is required to follow in their footsteps. Śrī Raghunātha's love can be understood through this Vilāpa. For this reason we are discussing Vilāpa Kusumāñjali.

Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī prays: "Hā devi! Please give me the excellent service of Your lotus feet!" This service is so excellent because it is completely free from shame and reverence, and it is very luscious. Such service cannot be found anywhere, but now it is given as a special token of mercy of Śrī Gaurasundara. Raghunātha dāsa is a nitya siddha kiñkarī and the guru of the (Gauḍīya) sampradāya. The beautiful and sweet service of Śrī Rādhā is also most dear to us. Of all kinds of servanthood the servitude of Śrī Rādhā is the greatest. Although you are a sakhī, you are also a maidservant, adolescent in form and attributes, and qualified for the most intimate services. There is no other kind of servitude that can soothe the hearts of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas. The mañjarīs are actually taking part in the madhura rasa, but still it is servitude, for their service is within the scope of the madhura rasa— rūpa raghunātha pade hoibe ākuti; kobe hām bujhabo sei yugala prīti? "When, will I, by following in the footsteps of Śrīla Rūpa and Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī, understand the love of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa?" (Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura) Rūpa and Raghunātha dāsa's bodies are made from tip to toe of yugala ujjvala rasa, splendid consciousness of the Divine Couple. How eager their hearts were! How can one become absorbed in this splendid consciousness without being full of this yugala ujjvala rasa? Meditation on the Kāma gāyatrī-mantra is very helpful for entering into this mood. vṛndāvane aprākṛta navīna madana; kāma bīja kāma gāyatrī yāhāra upāsana (C.C. Madhya 8) "The transcendental youthful Cupid of Vṛndāvana (Kṛṣṇa) is meditated upon and attained by the Kāma gāyatrī-mantra which has the Kāma-bīja (seed of transcendental desire) joined to it." He who makes the devotees forget the material world and who maddens them with His transcendental form, qualities and pastimes, is the transcendental youthful Cupid, and on Him we meditate (dhīmahi). gāyantāṁ trāyate yasmād iti gāyatrī: "That which liberates by being sung is a gāyatrī." The worship with the Kāma-gāyatrī-mantra is meant to save us from material existence and to make our bodies, minds and life-airs fit for relishing the flavours of Rādhā-Govinda's transcendental pastimes.

In his spiritual absorption Śrī Raghunātha dāsa submits to Svāminī's feet: "Let me meditate how You overwhelm Śyāma with Your ecstatic plays in the kuñjas! When even You are unable to bring Him back to consciousness, You will need me". During His loving pastimes in the kuñja Śyāma faints of ecstasy because of encountering the waves of Rādhikā's vast mādana mahā bhāva, but Anurāgavatī (passionate Rādhikā) is not satisfied yet, so here some excellent service is required. Svāminī thinks: "Tulasi! I cannot break Priyatama's swoon! Why don't you please come?" Where else is such a confidential service to be found? Even Lalitā and Visākhā cannot attain this! This is the most excellent service! Rādhikā is called devi in this verse because She takes part in such playful sports.

Once the Divine Couple plays a game of dice for a wager. She who gives the most joy wins. Śyāma is defeated. On Rādhārāṇī's indication the maidservant begins to deride Śyāma, saying: "Ohe! Don't come here to play dice anymore! Better You go and herd the cows, understand? For cowherding You need a cow's brain! You must have become like them because of too much association with them! Qualifications are indispensable! Go and play there where bodily strength is required! For this game You need some brain, You understand?! Don't come here to play this game anymore!" Śyāma is embarrassed by these joking words. There's no limit to Svāminī's ecstasy! This is the most excellent service! What a sweet upāsanā (subject of meditation)! How can servitude ever be supreme? When it is anointed with the madhura rasa! Without being in madhura bhāva (a sweet spiritual mood) one can not enter into Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's pastimes. Only those who know the feelings and the thoughts of Bhāvamaya and Bhāvamayī (all-emotional Rādhikā and Kṛṣṇa-candra) can enter into this. The maidservants don't want Kṛṣṇa alone, not even in their dreams! They pray to Kṛṣṇa: "Please take me along wherever You play Your loving pastimes - with Your Priyājī - so that I can engage in Your loving service!"

Śrīmat Rūpa Gosvāmī says: The kāma rūpa rāga bhakti (rāgānugā-devotion in the erotic mood) is of two kinds: sambhogecchātmikā (devotion full of desire to enjoy with Kṛṣṇa personally) and tad bhāveccchātmikā (sakhībhāva): tad bhāveccchātmikā tāsām bhāva mādhurya kāmitā (Bhakti Rasāmṛta

Sindhuḥ 1.2.299). These devotees are finding more happiness in assisting Kṛṣṇa's direct lady-lovers, like Rādhā and Candrāvalī, in meeting Kṛṣṇa than in meeting Him personally. Examples are sakhīs like Lalitā and Viśākhā. Their sthāyi bhāva (intrinsic, permanent mood) is Kṛṣṇa-rati (love for Kṛṣṇa), and their suhṛt rati (love for the friend like Rādhārāṇī) is a sañcāribhāva, an infused mood. sañcārayanti bhāvasya gatīm sañcārino'pi te (B.R.S. 2.4.2). They love Kṛṣṇa first, and that love is infused in Rādhārāṇī. During pūrva rāga (beginnings of love), Śrī Rādhā met Lalitā and the sakhīs on the bank of the Kāliya-hrada. Because they had the same mood they became acquainted with each other that day, but when the gopīs saw the superiority of Śrī Rādhā's love for Kṛṣṇa they wanted to become happy by arranging for Her meeting with Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa then told His friend Subala:

kāliya damana dina māha; kālindī kūla kadambaka chāho
 koto śata vraja nava bālā; pekhalum janu thira vijurīka mālā
 tohe kahoṇ subala sāṅgāti; taba dhari hāma nā jāno dina rāti
 tahi dhanī-maṇi dui cāri; tahi mana mohinī eka nārī
 so rahu majhu mone paīṭhī; manasija dhūme ghume nāhi diṭhī
 anukhana tahika samādhi; ko jāne kaichana viraha veyādhi
 dine dine kṣīna bhelo dehā; govinda dāsa koho aiche nava lehā

"How many hundreds of Vraja-gopīs didn't I see under the shade of the Kadamba-tree on the bank of the Yamunā on the day I subdued the Kāliya-snake? I tell you, O friend Subala! Then (I was so startled that) I didn't know whether it was day or night! Amongst them there were about two or four jewel-like girls, and among them there was again one particularly mind-enchanting girl. She entered My mind and the resultant smoke of Cupid did not allow me to sleep anymore. I am now constantly meditating on Her; who knows how the pain of separation feels? My body becomes skinnier and weaker every day." Govinda dāsa says: "Such are the ways of new, young love!"

Śrīmatī showed similar loving attachment when She first saw Śyāmasundara:

dekhiyā nāgara śiromani; nā jāniye divasa rajaṇī
 ki hoilo marame vyathā; kāhāre kohibo kothā
 sakhi! ki āra puchasi more; marama kohilum tore
 yadi se milaye moya; tabe se saphala hoy
 nahile nā jīva āra; tohāre kohilum sāra

"When I saw this crown-jewel of lovers I did not know anymore whether it was night or day (out of ecstasy). Who can I tell about My heartache? O sakhi! What more do you want to know? I told you what's on My heart! When He will meet Me, then I will feel fulfilled, and if not then I cannot live anymore! This is definite!"

The sakhīs like Lalitā and Viśākhā are getting more ecstasy from establishing the meeting of the anurāgī eager Couple Rādhā and Mādhava than from meeting with Kṛṣṇa themselves, and in this way their love has become known as tad-bhāveccchātmikā-love. Still, Śrī Rādhā sometimes desires to give them the position of nāyikā (lady-love of Kṛṣṇa), but, although the mañjarīs are also a kind of sakhī, they never accept such a role! The mañjarīs (buds) enhance the beauty of a flower (gopī), but are never separately enjoyable to the blackbee (Kṛṣṇa). Lalitā and the sakhīs have sama sneha (equal love for Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa), but the mañjarīs are rādhā snehādhikā (they have more love for Rādhikā). This kind of love is called bhāvollasa. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī states in his 'Bhakti Rasāmṛta Sindhuḥ' (2.5.128) :

sañcāri syāt samonā vā kṛṣṇa-ratyāḥ suhṛd ratīḥ
 adhikā puṣyamānā ced bhāvollāsa itīryate

"When the sakhīs love Rādhā (suhṛd ratīḥ) as much as or less than Kṛṣṇa, then their sañcāribhāva is called Kṛṣṇa rati. But if they love Rādhikā more, then it is called bhāvollāsa rati." The mañjarīs are endowed with this bhāvollāsa rati. Śrīla Rāmāī Ṭhākura inquired from Śrīmatī Jāhnavaī Ṭhākurāṇī about this bhāvollāsa rati:

ṭhākura kohe - āge kṛpā kori koho; bhāvollāsā rati kothā āmāre śunāho
jāhnavā kohena - bāpu! śona sāvadhāne!; bhāvollāsā rati mātra hoy vṛndāvane
vṛndāvana sthāna se devera agocara; yāhā vilasaye nitya kiśorī kiśora
Śrī rūpa mañjarī āra Śrī rati mañjarī; sevānande magna rahe divā vibhāvarī¹
bhāvollāsā rati mātra ihā sabhākāra; duhu sukhe sukhī kichu nāhi jāne āra
rādhā-Kṛṣṇa sevānande sadā kāla hare; ānanda sāgare tārā sadāi vihare
Śrīmatīra samā sabē deha bheda mātra; eka prāṇa eka ātmā sabhe rādhā-tantra

"Rāmāī Ṭhākura said: Please tell me more about bhāvollāsā rati!" Mother Jāhnavā said: "Listen carefully, O son! Bhāvollāsā rati can only be found in Vṛndāvana!" Vṛndāvana, where Kiśora (adolescent Kṛṣṇa) eternally sports with Kiśorī (adolescent Rādhikā) cannot be perceived even by the demigods. Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī and Śrī Rati Mañjarī are absorbed in the ecstasy of devotional service day and night. They are all endowed with bhāvollāsā rati, and they are happy only when the Divine Couple is happy; they don't know anything else but that. They are completely equal to Śrīmatī; only their bodies are different. They are one soul and one life-air and they are all controlled by Rādhā."

One who wants to relish Kṛṣṇa's sweetness to the utmost must take complete shelter of Śrī Rādhā. Śrīpāda Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī writes in Rādhā Rasa Sudhānidhiḥ (261): kvāsau rādhā nigama padavī dūragā kutra cāsau Kṛṣṇas tasyāḥ kuca mukulayor antaraikānta vāsaḥ "Where is Rādhā, who is hard to perceive by following the Vedas, and where is Kṛṣṇa, who always lives inbetween Her bud-like breasts?" Śrī Rādhārāṇī says: "If you want to see My Sundara (beautiful Kṛṣṇa) you must take full shelter of My lotus feet!" And why do the mañjarīs love Kṛṣṇa? Because He is Rādhārāṇī's gallant! "Remember Kṛṣṇa in this Vraja forest as the Prāṇa-vallabha of my Svāminī! First Rādhā - then Śyāma! When Kṛṣṇa makes any trouble we'll take Him by the hand and throw Him out of the kuñja! We are the maidservants of Rādhā!" Why do the kiñkarīs love Kṛṣṇa? Because He is the lover of Rādhārāṇī!

Once, when Kṛṣṇa takes His supper in Nandīśvara, a kiñkarī fans Him. Without being seen by others Śyāma keeps His hand on that kiñkarī's foot, as a means of asking her: "Will I meet My Dearest One or not?" That maidservant then places one toe on Śyāma's hand, indicating that a meeting will be possible - that is the most excellent service! This is vara dāsyā, the most excellent service! Nothing is done for personal happiness, everything is done for the pleasure of the Yugala! Although the mañjarīs are in the category of sakhīs they are servants because of their complete dedication to devotional service. The sakhīs may have a superior position in the pastimes, but the fortune of service is greater for the mañjarīs! They know Śrī Rādhikā's innermost purpose and therefore they can perform their service without hesitation like no one else in the world.

One day Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are intimately enjoying Themselves in a kuñja, and a mañjarī relishes the sweetness of these pastimes through a passage between the vines. It appears to the maidservant that there is some obstacle in Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's pastimes, but They don't notice anything out of ecstasy. The maidservant then notices that Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa got stuck to Each other with Their hair, so very carefully she enters the kuñja, so as not to disturb Them, and unravels the hairs, so that the amorous pastimes can continue again. Who else can perform such a clever, intimate service? Even Lalitā and the sakhīs don't know! This is vara dāsyā, the most excellent service, which is attained by chanting the name of Śrī Rādhā: jaya jaya rādhā nāma, vṛndāvana yāra dhāma, kṛṣṇa sukha vilāsera nidhi (Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura, Prema Bhakti Candrikā) "Glory, glory to Śrī Rādhā's name, that dwells in Vṛndāvana and that is the jewel of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's blissful pastimes!"

"O Rādhe! For attaining Your most excellent service I'm taking shelter of Your lotus feet, which even Śyāma holds to His chest for soothing His lust-afflicted heart!"

vṛndāvaneśvari tavaiva padāravindam premāmṛtaika makaranda rasaugha pūrṇam
hṛdy arpitam madhupateḥ smara tāpam ugram nirvāpayat parama śītalām āśrayāmi

"O Queen of Vṛndāvana! I take shelter of Your cooling lotus feet, which are filled with all the nectar- honey of pure love, and that even Madhupati, the Lord of sweetness Śrī Kṛṣṇa, keeps to His heart to soothe His terrible lusty affliction!" (Rādhā Rasa Sudhānidhiḥ - 13)

Śrī Rādhikā protects Śrī Kṛṣṇa's senses, that's why She is a GOPĪ (the verbal root 'gup' means 'protecting'). Giridhārī does not feel the slightest distress while lifting Govardhana Hill. His pleasure potency stands before Him and solves everything. She's made of the quintessence of the Cintāmaṇi jewel of mahā-bhāva, the pinnacle of love. In sandalwoodpulp or a Cintāmaṇi-stone there is no asāra, or useless refuse, but still Her mahā-bhāva is the sāra, or quintessence, of the Cintāmani-jewel of prema. The maidservants say: "Śyāma! Do You know why You're so beautiful? Because Your Priyā is here!"

rādhā saṅge yadā bhāti tadā madana mohanaḥ
anyathā viśvamoho'pi svayaṁ madana mohitaḥ

(Govinda Līlāmṛta 8.32)

"When He shines with Rādhā, He is Madana Mohana, the enchanter of Cupid, but otherwise He is Himself enchanted by Cupid, although He enchants the whole world!"

coḍi gopīra manoratha, manmathera mana mathe, nāma dhare madana mohana

"Mounting the chariots of the gopīs' desires, He stirs even Cupid's mind, hence He is called Madana Mohana." (Caitanya Caritāmṛta) ballabī bhuja-latā baddhe manobhāvati brahmani mano me ramate "The supreme brahman delights my mind when it is bound by the vine-like arms of the cowherd girls." Kṛṣṇa is very happy when someone calls Him Rādhā-sevaka (the servant of Rādhā), but almost nobody says this. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is so much under Rādhā's control that He is willing to give everything to those who serve Her. Śrīla Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī writes (Rādhā Rasa Sudhānidhih 155):

anulikhyānāntān api sad aparādhan madhupatir
mahā premāviṣṭas tava parama deyarām vimṛsyati
tavaikāṁ śrī rādhe grṇata iha nāmāṁṛta rasāṁ
mahimnaḥ kaḥ sīmaṁ sprśatu dāsyāika manasām

"O Śrī Rādhe! Madhupati (Kṛṣṇa) cancels innumerable offenses of anyone who even once relishes the nectarean spiritual flavour of Your name, and in great ecstasy He considers what the greatest gift He can give to such a person is. Who can then imagine the glories of someone whose mind is fixed on becoming Your maidservant?"

Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī says: "I don't want anything else but Your excellent service! If I am not qualified for Your service, then please at least make me attached to this aspiration, so that one day I may get it." dāsyāya te mama raso'stu raso'stu satyam: "Let me truly have eager spiritual thirst for Your service!"

Śrī Rasika-Candra Dāsa sings:

| | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| tomāra caraṇa padma, | prema bhakti rasa sadma |
| dāsī bhāve sevā vinā tāra | |
| jīvane maraṇe hāya, | mone mora nāhi cāya, |
| sakhītvādi anya kichu āra | |

"Your lotus feet are the abode of loving devotion. In life or in death, I don't want anything else but a service-mood towards them! I don't want friendship with You or anything else!"

| | |
|----------------------------|----------------------|
| nā jāni sakhyea guṇa, | tāi devi punaḥ punaḥ |
| tava sakhye mora namaskāra | |
| yadi bolo lajjā pāi, | sakhītvare nāhi cāi, |
| kintu mone vāsanā tāhāra. | |
| śuno devi nivedana, | se lālasā kadācana, |

nāhi uṭhe āmāra hṛdaya
tava dāsyā rase mora, sadā mone rahu bhora
ei satya jānibe niścoy

"I don't know the qualities of friendship, therefore, O Devi, I offer my obeisances to it again and again! And if You say: "You don't want My friendship just because You're shy, but you actually desire it within your mind!", then listen, O Devi, to my petition: "This desire has never arisen in my heart! My mind is always filled with dāsyā rasa, which You should know for sure!"

Vilapa Kusumanjali 92
(Srila Raghunatha das Goswami)

VIHĀRAIS TRUṬITAM HĀRAM GUMPHITAM DAYITAM KADĀ
SAKHINĀM LAJJAYĀ DEVI SAMJÑAYĀ MĀM NIDEKŚYASI

O Devi! When will You, being shy before Your girlfriends, order me through a hint to restring Your dear necklace which broke during Your loving pastimes with Kṛṣṇa?

Explanations:

Śrī Raghunātha is deeply absorbed in his svarūpa; there's no end to the stream of his visions. One by one the transcendental pastimes trickle through his consciousness. In the previous verse Tulasī rendered a wonderful service by playing the Vīṇā. After arousing amorous feelings in the Divine Couple she went out of the kuñja and became blessed by relishing the sweetness of Their pastimes by looking in through the window. After the Divine Couple has completed Their amorous pastimes Tulasī understands that her time to render service has come, so she enters into the kuñja. Both Rādhā and Śyāma are leaning against Each other in the kuñja after completing Their amorous pastimes. Śṛṅgāra rasa (erotic love) personified has become an expert craftsman and has dressed Them singlehandedly. Their clothes are disheveled, Rādhikā's blouse has fallen off, sindūra is smeared over Their foreheads, Svāmīnī's braid is half opened and Her pearl necklace is broken. Śyāmasundara is the very form of Śṛṅgāra rasa (erotic flavour), and even He is enchanted by the vision of Śrī Rādhikā's body after Their love pastimes: līlā ante sukhe ihāra ye arṅga mādhuri; tāhā dekhi sukhe āmi āpanā pāsarī (C.C. Ādi 4) "I get beside Myself of ecstasy when I behold the sweetness of Her body after Our Pastimes." Even now this relish has not come to an end. Svāmīnī gives a hint to Tulasī: "Tulasi! My pearl necklace is broken! Quickly restring it!" vihārais truṭitam hāram: "The necklace was not broken by Me, but by Our pastimes", Svāmīnī shyly says. "Lalitā and Viśākhā will come here soon! Quickly restring the necklace before they have another reason to mock Me!" The sakhīs make waves on the ocean of prema by making jokes. prema līlā vihārānām samyag vistārikā sakhī (Ujjvala Nīlāmaṇī) "The sakhīs completely expand and nourish the love, the pastimes and the enjoyment of Śrī-Śrī-Rādhā-Mādhava." sakhī vinā ei līlāra puṣṭi nāhi hoy; sakhī līlā vistāriyā sakhī āsvādoy (C.C.) "Without the sakhīs these pastimes cannot be nourished. The sakhīs extend them and make them relishable." But only the mañjarīs are eligible to render service freely and without hesitation! It is the nature of Mahābhāva to make Śyāmasundara happy and it is the nature of the mañjarīs to make both Rādhā and Śyāmasundara happy with their services. Along with their services they can also relish the sweetness of the Yugala-pastimes. According to all the scriptures Kṛṣṇa is the most beautiful, but according to Śrīmad Bhāgavata His beauty is even more enchanting when He is with the gopīs. Śrī Śuka Muni said (Ś.B. 10.33.7):

tatrāti śuśubhe tābhir bhagavān devakī sutāḥ
madhye mañīnām haimānām mahā marakato yathā

"Kṛṣṇa looked even more beautiful amongst the gopīs, like a great emerald (Kṛṣṇa) beautified by beads of gold (the gopīs)". And Rādhārāṇī is the most beautiful gopī! Where can you ever find anyone like Her? In Śrī Viśākhānandada-stotram Śrī Raghunātha dāsa has written:

govindānaṅga rājīve bhānu śrīr vārṣabhānavī;
Kṛṣṇa hṛt kumudollāse sudhākara kara sthitih

"Śrī Rādhikā, the daughter of Vṛṣabhānu, is the beautiful sun that shines on the lotus flower of Govinda's amorous desires and She's like the moon that shines on the heart of Kṛṣṇa, which is like a Kumuda-flower (Kumuda flowers thrive on the moonlight)."

Kṛṣṇa mānasa harīsasya mānasi sarasī varā;
Kṛṣṇa cātaka jīvātu navāmbhoda payaḥ śruti

"She is the excellent Mānasī-lake where the swan of Kṛṣṇa's mind swims (swans go to this lake once a year to mate) and She is the fresh monsoon cloud that keeps the Kṛṣṇa-Cātaka bird alive."

Kṛṣṇa mañjula tāpiñche vilasat svarṇa yūthikā
govinda navya pāthode sthira vidyul latādbhuta

"She is a splendid golden Yūthikā-flower on the beautiful Tamāla-tree named Kṛṣṇa, and She is a wonderful steady lightning strike in the fresh raincloud named Kṛṣṇa."

grīṣme govinda sarvāṅge candra candana candrikā;
śīte śyāma śubhāṅgeṣu pīta paṭṭa lasat paṭī

"In the summer She is soothing camphor, sandalpaste and moonlight for all of Govinda's limbs and in the winter She is a glistening yellow silk garment on Śyāma's handsome limbs."

madhau Kṛṣṇa tarūllāse madhu-śrīr madhurākṛtiḥ
mañju mallāra rāga-śrīr prāvṛṣī śyāma harṣiṇī

"In the spring She is the sweet form of the vernal goddess of fortune that gladdens the Kṛṣṇa-tree, and in the rainy season She is the lovely Mallāra-melody that delights Śyāma."

ṛtau śāradi rāsaika rasikendram iha sphuṭam
varītum hanta rāsa-śrīr viharanti sakhī śritā

"In the autumn She selects Rāsaika Rasikendra (Kṛṣṇa, the only king of relishers of the Rāsa-dance) as Her husband and enjoys the Rāsa-dance with Him as Rāsa-Śrī, the goddess of beauty of the Rāsa-dance, accompanied by Her friends."

hemante smara yuddhārtham aṭantam rāja-nandanam
pauruṣena parājetum jaya-śrīr mūrti dhāriṇī

"In the Hemanta-season She wanders around with prince Kṛṣṇa to fight erotic battles, in which She assumes the form of Jaya-Śrī (the goddess of victory) and defeats Him in a masculine way (taking the masculine role during lovemaking)." Whatever is beautiful, sweet, loveable, and dear to the heart and desirable Śrī Raghunātha has used as examples of Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava's extraordinary mutual love and Their beauty and sweetness. The greatest remembrance is the pastimes of the Divine Couple and the practising devotee should immerse himself in this rasa. yugala vilāsa smṛti sāra (Narottama). During particular pastimes the Yugala will feel shy when the sakhīs are present, therefore even the sakhīs will sometimes order the mañjarīs to perform the more confidential service. Śrīla Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura sings:

lalitā kobe more, vījana deobo, vījabo māruta mande

śramajala sakala, meṭabo duhuṇ kalevara, herabo parama ānande

When will Lalitā order me to softly fan Them when Their bodies are studded with sweatdrops of fatigue? I will see Them in topmost bliss!" (Prārthanā)

The maidservant's heart is filled with Śrī Rādhikā's love and affection. She sits at Her feet and quickly restrings the necklace. Svāminī is most satisfied and says: "Well done! How did you do that so quickly?" There is no limit to Tulasi's bliss when she knows that Svāminī is pleased with her. Now she knows that her service is a success! If I don't get a signal (from my deity) about whether my service is pleasing Him or not, can I then truly say that I'm doing bhajan? In my dreams, smaraṇa and visions I want some experience also". This is a consolation in the life of a practising devotee. How wonderful is Śrī Raghunātha's relish of these visions! It is as if he directly experiences all this! When the vision vanishes he weeps and prays:

he devi śrī rādhike! he svāmini gāndharvike!
nikuñjete kandarpa vilāse
premāspada maṇihāra, chinna hole punarbār,
sakhīgaṇa bhoye lajjāvaśe.

sakhīgaṇa samīpete, ājñā dibe iṅgitete,
chinna hāra granthanā korite.
vimardita kanṭha hāra, ki apūrva śobhā tāra,
gaṇthi dibo rasa kautukete

(Śrī Haripada Śila)

"O Devi Śrī Rādhike! O Svāmini Gāndharvike! When Your beloved jewelled necklace breaks during Your erotic pastimes in the nikuñja You are too shy to show it to Your girlfriends, so You order me through a hint to restrung it. How wonderful is the beauty of that ravaged necklace! I will restrung it with rasika eagerness!"

Radha Rasa Sudhanidhi 142
(Srila Prabhodhananda Sarasvati)

RĀDHĀ NĀMA SUDHĀ-RASAṂ RASAYITUṂ JIHVĀŚ TU ME VIHVALĀ
PĀDAU TAT PADAKAṄKITĀSU CARATĀṂ VRNDĀṬAVI VĪTHIŚU
TAT KARMAIVA KARAH KAROTU HRDAYAM TASYĀH PADAṂ DHYĀYATĀT
TAD BHĀVOTSAVATAḥ PARAM BHAVATU ME TAT PRĀṄANĀT HE RATIḥ

May my tongue become overwhelmed by relishing the nectarean flavour of Rādhā's holy name, may my feet walk over Vṛndāvana's pathways that are marked with Her footprints, may my hands be engaged only in Her menial service, may my heart meditate on Her lotus-feet, and may I develop love for the Lord of Her life (Kṛṣṇa) through Her festival of emotions.

DESIRING RĀDHĀ'S WORSHIP:

Commentary:

First of all Śrīpāda, who is, just like in the previous verse, in sādhakāveśa (external consciousness), says: rādhā nāma sudhā rasam rasayitum jihvās tu me vihvalā „May my tongue become overwhelmed by relishing the nectar of Rādhā's holy name!" The best way to attain prema is nāma saṅkīrtana. Actually,

when the tongue becomes overwhelmed by chanting the holy name, all the other senses also become overwhelmed by its sweetness. This is what Sanātana Gosvāmī says in Bṛhad Bhāgavatāmṛta (2.3.162):

ekasminn indriye prādurbhūtam nāmāmṛtam rasaiḥ
āplāvayati sarvānīndriyāni madhurair nijaiḥ

Furthermore, Sanātana Gosvāmī says nijaiḥ svakīyaiḥ svābhāvikair vā „The holy name naturally contains all of its own sweetness". Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī writes in his 'Kṛṣṇa nāma stotram':
nārada vīnojjīvana sudhormi niryāsa mādhurī pūra
tvām kṛṣṇa nāma kāmaṁ sphura me rasane rasena me

"O Holy name of Kṛṣṇa! You are the very life of Nārada Muni's Vīṇā and the stream of Your sweetness is the quintessence of nectar! Please always give that savour to my tongue!" But even Kṛṣṇa is overwhelmed when His tongue relishes the nectar of Rādhā's name! When you love somebody, it is natural that you love that person's name also. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī writes in Act VI of 'Vidagdha Mādhava' that when Kṛṣṇa was burning in the forestfire of separation from Śrī Rādhā, his comrade Madhumaṅgala consoled Him by writing the two syllables Rā-dhā on a leaf and showing it to Him, saying: "O Friend, accept Your Rādhā!" Kṛṣṇa was very happy when He saw the syllables on the leaf and said: "O friend! You fully satisfied Me with this gift!" Because:

kramāt kakṣām akṣṇoḥ parisara bhuvāṁ vā śravaṇayor
manāg adhyārūḍham praṇayi jana nāmākṣara padam
kam apy antas toṣāṁ vitarad avilambād anupadāṁ
nisargād viśvesām hṛdaya padavīm utsukayati

"Who will not be happy when the name of one's beloved comes to the edges of the eyes or the ears? The hearts of all the people of the world are naturally always eager for this!" Offenders cannot taste the natural sweetness of the holy name, but the holy name destroys the offenses of a surrendered chanter and becomes self-manifest on his tongue. When a devotee does not experience any taste, he should humbly pray: "O Holy name! O Cintamaṇi-jewel! O Lord! O form of topmost bliss! Reveal Your spotless, blissful form on my tongue! You are the most merciful descension in the form of syllables! Please bless this fallen soul with a little taste of Your endless sweetness!" Thus the sincere devotee will surely be blessed with some sweet taste (sevonmukhe hi jihvādau svayam eva sphuratyadah).

Then Śrīpāda says: pādau tat padakāṅkitāsu caratām vṛṇdāṭavī vīthiṣu "Let my feet walk over the pathways of Vṛndāvana, which are marked by Her lotus-feet! May I experience the fact that my Iṣvarī always walks here! Each speck of Vraja's dust is sprinkled with the honey of Her supreme love, and even great devotees like Uddhava prayed for a shower of that dust over their heads! When I remember this I will surely be blessed with a life full of bhajana in Vraja!"

tat karmaiva karaḥ karotu: "May my hands be engaged in Rādhā's service. My hands and feet have been serving so many persons. Let them become stunned now and become solely engaged in Śrī Rādhā's service."

hṛdayām tasyāḥ padām dhyāyatāt „May my heart meditate on Śrī Rādhā's lotus-feet, as well as on Her whole form, Her pastimes and Her qualities. My mind is always restlessly wandering away from it's sweet meditation on Śrī Rādhā! If it could only acquire some taste for Her lotus-feet, then it would remain calm and fixed there! Not only the tongue, the hands, the feet and the mind should be engaged, but all the other senses as well! Let my eyes look at beautiful Rādhākuṇḍa and at Rādhā's devotees, let my nose smell the incense offered to Her, and let my ears hear the singing of Her holy names, pastimes and attributes!"

Someone may say: "Śrīpāda! Why don't You worship Govinda while living in Vṛndāvana?" As an answer he says: "tad bhāvotsavataḥ param bhavatu me tat prāṇanāthe ratih When I surrender exclusively to Śrī Rādhā's lotus-feet, my worship of Govinda will automatically be more successful! Knowing me to be the greatest object of Śrī Rādhā's mercy, Govinda will automatically come to me and

give me even more mercy than He gives to His own devotees (prītah svāṁ bhajato'pi, verse 118)! Rather, since Śrī Rādhā is hard to attain even for Him, Śrī Govinda will always need me in order to get Her mercy also! I will not need Him, but He will need me!" Here the word bhāvotsava means mañjarī bhāva, a preference for Śrī Rādhā over Śrī Kṛṣṇa (bhāvollāsa rati), and a strong feeling of mine-ness towards Her. The mañjarīs love Kṛṣṇa only because He is connected to Śrī Rādhā. Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī concludes his 'Cāṭu Puṣpāñjalī' by praying:

karunāṁ muhur arthaye param tava vṛndāvana cakravartini
api keśiripor yayā bhavet sa cāṭu prārthana bhājanāṁ janah

"O Queen of Vṛndāvana! I pray for Your mercy again and again, so that I may once become the object of Kṛṣṇa's flattering prayers! I will be Your maidservant and when You are angry with Kṛṣṇa He will have to flatter me by saying: "O Sundari (beautiful girl) O merciful one! (dayāvati)! Please please Your Svāminī for Me, so that the fire of My separation from Her will be extinguished!" Then I will take Him by the hand and bring Him to You!" Such will be our love for Govinda in the festival of Rādhā's bhāva! This is the greatest aspiration for a Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava!

Radha Rasa Sudhanidhi 259

DHYĀYĀM TAM ŚIKHI PIÑCHA MAULIM ANIŚĀM TAN NĀMA SAṄKĪRTAYAN
NITYĀM TAC CARĀṄAMBŪJAĀM PARICARAĀM TAN MANTRA VARYĀM JAPAN
ŚRĪ RĀDHĀ PADA DĀSYAM EVA PARAMĀBHĪṢṬĀM Hṛdā DHĀRAYAN
KARHI SYĀM TAD ANUGRAHENĀ PARAMODBHUTĀNURĀGOTSAVĀH

I always meditate on Kṛṣṇa, who wears a crown of peacock-feathers, I always sing His name in saṅkīrtana, I always serve His lotus-feet (the deity) and repeat His best of mantras, holding the desire for the supremely cherished service of Śrī Rādhā's lotus-feet in my heart. When will that great festival of divine love arise in my heart by His grace?

WORSHIPING ŚRĪ KṛṣṇA FOR ŚRĪ RĀDHĀ'S SERVICE:

Commentary:

Śrīpāda continues his prayers in sādhakāveśa for Śrī Rādhā's maidservice. It is for the sake of attaining Śrī Rādhā's service alone that he worships Kṛṣṇa, not independently: āmāra īśvarī hon vṛndāvaneśvarī; tāra prānanātha boli bhaji giridhārī - „My mistress is the queen of Vṛndāvana (Rādhā) and I worship Giridhāri (only) because He is the Lord of Her life." This is the slogan of the rādhā snehādhikā devotees. Śrīpāda says: "I worship Kṛṣṇa, who wears a peacock feather, only to please Rādhā. I will see in my meditation that I am serving Rādhikā in a solitary grove in Vṛndāvana and that She will be angry with Kṛṣṇa for being a little too late for His appointment with Her. I will then see in my meditation how Kṛṣṇa makes His peacock-feather crown roll on the ground before Her feet, just to pacify Her pique. To meditate on Kṛṣṇa in this way is the greatest festival of anurāga for me". In the same way I will always loudly chant Kṛṣṇa's holy name together with Rādhā's holy name, holding the most cherished maidservice of Śrī Rādhā in my heart. This chanting will cause a festival of anurāga to appear in the heart. Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī similarly prayed:

rādheti nāma nava sundara sīdhu mugdham kṛṣṇeti nāma madhurādbhuta gāḍha dugdham
sarvākṣaṇāṁ surabhi rāga himena ramyāṁ kṛtvā tad eva piba me rasane kṣudhārte

"O tongue suffering from thirst! Please mix the delicious nectar of the name Rādhā with the wonderfully sweet condensed milk of the name Kṛṣṇa, add the fragrant ice of pure love and drink this

charming drink at every moment!" Śrīpāda says: "I will always serve Kṛṣṇa's lotus-feet (the deity) and I will worship my Īśvarī with the remnants of His food, His chewed betel-leaves and His flowergarlands. I will always mutter His best of mantras (the eighteen-syllable gopī jana vallabha mantra), so that my mind (man) will be saved (tra) from bodily consciousness and I will become absorbed in thinking of my mañjarī svarūpa. This very enthusiastic Kṛṣṇa-bhajana will swiftly make me attain the most cherished treasure of Śrī Rādhikā's maidservice!

āmāra paramābhiṣṭa, rādhā pada dāsye niṣṭha,
dāsyāṁṛta prāptira kāraṇa
Śikhi piñcha mauli śyāma, satata koribo dhyāna,
śyāma nāma koribo kīrtana

"For the sake of attaining establishment in the most cherished nectarean service of Rādhikā's lotus-feet I will always meditate on Śyāma, who wears a crown of peacock-feathers, and I will always chant Śyāma's holy name."

śyāmera śrī pādapadma, arcanā koribo nitya,
mantra rāja japibo sadāya
triloke paramādbhuta, anurāga premotsava,
labhya hobe śyāmera kṛpāya

"I will always worship Śyāma's lotus-feet and mutter His best of mantras. By Śyāma's grace I will attain the great festival of spontaneous love that is the most astonishing thing in all the three worlds."

rādhāra kiñkarī pada, sudurlabha se sampad,
lokātīta parama ānanda,
bhaṇe śrī prabodhānanda, bhāgye mile se ānanda,
kṛpā koile nandakula canda

Śrī Prabodhānanda sings: "It is by great fortune and by the grace of Kṛṣṇa, the moon of king Nanda's dynasty, that I can attain the limit of transcendental ecstasy, the rarely attained treasure of Rādhā's maidservice."

Prema Bhakti Chandrika, verse 51
(Srila Narottama das Thakur)

sama snehā viṣama snehā, nā koriho dui lehā
kohi mātra adhika snehā-gaṇa
nirantara thāke saṅge, kṛṣṇa kathā līlā raṅge
narma sakhi ei sab jana (51)

"Equal affection for Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa or more affection for Kṛṣṇa than for Śrī Rādhā - do not become attached to that. I will just speak about preference for Śrī Rādhā! They are always in Her company, blissfully telling Her about Kṛṣṇa. They are all called narma sakhiś."

Allegiance to the adhika snehās:
Sudhā kaṇikā vyākhyā —

Śrīla Ṭhākura Mahāśaya establishes allegiance to the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas' adhika snehā mañjarīs or rādhā snehādhikā mañjarīs by saying: sama snehā viṣama snehā nā koriho dui lehā, kohi mātra adhika

snehāgaṇa. Previously we have mentioned the difference between Śrī Rādhārāṇī's five types of sakhīs, namely viṣama snehā or śrī kṛṣṇa snehādhikā, those who have a greater love for Kṛṣṇa, sama snehā or those who love Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa equally and adhika snehā or those who love Śrī Rādhā more than Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The blessed author says: "We will not do bhajana in allegiance to those who love Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa equally or those who love Śrī Kṛṣṇa more than Śrī Rādhā. Therefore na koriho dui lehā — We do not have to lehā, love them or be affectionate towards them." This does not mean that we should not love them or be indifferent towards them, for those who practise mañjarī bhāva have proper faith, respect, love and friendship for all the girlfriends of Śrī Rādhārāṇī. Therefore the word lehā is understood to mean special love or allegiance to their feelings here. In his description of the distinction between the feelings of the viṣama snehā and sama snehā sakhīs on the one hand and the feelings of the rādhā snehādhikā mañjarīs on the other hand, Śrimat Rūpa Gosvāmīpāda has written —

sañcārī syāt samonā vā kṛṣṇa ratyā suhṛd ratih
adhikā puṣyamāṇā ced bhāvollāsa itīryate (B.R.S.2.5.128)

"Those amongst Śrī Rādhārāṇī's sakhīs whose love for Śrī Rādhā is equal to or slightly less than their love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa have love for Kṛṣṇa as sthāyi bhāva within which their love for Rādhā is counted as a sañcārī bhāva (injected, infused, inserted feelings), for that nourishes their basic love for Kṛṣṇa. But those sakhīs who love Rādhā more than Kṛṣṇa and whose feelings are increased due to constant absorption in this have the status of bhāvollāsa because their feelings have come to dominate all feelings, although they are officially sañcārī bhāvas. Thus, despite it all, this adhika snehā must be counted as a sthāyi bhāva."

The Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas who have taken shelter of Śrīman Mahāprabhu's lotus feet and who follow the Six Gosvāmīs, headed by Rūpa and Sanātana, are following this upāsanā (mode of worship) of mañjarī bhāva or bhāvollāsa. Thus the rāgānugā bhajana of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas who follow the nitya siddha mañjarīs of Vraja, who love Rādhā more than Kṛṣṇa, will be accomplished. Therefore the blessed author does not mention the bhajana in allegiance to viṣama snehā or sama snehā and only shows the path of allegiance to the adhika snehās or mañjarīs. This is the great gift of Śrīman Mahāprabhu and the most beloved goal of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas. In the kingdom of bhāva sādhana, mañjarī bhāva is the pinnacle of relish that a living entity can ascend to!

Then, while defining the reason for which the adhika snehā mañjarīs relish more, Śrīla Ṭhākura Mahāśaya says: nirantara thāke saṅge, kṛṣṇa kothā līlā raṅge, narma sakhī ei sab jana "All the sakhīs are eternal companions in Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava's pastimes, because although the feelings of the Divine Pair are all-pervading, they cannot find nourishment without the support of the sakhīs. Still there are no other associates than the mañjarīs who continuously stay with Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava during Their pastimes. By Śrī Rādhārāṇī's wish Lalitā and other sakhīs sometimes are heroines (lovers) of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, therefore due to their equal feelings they cannot be there when the Divine Pair are having Their intimate pastimes — there would be shyness and embarrassment. But the mañjarīs who are endowed with bhāvollāsa are especially absorbed in the different services of the Divine Pair and due to their oneness in feelings with Her, Śrī Rādhārāṇī considers them to be non different from Her own body. Thus the mañjarīs never become heroines. They are also present when Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava have Their intimate meetings to engage in Their private service. At that time the Divine Pair consider them the āveśa mūrtis (embodiments of Their ecstatic absorption) of Their rasika pastimes, and thus there is no reason for Them to feel embarrassed and only these mañjarīs are constantly in the company of the Divine Pair. In his Śrī Vṛndāvana Mahimāmṛta (8th Śatakam) Śrīla Prabodhānanda Sarasvatīpāda has written about the sweet mood of the mañjarīs and how they are always present —

kṣaṇam carāṇa vicchedācchrīsvaryāḥ prāṇa hāriṇīm;
padāravinda samālagna tayaivāhar-niśam sthitām
bahunā kiṁ sva kāntena krīḍantyāpi latā grhe;
paryāṇkādhiṣṭhāpitām vā vastrair vācchāditām kvacit
.....
rādhā padābja sevānya spṛhā kāla trayojjhitām

rādhā prīti sukhāmbhodhāv apāre buḍitāṁ sadā
 rādhā padāmbujād anyat svapnānte'pi na jānatām
 rādhā sambandha saṁdhāvat prema sindhaugha mālinīm
 seṣāśeṣa mahā vismāpaka kaiśora rūpiṇīm;
 kṣaṇe kṣaṇe rasāsvāda prodañcat pulakāvalīm
 sarvāṅga kānti saundarya apāraiḥ sarva mohinīm
 rādhā karmākulatayā tatra tatra vicālinīm

"Since they will die if they are separated from the lotus feet of their Īśvarī Śrī Rādhārāṇī, the mañjarīs stay with Her lotus feet day and night. What more can I say? When Śrīmatī enjoys with Her lover in the vine cottage She will take the mañjarī with Her onto the bed and sometimes even covers her with the sheets! The mañjarī does not desire anything but the service of Śrī Rādhā's lotus feet in all three phases of time — past, present, or future, and is always immersed in a boundless ocean of ecstatic love for Rādhā. Even in dreams she does not know anything else but the lotus feet of Rādhā. She is beautified by waves of the billowing ocean of prema for Śrī Rādhā, she has an adolescent female form that astonishes even the great gods and the entire universe, and she wears big goosebumps due to relishing rasa on her body at every moment. Rādhā's maidservants captivate everyone by the endless luster and beauty of their every limb and they always anxiously wander around here and there in Rādhā's service."

In this way the kiñkarīs are always with Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava, enjoying their services when They meet, and in times of separation they relieve virahinī Rādhā from the pangs of separation by kṛṣṇa-kathā līlā rāṅge, enjoying discussing topics of Kṛṣṇa. Then, when they view the pastimes of the Divine Pair, they keep these intimate pastimes marked on the canvases of their hearts with the pencils of prema, so that they can describe these blissful pastimes again to Śrīmatī at the time of separation. In this way they give shape to playful Śyāma in front of Śrīmatī. Also for this prasaṅga (conversational) form of devotional service the mañjarīs always stay with Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. Although they are always engaged in acts of service they are still known as narma sakhīs (intimate joking girlfriends). They extend tasty jokes to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, to Śrī Rādhārāṇī and again to the Divine Pair both, to give them topmost happiness according to the time. Hence it is said: "They are all called narma sakhīs." (51)

Utkalika Vallari, verses 19-20
(Srila Rupa Goswami)

PRAṄIPATYA BHAVANTAM ARTHAYE
 PAŚUPĀLENDRA KUMĀRA KĀKUBHIH
 VRAJA YAUVATA MAULI MĀLIKĀ
 KARUNĀ PĀTRAM IMAM JANĀM KURU

O Prince of the cowherders (Kṛṣṇa)! I offer my obeisances unto You and I pitifully pray to You: Please make me the object of mercy of the crowngarland of young girls of Vraja (Śrī Rādhikā)!

ŚRĪ RĀDHĀ KRPA-PĀTRA (The Object Of Śrī Rādhā's Grace):

Makaranda Kaṇā Vyākhyā:

The strong desire for attaining his coveted devotional service increases more and more in virahī Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī's heart, and this desire grows as high as the Sumeru-mountain. On the one hand his heart is squeezed strongly by strong desires to attain the service of the Lord, and on the other hand he laments because he understands how unqualified he is for attaining that service. This is a very desirable stage in the kingdom of Divine Love. The aspirant is also separated and deprived of the vision of the Lord, so he should also feel some want and some void because of this. bhajana means searching, and

that search will make external consciousness disappear from the aspirant. Slowly the thirst for loving devotion will increase and finally the aspirant will become anxious of thirst. When that thirst takes over the heart the material world will stay out of the mind and all activities will be connected with that thirst.

In this verse Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī prays to Śrī Śyāmasundara's lotus-feet: "Please make me the object of Śrī Rādhā's mercy - I don't want anything else! I will relish the mellows of Your service through the lotus-feet of Śrī Rādhā - not independently!" This is the rādhā snehādhikā love of the mañjarīs: āmāra īśvarī hon vṛndāvaneśvarī; tāra prāṇanātha boli bhaji giridhārī "My Queen is the Queen of Vṛndāvana (Śrī Rādhā) and I worship Giridhārī because He is the Lord of Her life!" We will not worship Giridhārī without Śrimatī Rādhārāṇī. I want to relish Your sweetness by experiencing Rādhārāṇī and I want to relish Your sweetness through Śrī Rādhārāṇī. But this will not be done in a sama snehā bhāva, a mood of equal affection. I will keep rādhā snehādhikā prīti in my heart." In Bhakti Rasāmṛta Sindhu Śrī Rūpa has written (2.5.18):

sañcārī syāt samonā vā Kṛṣṇa-ratyāḥ suhṛd ratīḥ
adhibhāva puṣyamānā ced bhāvollāsa itīryate

"When the sakhīs love Rādhā (suhṛd ratīḥ) as much as or less than Kṛṣṇa, then this is counted as a sañcārī bhāva in their sthāyi bhāva called Kṛṣṇa ratī. But if they always love Rādhikā more, then it is called bhāvollāsa ratī." This bhāvollāsa ratī is the sthāyi bhāva of the mañjarīs, who are endowed with rādhā snehādhikā. This is the great gift of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and this is the very heart of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism. Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī taught his mind:

mad īśā nāthatve vraja vipina candraṁ vrajavaneś-
varīṁ tan nāthatve tad atula sakhītve tu lalitām
viśākhāṁ śikṣāli vitarāṇa gurutve priya saro
girīndrau tat prekṣa lalita ratidatve smara manah

"O mind! Remember Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the moon of the Vraja-forests as the Lord of the Queen of Vṛndāvana Rādhā, remember Śrī Rādhā as Śrī Kṛṣṇa's most beloved girl, Lalitā as Their matchless girlfriend, Viśākhā as the teacher of all the other girlfriends, and Śrī Rādhākunda and Girirāja Govardhana as two places the mere sight of which bestows charming love of Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa!"

sama snehā viṣama snehā, nā koriho dui lehā,
kohi mātra adhika snehā gaṇa Kṛṣṇa kathā līlā raṅge,
nirantara thāke saṅge, narma sakhī ei sab jana

"Don't count equal affection (for both Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa) and unequal affection (More for Kṛṣṇa than for Rādhā). Just speak of adhika snehā (More love for Rādhā than for Kṛṣṇa). Always stay with the priya narma sakhīs and always talk with them about Kṛṣṇa's pastimes."

śrī rūpa mañjarī āra, śrī rati mañjarī sāra,
lavaṅga mañjarī mañjulālī.
śrī rasa mañjarī saṅge, kasturikā ādi raṅge,
prema sevā kore kutūhole

"Blissfully render loving devotional service with Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī, Śrī Rati Mañjarī, Lavaṅga Mañjarī, Mañjulālī Mañjarī, Śrī Rasa Mañjarī, Kasturikā and others."

e sabhāra anugā hoiyā, prema sevā nibo cāiyā,
iṅgite bujhībo sab kāja.

rūpe guṇe ḍagamagi, sadā hobo anurāgī,
vasati koribo sakhiā mājha

(Prema Bhakti Candrikā)

"I will follow in their footsteps and render loving devotional service. Simply on their hints I will understand what my duty is. I will always be passionately absorbed in Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's forms and qualities while I reside amongst the sakhiś."

"O Śyāma! I will worship Your Priyā, and Your worship will follow automatically, because You are dearer to Each other than millions of lives!"

prāṇebhyo'py adhikā priyā mura-ripor yā hanta yasyā api
svīya prāṇa parārddhato'pi dayitās tat pāda-reṇoh kaṇāḥ
dhanyāṁ tāṁ jagatī-traye parilasaj jaṅghāla kīrtim hareḥ
preṣṭhā-varga śiro'gra bhūṣaṇa-maṇīm rādhām kadāham bhaje

(Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī's Utkaṇṭhā daśakam)

"When will I serve Śrī Rādhā, who is dearer to Kṛṣṇa than His own life, who considers a speck of Kṛṣṇa's footdust millions of times more dear than Her own life, who is supremely fortunate, whose fames shine in the three worlds, and who is the crown jewel of all of Hari's beloveds?" The treasure that is attained by single-mindedly worshiping Śrī Rādhā is very precious, as Śrī Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī explains in 'Rādhā Rasa Sudhānidhi (74)':

dūre snigdha paramparā vijayatāṁ dūre suhṛṇi maṇḍalī
bhṛtyāḥ suntu vidūrato vraja-pater anyāḥ prasaṅgaḥ kutah
yatra śrī vṛṣabhānujā kṛta ratih kuñjodare kāminā
dvārasthā priya kiñkarī param aham śroṣyāmi kāñci-dhvanim

"Let Kṛṣṇa's parents and all elders of Vraja stay at a distance, all glories to them! Let the circle of Kṛṣṇa's friends keep some distance! Let the servants of the Lord of Vraja, Kṛṣṇa, stay especially far away, what to speak of others! Let them all stay away from the kusja-gate where I stand as a loving maidservant, hearing the sash of bells of Vṛṣabhānu's beautiful daughter jingling as She makes love with Her lusty lover!" When I hear these waist bells jingling I know that Your pastimes are finished and my time for serving has come. I will blissfully enter the kuñja and:

mukhera muchābo ghāma khāoyābo guyā;
ghāmete bātāsa dibo candanādi cūyā
vṛndāvanera phulete gāñthiyā dibo hāra;
vināiyā bāndhibo cūdā kuntalera bhāra
kapāle tilaka dibo candanera cānd
narottama dāsa kohe pirītera phānd
(Prārthanā)

"I will wipe Their faces and feed Them betel leaves. I will fan the perspiration from Their bodies and anoint Them with sandalwoodpulp and other ointments. I will string garlands for Them with Vṛndāvana's flowers and place them in His crown and in Her braid. I will draw tilaka on Their foreheads and I will serve Them sandalpulp and camphor. Narottama dāsa says: "That is the noose of love!"

"O Śyāma! Your Priyājī is vraja nava yauvata mauli mālikā, the crowning garland, or the greatest, of all the young Vraja-sundarīs! When You leave all these gopa-sundarīs and become eager to meet with Rādhikā alone, then You will need my service!"

yasyāḥ kānti tanūllasat parimalenākṛṣṭa uccaiḥ sphurad
 gopīvṛnda mukhāravinda madhu tat prītyā dhayann apy adaḥ
 muñcan vartmani vambhramīti madato govinda bhṛṅgaḥ satāṁ
 vṛndāraṇya vareṇya kalpa-latikāṁ rādhāṁ kadāham bhaje

(Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī's Utkaṇṭhā daśakam)

"Although the Govinda-bee very much loves the honey (of love) that oozes from the beautiful lotusfaces of the gopīs, He suddenly leaves them and wanders here and there over the pathways searching for the best of wish-yielding vine of Vṛndāvana, being attracted to the superexcellent fragrance of Her blissful body. When will I worship that Rādhā?"

paśupālendra kumāra vrajera śrī hari;
 praṇata hoiyā pade nivedana kori
 varaja ramaṇī mauli mālikā rādhikā;
 tava priyatamā tava keli ārādhikā
 kuñjeśvarī rādhikāra karuṇā višeṣa;
 kemote pāibo āmi koro upadeṣa
 bhāgavata cūḍāmaṇi śrī rūpa gosvāmī;
 prakāśilā bhajana rahasya cintāmaṇi

"I bow down to the feet of Śrī Hari, the son of Vraja's cowherdking. Rādhikā, the crown of all of Vraja's young girls, is Your beloved, who worships You in Your plays. Please instruct me into how to attain the special mercy of Kuñjeśvarī Rādhikā?" Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī, the crown jewel of all devotees, thus reveals the Cintāmaṇi jewel of confidential worship.

VERSE 20:

BHAVATĪM ABHIVĀDYA CĀṬUBHIR
 VARĀM ŪRJEŚVARI VARYAM ARTHAYE
 BHAVADĪYATAYĀ KR̄PĀM YATHĀ
 MAYI KURYĀD ADHIKĀM BAKĀNTAKAH

O Ūrjeśvari (Rādhikā, the goddess of the Kārtika-month)! I pitifully pray to You for this benediction: May Bakāntaka (Krṣṇa, the killer of Bakāsura), be more kind to me, knowing me to be Yours!

RĀDHĀ NIṢṬHĀH (Loyalty to Rādhā)

Makaranda Kaṇā Vyākhyā:

The loyalty of Rādhā's maidservants is evident from these prayers of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. To Śrī Krṣṇa he prays: "Please make me the object of Śrī Rādhā's grace", and to Śrī Rādhā he prays: "May Krṣṇa give me more mercy, knowing me to be Your maidservant!" Śrīman Mahāprabhu's gift is revealed through the ācāryas. This Rādhā-dāsyā is an unprecedented gift of mercy. The conditioned souls are floating in the ocean of material existence, but by some stroke of good luck some of them receive the mercy of guru and Krṣṇa in the form of the seed of the vine of devotion. saṁsāre bhramite kon bhāgyavān jīva; guru-Krṣṇa prasāde pāy bhakti latā bīja (C.C.) - By taking shelter of the lotus-feet of Śrī Guru a fortunate person can attain purification of the self. Gurudeva is bringing the remembrance of an ever-forgotten thing back into the heart. When fortunate sādhakas take shelter of Śrī Guru's lotus-feet in the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Sampradāya they become acquainted with the service of Śrī Rādhā. After establishing the

self-identification as Rādhā's dāsī they continue their bhajana according to the love of rādhā snehādhikā (greater love for Rādhā than for Kṛṣṇa). How enchanting it is to think of oneself: "I am Rādhā's fallen maid servant!" My bhajana is disturbed by bodily consciousness; my life is contaminated by all kinds of external behaviour! Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī says: "What to speak of internally, even externally, while following the process of hearing, chanting and deity-worship, one should think of oneself as Rādhā's maid servant." This is the bhūta-śuddhi (spiritual self-identification) of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas. *atha teṣāṁ śuddha bhaktānāṁ bhūta-śuddhyādikāṁ yathāmatir vyākhyāyate. tatra bhūta-śuddhir nijābhilaṣita bhagavat sevaupayika tat pārṣada-deha bhāvanā paryantaiva tat sevaika puruṣārthibhiḥ kāryā nijānukūlyāt* (Bhakti Sandarbhaḥ - 286) - „Here the bhūta śuddhi of the pure devotees is explained. This means thinking of one's own desired spiritual body, in which one associates with the Lord and which is suitable for serving Him. The real bhūta śuddhi for a pure devotee is to think himself in his own siddha svarūpa (spiritual body). This way of thinking is favorable for those who know that the highest goal of life is to serve God.“

When Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī prays he calls Rādhārāṇī 'Ūrjeśvarī'. The month of Kārtika (October-November) is also called 'Ūrjā', therefore Śrī Rūpa means to call Śrī Rādhā "O presiding goddess of the month of Kārtika!" This address indicates Śrī Rādhā's superiority. In the Uttara-khaṇḍa of the Bhavisya Purāṇa it is said:

saṅketāvasare cyute pranayataḥ samrabdhayā rādhayā
prārabhya bhrukutīṁ hiraṇya rasanā dāmnā nibaddhodaram
kārtikyāṁ jananī kṛtotsava vare prastāvanā pūrvakāṁ
cātuni prathayantam ātma pulakāṁ dhyāyema dāmodaram

"Once, in the auspicious month of Kārtika, Kṛṣṇa could not meet His beloved Rādhārāṇī in the kuñja on time, so Śrīmatī frowned Her eyebrows out of loving anger and bound Kṛṣṇa around the belly with a golden rope. Śrī Kṛṣṇa then explained to Her that He was too late for His appointment because He had been held up in Mā Yaśomatī's festival, so Śrīmatī released Him again. Since then Śrī Kṛṣṇa has been named 'Dāmodara' or 'Nīvi Dāmodara (the girdle-Dāmodara)'. We meditate on this Dāmodara, who is studded with goosepimplies of loving ecstasy!"

The month of Kārtika is also called the month of Dāmodara. It is not just the month in which mother Yaśodā bound up Kṛṣṇa, but also the month in which Śrī Rādhā bound Him up. At first the ropes with which mother Yaśodā tried to bind up Kṛṣṇa were two fingers too short because of her lack of eagerness, and it took Mother Yaśodā a lot of trouble to get Kṛṣṇa bound up, but Śrī Rādhā's loving eagerness was so great that She easily bound Kṛṣṇa up, and released Him again also. By calling Śrī Rādhā the goddess of the month of Kārtika, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has indicated Her absolute supremacy over all the other devotees.

Śrī Rūpa says: "O goddess of Kārtika! I praise You and I pray to You with sweet, anxious words: "May Kṛṣṇa give me more mercy, knowing me to be Your maid servant!" "He will serve You with His own hands, and I will assist Him. Then He will shower me with His mercy, knowing me to be Yours!"

vāsantī kusumotkarena parita saurabhyā vistāriṇā
svenālaṅkṛti sañcayena bahudhāvirbhāvitena sphuṭam
sotkampāṁ pulakodgamair murabhidhā drāg bhūṣitāṅgīṁ kramair
modenāśru bharaiḥ plutāṁ pulakitāṁ rādhām kadāham bhaje

(Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī's Utkaṇṭhā daśakam)

"When will I serve Śrī Rādhā, who sheds many tears of joy and whose hairs stand on end when Kṛṣṇa gradually decorates Her in so many ways with many self-made ornaments made of spring-flowers that extend their excellent fragrance everywhere, trembling and horripilating of ecstasy?" My assistance will be required when You are served in this way, and Kṛṣṇa will give me more mercy, knowing me to be Your maid servant! O Svāmini! I don't have anyone but You in this world! My most merciful Śrī Gurudeva has submitted me to Your lotus-feet. I will not mix with this world and its people!

I will only think of You, and I will give my heart and my life to Your service!" This is how those whose hearts are attached to the mood of service to Śrī Rādhā are thinking.

"O Svāmini! Please let me attain Your Priyatama's mercy as Your maidservant! Kṛṣṇa is erotic sentiment personified, and His body blazes with an abundance of transcendental lust, so He has a strong desire to play with You! There are other consorts also, but His mind is really fixed on You! Therefore He ultimately desires me to serve Him as Your maidservant." She prays with all her heart:

he ūrjeśvari! rādhe! āmāra īśvari!
cātu-vākye tava pade nivedana kori
śrī Kṛṣṇa tomāri bheve (more) koribe karuṇā¹
ei to vidhāna koro Kṛṣṇa-priyatamā

"O Ūrjeśvari Rādhe! O my goddess! I pray to Your feet with plaintive words: May Kṛṣṇa bestow His mercy upon me, considering me to be Yours! Please let this be, O beloved of Kṛṣṇa!"