

## ACT 2

*(Enters Nandimuhku)*

NANDI

Paurnamasi has just told me this; “Nandimukhu! I hear my child Radha is unwell. Go to her and discover what the matter is.” Thus I am on my way to Mukhara’s house. *(paces around, gazes ahead)* Here comes Mukhara and she is in tears!

MUKHARA

Alas! wretched fate is killing me!

NANDHI

Noble Mukhara! Why are you crying?

MUKHARA *[GLANCING AT NANDHI]*

My child! Radha is not well.

NANDHI

What is Radha doing?

MUKHARA

O dear one, she talks like one lost to sanity!

“Remorseless bees! My wreath you blacken so

Is of no use to me! Then please do go!

From out my courtyard go! I am a girl!

An object not for jests like this to hurl”  
All day and night, awake or in her dream,  
My fair lotus eyed girl like this has been.(1)

NANDHI [*ASIDE*]

This is certainly not the sign of madness. Rather, by some great good fortune, she has been swept away by Krsna’s playful dalliances.

MUKHARA

Dear child, I must go to Purnamasi and acquaint her with these matters. You go to Vetasi kunja and observe Radha for yourself.

*(Exit Mukhara and Nandhi; Enter Radha, Lalita and Visakha)*

RADHA [*ANXIOUS-ASIDE*]

When I did glance upon his portrait, my heart was slain but wishes still to bear the burden of being in love with him.

LALITA AND VISAKHA

Dear friend Radha, tell us the truth behind your unmannerly sadness, which uncommonly acute does appear?

RADHA [*SIGHING DEEPLY, TURNS HER AWAY*]

VISAKHA [*APPROACHING RADHA*]

O friend in hue like campaka flowers fair!

What thoughts annoy the temper of your heart?

Now perspiration moisture does impart,  
Unto your red dress bright; your limbs do shake,  
The cause reveal, this awful silence break!

RADHA [*WITH CONSIDERABLE ANNOYANCE*]  
Cruel Visakha! Are you not ashamed to ask?

VISHAKA [*DOUBTFULLY*]  
To my memory I upset you not.

RADHA  
O pitiless one! Well do you remember, why say otherwise?

VISAKHA  
Even deep reflection does nothing recall.

RADHA  
You are the mad one who threw me into this fire pit within  
these forests dense.

VISAKHA  
How?

RADHA  
O naive one! Benefactress of the serpent in your portrait.  
(*Overwhelmed*)

Like emeralds shone forth that youth's fine hue,  
When out the portrait stepped he in view;

Peacock feathers within his hair did rest...(*Stops suddenly*)

LALITA AND VISAKHA [*LOOK AT EACH OTHER WITH RAISED EYEBROWS*]

RADHA

Which graceful movement in his brow invest  
And frantic wrought this heart of mine, and now,  
The moon rays as blazing fire feel, and how  
Can tongues of hot flame fierce as moonlight seem?  
O friend of mine, say true, do I but dream?

LALITA

Could this be your romantic dreaming?

RADHA

Acquainted with these dark moonbeams of light,  
My heart in flames was rent; now day is night,  
And night is day, or do I dream, or wake?  
And on and on thus I myself forsake.

VISAKHA [*ENCOURAGINGLY*]

Seems your mind has momentarily obsessed.

RADHA

On every limb ornate designs appear

In radiant pigment, so fine and so clear,  
Under a tree was he, with roaming mind,  
He did approach, yet proved he most unkind,  
For though in all modesty I did plead,  
Declaring no! And no! He did proceed  
To smirk, while I was held in vine like arms,  
Captured by that dark lord's unruly charms,  
I found myself amidst a soft embrace  
Of he with hands, of such a sable grace,  
In colour, quite like darkish blue lotus,  
Enchanted by his touch, I did notice,  
Sorrow and delight together appear.  
Now, where or who I am, it is not clear,  
Or what task I have just but done O friend.

*(Anxious-aside)*

O apish heart! Your love toward three wend  
A flautist, Krsna, and some fine dark youth!  
Are you not ashamed?! Three at once forsooth!  
My present death shall end your wretched hope!

LALITA

Alas! Sweet spring appears! how shall we cope?(2)

RADHA

Come, cool and playful, O you gentle breeze,  
Cuck-coos sing merry notes as you now please,  
And bees with heart piercing, sweet song proceed,  
For they my longing for repose do feed,  
Because if I were in this pain to die,  
Then from all woe, shall I depart thereby.

LALITA AND VISAKHA [*SHEDDING TEARS*]

Why harbour such dark feelings? We think that for which  
your heart craves, cannot be beyond reach.

RADHA [*SIGHING DEEPLY*]

Beyond all hope is Radha's sore heart ache,  
O friend, for if the medicine I take,  
Such scandal will prevail, O if you care,  
A rope of vine, around my neck prepare.

LALITA AND VISAKHA [*PAINED*]

If you speak like this you will slay us with your sorrow  
too! As we have said, your wishes will come true before long.

RADHA

O friends! You know not what wicked pangs rend the  
bosom of this unfortunate Radha and therefore this  
consolation do you offer me.

LALITA AND VISAKHA

Dear friend! Disclose the state of your true affections.

RADHA

No, never. Deep shame forbids me to do so.

LALITA AND VISAKHA

When it is seen you love us more than yourself, why listen to some outsider called shame?

RADHA

The one called Krsna took my mind away,  
Another one who plays the flute all day,  
Has made me mad! Then a dark handsome one,  
After beholding your portrait, has come  
To dwell within my heart and cause such pain,  
To love all three! I wish that I were slain.

LALITA AND VISAKHA [*ELATED*]

Could a beauteous maiden of Gokula such as you are, devoutly dote upon anyone other than the son of Gokula's king? Listen, these three are none but him, Krsna the matchless philanderer.

RADHA [*ASIDE*]

Be at rest my heart! Your desire to live has returned.

LALITA AND VISAKHA

The fragrant golden flower, over which  
No bee hovers, though in perfume most rich,  
That far and wide its scent does lend is vain  
Indeed, O you with limbs devoid of blame!(3)

*(Moving to and fro enters Nandhimukhi)*

NANDHI

Radha stands before me. *(She moves close)* Dear friend,  
may success attend you.

RADHA[CONCEALS HER MOOD

Friend, all is well?

NANDHI

Your well being is my happiness. *(looks at Radha-aside)*  
By looking at her I can tell everything, yet I will ask.

O simple girl!(4) The majesty and height  
Of your fresh wit still grows; your limbs yet slight,  
Within your budding charms I see the girl  
Of yesteryear; this grief that does unfurl,  
From deep within, O friend, I feel is due,  
To Cupid(5) who his form reveals to you.



LALITA

Why harbour such needless worry and accusation when  
Radha's body simply trembles and shivers in the sharp  
malayan breeze?

NANDHI

You think that I have never seen someone  
Horripilate? No fault's by air begun,  
The king of love, whose brows and looks compare  
To festivals of countless Cupids fair,  
Now plays within her heart for all to see;

VISAKHA [*WHISPERS*]

And so like this, does she appear to be;

NANDHI

Your tender age, does yet a lass proclaim,  
Who happy makes her home with song and game.  
Delight of all, husband and friend alike,  
Yet even you he mystified does strike;  
Alas! bemused by a mere cowherd boy,  
Who village elders' wives longs to enjoy.

*(Exit Nandi)*

RADHA [*LOST IN THOUGHT*]

Such good conduct, most worthy of well bred  
And newly wedded girls; the vows we pled  
Can I discard for lack of modesty?  
And yet...(*Stops in mid-sentence, turns restless*)  
.....O he of artful majesty!  
I cannot leave; his glances deep and long;  
In all fine arts he's consummate and strong,  
This wanton prince the village roams,  
To drag the deft and fair from out their homes.

*(Enters Paurnamasi followed by Mukhara and Nandhimukhi)*

PAURNA

Mukhara! Do you consider Radha's distemper beyond cure?

MUKHARA

A peacock feather if she spies,  
Most piteously out she cries;  
A bright red necklace when she sees  
Falls tremulous onto her knees;  
Some new planet(6) does orchestrate

On her hearts stage administrate,  
A fine array of dancing pose,  
This news to you I must disclose.

PAURNA[*ASIDE*

We witness the cataclysm of blooming love for Mukanda.  
(*Openly*) Indeed Mukhara, at this very hour the most hideous  
Demon, Kamsa, peruses our Radha in earnest, and he no  
doubt sent some ghostly-spirit(7) to possess her.

MUKHARA

Is there a cure?

PAURNA

She must be brought before Visnu.(8)

MUKHARA

Jatila and Kutila will never agree.

PAURNA

Mukhara, inform them I have said not to worry, for my  
magical powers will make him appear.

MUKHARA[*EXITS MAKING PRANAMS*

PAURNA[*APPROACHING RADHA*

My child, may your wishes come true.

RADHA

*(Conceals her mood and makes pranam)*

PAURNA[*ASIDE*

A certain elephant lord meanders(9)  
In woods close by Yamuna's soft waters  
Conquered he the fair arbour of her heart  
And unto her forest like limbs impart  
Most tremulous symptoms of his presence;  
Yet most modest Radha of fine fragrance,  
And lotus eyes, attempts concealment,  
To worldly show never will she consent.

*(Looking again at Radha)* Her heart aches within waves of deep love rendering her behaviour indecipherable. Doubtless this must be the power of love's profound and wonderful effects.

To catch a glimpse of him yogis do try  
Their minds away from earthly joy to pry  
Yet she does long to rid from her hearts core  
That lord and chain herself to worldly chore,  
Alas! Yogis to see him hanker so  
But she from her heart hopes for him to go!

NANDHI

Noble lady! Such moods are beyond me?

PAURNA

O fair of limb! trifling is venom's pain,  
Compared to the sorrow under love's reign,  
And then nectar's esteem and honey sweet,  
In love's joy fade to lose all their conceit,  
In whose heart love for Nanda's son does dwell'  
Such crooked dichotomy they can tell.

Let us question her. (*Approaches Radha*) My child! there is something we wish to ask you;

Your husband does confer on you his love;  
Your name from infamy rests far above;  
Your family is pure and prosperous,  
Then why this shameful act so monstrous?

RADHA

(*Painfully whispers something to Lalita*)

LALITA

O noble one, Radha wants me to tell you something.

Observing my anxiety, you too  
Articulate my faults, but I am true,

I protest my innocence at your feet,  
Although with flower ornaments I beat  
Him away, I find myself face to face  
With that dark lord, enjoying my embrace.

PAURNA[*ANNOYED STARING*

You could have defended yourself by some other means, as  
would be expected of someone your age.

RADHA[*STUNG*

O harsh lady!

When I do weep my lips that lord does seal  
With his soft hands; if I away do steal,  
And flee in fear, then stands he before me,  
His arms out-stretched thus, hearing not my plea,  
And bars my way; then fallen at his feet,  
My lips with keen amorous haste does greet,  
Pray tell me how protection I may find  
From he who peacock's plume in hair does bind?

PAURNA[*ASIDE*

Her tree of love on firm strong roots does rest

*(Openly)*

Meanwhile, most keen was your aspiration

To play with him in the illustration,  
Then say, did your fair eye happen to stray  
On he who did the Demon Madhu slay?  
Alas! As frost withers the lotus blue,  
And as a Potal(10) in a boiling brew;  
Such is your state this hour, this is no jest

RADHA[*ASIDE, CURSING KRSNA*

Behold the celestial fine youth therein,  
A soothing affect to sore eyes he'll bring;  
They said, and trusting friends advice, did peak  
At your amorous portrayal unique,  
Alas! How may a simple girl contend,  
With flames that did from you extend?

PAURNA[*LOOKING AFFECTIONATELY AT RADHA*

Sweetheart, could you not sit somewhere alone and write a pretty composition in verse, containing a delicate declaration of your love on a flower petal. Your friends will deliver it to Krsna.

*(Exits Radha with her two Friends)*

NANDHI

Seems Krsna is not too far away. The southern skies resound with the mooing of his cows. I must be gone to bathe.

*(Exits Paurnamasi and Nandhi)*

*(Enters Krsna)*

KRSNA[*ANXIOUS*

Seems lightening plays within her figure bright  
Which sudden came straight-way before my sight,  
Since then of she alone always I think,  
And like a yogi my worldly joys sink.

*(Aside)*

Why is Madhu taking so long to bring a flower garland?

*(Enters Madhu with a flower garland)*

MADHU[*ASIDE*

I suppose time will tell why he looks so morose?

*(Staring at Krsna and pacing to and fro-aside)*

He shakes as on a vine of flowers fair  
Does look and think upon his golden care  
Radha besmeared with kum-kum's design,  
And traced clear on his heart's canvas sublime.

*(Draws near) Accept this my friend. (Offers the garland)*

KRSNA[*NOT HEARING*

Her comely charms a golden mountain fair  
Upon which bright ketaki flowers glare,



Will she unsteady as a streak of light  
Upon the cloud of my own heart alight.

MADHU[*ASIDE*

As I thought. (*Openly*) My friend, why do you fail to see me when I stand and speak before you.

KRSNA[*CONCEALS HIS MOOD*

O friend, distracted by a campaka vine of exquisite delicacy, I just did not to see you!

MADHU

True. This campaka vine rests around a tree or roams here and there?

KRSNA

Friend, Walking vines? Impossible!

MADHU

Friend, why pretend? Tell me the matter! Why is your head in the clouds?

KRSNA[*SLIGHT SMILE*

Because there is no garland.

MADHU

Garland? You mean girland!(11)

KRSNA

Groundless doubt!

MADHU

Peacocks' fine plumes which did your hair adorn  
Lie here and there from your dark crown quite shorn,  
This wreath of scented flowers I gave you  
As yet no thanks at all from you has drew;  
O drunken elephant in caves at play,  
The bees of her sweet eyes lead you astray!

KRSNA[*ASIDE*

Discovered by a clown! No use in pretending any further.  
(*Openly*) True indeed. As the Ganges waves suddenly leap  
against the current on a full moon, similarly, Radha turns me  
upside down.

MADHU

You have surely seen her then?

KRSNA

Yes. Subala made her known to me (*Eager*)

Her dancing brows and side-long glance around  
Instruct the doe in eye gestures profound;  
When on her blushing lips thus fell mine eye  
Cupid did with his matchless bow reply!

MADHU

You actually met each other?

KRSNA

Her face, my friend, most splendours bright and cool,  
Which from afar saw I, so rare a jewel,  
But then my mother brings me home to dine,  
With oaths to feast she does me thus confine!

MADHU

Why her when Vraj has many a fair girl?

KRSNA

Since ever I her comely face and eyes,  
Most beautiful beheld, I do chastise,  
The moon and lotus pale, as my lips curl.

MADHU

Understood! Love at first sight.

KRSNA

Friend, wrapped in thought of her I have realised something of her wonder. Whoever great men naturally fall in love with, then it can be guessed that there is some brilliance present. Wherever the black deer happens to roam, it can be presumed that such a place is pure.(12)

VOICE

Sakhi sari! Have you seen the son of our king?

KRSNA

Friend! I hear the melodic speech of a young maiden! let us be silent.

*(Enter Lalita and Visakha)*

LALITA

O our luck! Look, here is Krsna! Let us go and see him.  
*(Approaches Krsna)*

KRSNA

Lalita, have you come here to take some of Vraj's pretty flowers and leaves?

LALITA

You know we have come to give you something! Why try and hide the truth? Here, take this. *(Gives him Radha's love letter)* (13)

KRSNA[ASIDE

Rest assured my heart, seems the seed of your wishes do blossom.

MADHU

Lalita! What is the use of a leaf with a few letters on it? Do you have any sweets?

KRSNA

My friend, will it please you to read it. Let us see if it will delight the ear?

MADHU

Friend! Look at the generosity of your gopa caste. I adore my brahmana caste. Remember that day when the brahmana ladies fed us all that rice? (*Begins to read*) “You appear in the form of a picture which now rests in the temple of my heart. Seeing you I am affrighted, but whichever way I run you besiege my way with stealth”

KRSNA

Friend, her riddles puzzle me. Let us hear it once more.

MADHU

*(Reads it again)*

KRSNA [*HAPPY-ASIDE*

As wedded maids in fear of scandal breath,

By shunning her her love shall I perceive.

*(Openly and hastily)*

Accompanied by friends as I do tend

Our cows within these woods, I fail to spend

A thought on topics linked to a women,

My heart by such a wish is not driven

If then a pack of wanton dames approach

Our elders must give them words of reproach.

*(Determinedly walks away in anger)*

MADHU *[RESTRAINING HIS LAUGHTER*

Wait! King of celibates. Let us first dismiss them, for now they are lost for words. I will tell your mother.. *(Takes Krsna's hand and brings him back)*

LALITA AND VISAKHA

*(Look at each other in surprise)*

KRSNA

Sakhi Visakha. We have never even seen each other, what to speak of obstructing the pathway. I suppose some other gallant steals her fancy?

VISAKHA

O lotus eyed lord!

Within our Vraj just who does cause shudder,

And quake the mountain like hearts of other

Men's young fair brides? Besides, it is well known

That you did lift a hill all on your own!

MADHU

Thou liest! I saw a group of cowherd boys with their upraised staffs holding Govardhan aloft. Why pay tribute to my friend here?

KRSNA

Lalita, no use mentioning this again. You should be gone now.

LALITA

Handsome one! When you are known as everyone's well wisher in Gokula, can our adorable Radha then burden sorrow and ill fate?

KRSNA

O simple girl;

My friend Madhu intolerant becomes  
When to unrighteousness my mind succumbs;  
Sridhama when spies my faults, forsakes his sleep  
And vile Kamsa his kingly throne does keep  
On earth, can I then a disgrace like flame  
At newly-wedded girls fearlessly aim?

LALITA

He soaks our hearts torment in scandal dark,  
Let us today to deaths abode embark,  
Yet smiles still play on his deceitful lips,  
Though clever, O Radha, what does eclipse  
Your wit? Why love a cheating cattle boy,  
Who dallies with and cowherd's wives annoy?

*(Bursts into tears)*

MADHU

Can one with me who knows all scripture as their advisor  
from the righteous stray? No use is there to cry in the  
wilderness my naive one.

VISAKHA[*ASIDE*

I shall present him with Radha's necklace and see if that  
sways his mind. *(Openly)*

This necklace of fair gunja berries bright

Whose ends are dark and centre red to sight,

And strung on such a graceful thread reside

Around your neck, with Radha's arms beside.(14)

*(Garlands Krsna)*

KRSNA[*SOFT SMILE BUT SPEAKS CHURLISHLY*

Her necklace may have an enticing red hue, but the berries  
are hard. They are things of beauty, yet crooked. As they  
remind me of the Vraj Gopis, I care for it not.(15) *(Appears to  
mistakenly offer his own flower garland back to Visakha)*

VISAKHA[*ASIDE*

His error is our luck. *(Hides his garland in her dress)* (16)

LALITA

Providence kindly affords us the astonishing spectacle of  
the strict celibacy of a deceptive snake who defiles countless



milkmaids. Depart we from this futile place and forbid Radha from pursuing this intrigue further.

VISAKHA

Sakhi, let us be gone! *(They begin to walk away)*

LALITA

Visakha, give this garland to Radha. I must tell Paurnamasi what has just happened.

*(Exit Lalita and Visakha)*

MADHU

Friend! She loves you! Why deny her? You will climb that stairway you have just built yourself to drink the cup of bitter regret.

KRSNA

True indeed my friend. I am a reckless chancer.

MADHU

Look! They have disappeared.

KRSNA [*CURSING HIMSELF*]

O moon-faced one! Words cruel may well uproot

From your young aggrieved heart loves first fresh  
shoot,

Or perhaps, clings she to some dying hope?

Or scared by Cupid's darts how does she cope?

The creeper of her longings I have slew  
Just as the finest fruit came into view.

MADHU

Is there a solution?

KRSNA

A love letter. I see no other way.

MADHU

What will you write it with?

KRSNA

Red rose juice would be pleasing to her.

MADHU

Close by is the rose garden in Praskanda-Tirtha, shall we  
go?

*(Exit Krsna and Madhu, Enter Radha consoled by Visakha)*

RADHA/[PAINED

So eager to enjoy his wanton cheer  
I did forgo all maiden shame, all fear,  
Which we around our elders often feel,  
I drew you two into my great ordeal,  
Ignored my vow of noble chastity,  
Upheld by ladies of great sanctity

Then lastly he did me forsake! O fie

Upon my patience! Why did I not die?

*(Radha faints)*

VISAKHA[*RESPECTFULLY*

Sakhi, console your ruffled spirits. Be of better cheer.  
*(Holds Krsna's flower garland under her nose)*

RADHA[*REVIVED*

Sakhi! It is strange how his garland makes you faint and  
can revive one too.(17)

VISAKHA

*(Places his garland on her)*

Fragrant designs on his forehead my friend,  
Give more allure than rich jewels could lend;  
Bewitching charms of the flute player's name,  
Are mantras that do subjugate and tame,  
And like a potent herb acts his garland,  
To nullify Cupid's sharp darts demand;  
Thus all do praise the marvellous effects,  
Of these three naturally abstruse objects.

RADHA[*ASIDE*

Though shunned by such a virtuous youth, being shameless my wretched life still sustains these limbs. I will find a way to enter the Yamuna's depths. (*Openly*) Visakha, inform our elders I am going to Dwadasaditya-Tirtha to worship the sun.

VISAKHA

Sakhi, it is good that you reminded me for Jatila bade me to make sure you do your puja. (*They begin to stroll*)

RADHA[*IN TRANCE*

Sakhi, I know Krsna cares not, still flames of hope burn me. Those deep waters of the Yamuna shall be my respite.

VISAKHA

Look at the divine omens surrounding us! Why speak like that?

RADHA[*LOOKS AHEAD*

Sakhi, dusk suddenly cloaks the eastern horizon?

VISAKHA[*TAKES A LOOK*

This is not dusk! You see red roses. The sun god's favourite flowers, here in Praskanda-Tirtha. Let us pick some for our puja.

(*Both begin picking roses, Enters Krsna and Madhu*)

KRSNA

These red roses stole their beauty from Radha's lips.

MADHU

Press some juice and write your love letter.

KRSNA [*PACING AROUND, SURPRISED*]

A sliver from Meru's topless gold height,  
To earth did fall and bathes us in its light?  
Yet tinkling anklets now proclaim someone,  
A nymph in fond pursuit of wanton fun,  
Who strolls within this rosy grove along,  
Surrounded by her friendly happy throng.

MADHU

While making a trap for the doe she came along anyway.

KRSNA [*BLISSFUL*]

Friend, let's hide behind these trees and see what she says.  
(*They hide*)

RADHA [*CLINGING ONTO VISAKHA AND CRYING*]

Remind me of Krsna.

VISAKHA [*IN TEARS*]

Everyone speaks of your sobriety. Why be so undignified?

RADHA

That fiend did rob me of all good conduct;  
Adeptly his broad chest does quite obstruct

Our river like patience as a dam would,  
And his moon-face did vow to close for good  
The lotuses of my fair chastity;  
He uses his strong arms so brutally  
Like sacrificial posts whereon he kills  
All maiden shame! His snake like glancing skills  
Shot from side-long and crooked eyes of love  
Devours our all below and all above.

#### KRSNA

The power of your sweetness reduces my qualities to  
nothing.

#### RADHA

*(Folds her hands together as in prayer, looking up into the  
sky)* O Slayer of Putana!(18)

Absorbed in typical maiden like play,  
Not knowing good from bad I'd sport all day  
Within our family home since my childhood;  
Is it just, to lure me into this wood,  
And throw me deep into a helpless state  
To then abandon me? So cruel is fate!

KRSNA

Amongst those wishing to live, who would neglect the famous, life restoring medicinal vine?

RADHA[*SIGHS DEEPLY*

Wear my precious necklace. (*Starts to take her necklace off*). (19)

VISAKHA

(*Forcefully stops her*) Why torture us like this? I can wait for Lalita no longer. (*Starts to cry*)

RADHA

Why blame yourself if he be so unkind?

Forbear your tears that flow; somehow please find

A tamal tree, my vine like arms then wrap

Around the trunk; lay me thus in its lap;

O do perform my funeral like this,

Thus I, always in Vraj may lie in bliss!

KRSNA[*IN TEARS*

Friend, do you feel the warmth of her affections?

RADHA[*ASIDE*

Deep longing pulls me away (*Openly*) I wish to worship the sun. Remain here picking roses until I return. (*Takes a few steps toward the Yamuna-aside*) Alas! Shall I never again

behold his moon-like countenance which the triple world enchants? (*Returns to tell Visakha-eager*) Please let me see his portrait.

VISAKHA

Sakhi, his picture is not here.

RADHA[*HEARTBROKEN*]

Then I will see him through meditation (*Sits down to meditate*)

KRSNA

Friend, our ears have quaffed the honey of her sweet utterances, so let us now into her presence proceed. (*They stroll before Radha*)

VISAKHA[*BLISSFULLY, WITH RESPECT*]

Sakhi! Open your eyes at once. Fortunately your meditation bears fruit. (*Radha opens her eyes-amazed*)

He threw you into Cupids den, and there

Did scorch your tender limbs with flames of care;

Your roaming prince is crowned with a fresh plume

Of peacock feathers bright dispelling gloom.

RADHA

Astonishing! Such a sweet dream.



VISAKHA

O faithless one, your dreams come true.

KRSNA

Her side glances like arrows keenly fly  
Her idle gait pure revelry imply,  
Which mocks the elephant's enchanting tread,  
Her tapering thighs grace, and bright lips red  
As bimba fruit; her face more excellent  
Than lotus redolently brilliant.

RADHA

*(Looking at Krsna with dancing eyes-aside)*  
Congratulations my heart. A great fortune it is that you  
hesitated. (20)

KRSNA[GENTLE SMILE

My wretched Visakha! Far and wide I have searched for  
you and at last by some good luck discover you here. You  
swapped my precious flower garland for this raw string of  
beads.

MADHU

Go and retrieve your flower garland which swings around  
Radha's neck.

KRSNA

Friend, knowing me as one who never touches women even  
in dreams, how can you make such a proposal?

RADHA[*ASIDE*

I am sure he jokes, but my heart trembles to think it's true.

VISAKHA[*SMILING*

O vast ocean, welcoming the rivers  
Of every comely lass, buxom givers  
Of wounds dealt out by tooth and nail; I see  
Their tell-tale marks, all over your body  
In fact, the redness of your gunja beads  
Is love you stole from Gopis' hearts by deeds  
Enacted through your slanting gaze; this plume  
Of peacock feathers I have to assume  
Are their unblinking eyes; in this attire  
You dress yourself and set our hearts on fire.

KRSNA[*SMILING, ASIDE*

Her cheeks with smiles bloom which roll like waves  
Of purest joy; like Cupid's bow behaves  
Her dancing eyebrows fine; as drunken bees  
Do list and reel unsteady in the breeze

Just so are her two eyes which strike my heart  
With crooked glances, laced with love's keen dart.

VOICE

Grand-daughter Visakha!

KRSNA

O calamity! Why does old Jatila approach now?

JATILA

*(Enters, looks ahead, aside)* Why is Krsna here? *(Openly)*  
Visakha! You forgot to bring the incense, sweet fragrance and  
red sandalwood.(21)

KRSNA[*ASIDE*

Alas! As the cakora soars into the heavens to drink deep the  
moonbeams, a garland of the autumns white cloud veil his  
moon. *(Openly)* Good dame! Respectful greetings.(22)

JATILA

Enchanting one. May your eyes glance remain pure when it  
falls upon the Gopis.

MADHU[*CHUCKLES*

You are as hard as the thunder bolt made from the bones of  
Dadhici.(23) His glance is always noble. You have crooked  
vision, thus you give a blessing to yourself.

JATILA

Well my Gopi defiler, just what brings you here?

KRSNA

Is there anyone who is not allured by the beauty of this rose garden?(24)

JATILA[*ASIDE*

Seems the power of Purnamasi's magic made it possible for him to appear. (*Openly*) Leave this place at once.

KRSNA

Talkative old maid! Why are so vexed? I shall leave when I like.

JATILA[*CROOKED GLANCE*

Listen Krsna;

Within this world all that we do name sweet  
Find sanctuary within Radha replete,  
And she is my just-wed daughter-in-law  
Who reigns by my side; meanwhile you withdraw  
Into the woods and boldly roam and cast  
Such crooked looks that I must be aghast.

KRSNA

You fear nothing. Since I heard she was your daughter-in-law I have considered her worshipful. Give up your delirious assumptions.(25)

JATILA

Visakha! Why are you so late?

VISAKHA[*GENTLE SMILE*

Seeing the mischievous stag before me I was astonished. (*Throws a glance toward Krsna*) Merciless stag! Swayed by love you forsake the elegant and charming doe to futilely dance from forest to forest.

JATILA

Such curiosity over a deer?

MADHU

Dear friend, look! The youthful parrot has not savoured the sweet pomegranate.

KRSNA

O pomegranate! Your red flowers allured the parrot, but fearing your juice is not ripe yet, he remains at a distance.(26)

(*Visakha looks at Radha*)

RADHA[*ASIDE*

Be at rest my heart;

Not yet did I his mellifluous speech

Intrepidly imbibe without impeach  
Nor rest within the corners of mine eye  
His lovely face, and after so long, why  
When opportunity arrives, O friend,  
Does vile fate, this hag to us now send?

JATILA[*ASIDE*

Astonishing is the influence of Krsna's vision. Even Radha fails to see the hour for the sun worship elapsing. (*Openly*) Visakha! The afternoon is almost over! Let us hurry to the sun temple.

*(Exit Jatila, Visakha and Radha)*

KRSNA

Friend! This moonbeam closely follows the full moon. Let us seek refuge in Purnamasi.(27)

(END OF ACT TWO)

SUMMARY OF ACT TWO

*Observing Radha rapt in profound rumination Lalita and Visakha question her. Although initially reticent Radha discloses her true feelings; "He whose radiance mocks the emerald, who has peacock feathers in his hair, that fresh youth stepped out of the portrait and struck me with the arrows of his sidelong glance". Radha remains unaware if she is awake or dreaming or if it is day or night. She divulges*

more. "This crest jewel of lovers was under the kadambha tree, although I forbade him he took me in his arms, his touch overwhelmed me. O friends, do not try to find a cure for now death is for me auspicious". Radha berates herself "What a disgrace! I am in love with three different men all at the same time! One called Krsna, a flute player and the dark handsome youth in the portrait. I am undone!". Hearing how these three are none but the one Krsna, Radha somewhat recovers; Nandimukhi enters and having fathomed Radha's inner mood exits to petition Paurnamasi; A dialogue between Paurnamasi and Mukhara regarding Radha's disposition and bodily traits clearly establishes her Purvaraga (initial signs of love) upon seeing her they conclude a mysterious new planet has entered the stage of her heart and creates a powerful and wondrously strange variety of effects; the evolution of her novel affinity is beyond comprehension its repercussions being more painful than snake venom yet simultaneously sweeter than nectar; noting Radha's temper Paurnamasi asks her to write a love letter; A delineation of Krsna's purvaraga; Lalita presents Radha's love letter which is inscribed on a karnika flower petal to Krsna; Krsna pretends to be indifferent which dismays Lalita who chides Radha for falling in love with Krsna; Radha's deep yearning, hankering and unbearable pain; Despite Visakha's consoling advise Radha says "To attain his conjugal intimacy I have destroyed my home, forsaken my elders, my shame etc and given up everything, if he is now so callous then death is covetous"; saying this Radha swoons and Visakha revives her with the touch of a flower garland that Krsna has worn; Radha proceeds to Dwadasaditya-tirtha with the resolve to commit suicide in Kaliya-hrada (the deepest part of the

*Yamuna where the Kaliya serpent lived); Krsna and Madhu are at this time present in Banutirtha and concealing themselves behind some foliage overhear Radha taking her final farewell from Visakha; Radha says "For the purpose of attaining whom I gave up my happy home and have become a debauchee, yet he still remains indifferent! Is this just!" Radha continues speaking to Visakha; "Krsna may be merciless to me, that is no fault of yours, just acknowledge my last request, after my death entwine my corpse around a tamal tree so I may live in Vraj forever"; On the pretext of picking flowers Radha leaves Visakha's company and thinks; "Death is sure, but before I die let me see that form of his which bewitches the three worlds, then die"; Cogitating thus, she says to Visakha; "O friend, let me see his portrait once again"; Hearing the portrait is not at hand Radha sits down to meditate on Krsna; just then Krsna appears before her, Visakha says;"O friend open your eyes and look, your meditation bears fruit"; Radha opens her eyes yet thinks herself to be dreaming; Sri Rupa most deftly brings Radha back to life from the verge of death, but the personification of misfortune interrupts the loving exchanges in the form of an old hag named Jatila.*

## FOOTNOTES FOR ACT 2

(1) The abstruse soliloquy of a love sick heroine, known as *chitrajalpa*; See Chapter 14 of Ujjwalla; also S.B. 10:47 verses 11-20.

(2) Spring is Cupid's minister. Lalita understands the powerful influence that nature exercises on the mind of lovers



and hence laments the sudden appearance of spring in the groves of Vraj which will further excite Radha's passion.

(3) The purport here is obvious enough; The golden flower is Radha; The bee is Krsna; Unless the Krsna bee is relishing your golden flower-like beauty then your blossoming sweetness is surely wasted.

(4) *Mugdha*; For a full description of the *mugdha* heroine refer to Ujjwalla chapter 5.

(5) The Cupid of Vraj; *ie* Krsna.

(6) New Planet; *Navinah graha*; *Navinah* means new; *Graha* means planet; Alternatively *Navina* means a young lady; *Agraha* means interested; *ie* Krsna, who is interested in young ladies.

(7) Ghostly spirit; *Anganagraha* means a phantom; Alternatively *Angan* means young women and *Agraha* means interest; (*ie*) Krsna, who is passionate about young women.

(8) Krsna's father Nanda worships Visnu. The residents of Vraj think Visnu being pleased with Nanda's adoration manifests his potency through his son Krsna thus allowing Krsna to kill demons and lift mountains etc. Hence this spirit that has possessed Radha will leave if she is brought before Krsna.

(9) Although not seen directly, an elephants presence and motions in a dense forest are detected by the swaying and sudden movements of the undergrowth and supple trees. Similarly, the elephant-like presence of Krsna in the forest of

Radha's body is understood by signs such as weeping, tremulous limbs etc.

(10) Potala; A kind of vegetable.

(11) Garland in sanskrit is *mala*, A young lady in sanskrit is *bala*; Krsna just told Madhu that he was distracted because there was no *mala*; Madhu says don't you mean *bala*; Garland? Don't you mean Girland?

(12) One of the traits of the hero (especially the *Dhira-datta-nayak*) is that he is boastful. It seems vain, but because of who he is he has a licence. There is no possibility of impropriety. He knows his own worth. That is another quality of Iswara; For Black Buck See SB 11:21:8 Uddhava Gita.

(13) Krsna says *adatuh* which means to take. (*ie*) to take some of Vraj's pretty flowers. Lalita says why try and hide the *Akar*; (*ie*) by removing *A* from *Adhatuh* we get *datuh* which means to give. We have come to give you something.

(14) Gunja berries are black at the ends with a reddish centre. The word for black in sanskrit is *krsna*, in other words the mouth or top end of these beads has you Krsna. Meaning that Radha has your name in her mouth. The red centre of the beads is indicative of Radha's love for you.

(15) The enticing red hue is the love in Radha's heart, but the hardness of the berries refers to Radha's indifference in loving affairs. Shapely yet crooked; Radha is very attractive yet she behaves in a crooked manner.

(16) Krsna said he does not care for the Gunja necklace and thus wishes to return it to Visakha but instead gives Visakha

his own flower garland but makes it look as if he did so by mistake. Krsna knows his flower garland will undoubtedly provide Radha with much solace. Visakha thinks Krsna unintentionally gave her his garland thus she exclaims “lucky blunder.”

(17) Radha has just fainted. Visakha revives her by holding Krsna’s flower garland under her nose, but often the aroma of Krsna’s flower garland will cause Radha to faint. Hence Radha exclaims how Krsna’s garland can cause her to faint and can also revive her from a fainted condition.

(18) Slayer of Putana. Krsna slew Putana when he was just a few days old. Radha is on the verge of taking her own life. Thus she address Krsna as the Slayer of Putana; O you who are accustomed to killing women whilst in your cradle. Now you are killing me too.

(19) Radha wants to present Visakha with her necklace as a token gift before she commits suicide.

(20) Just as well I didn’t take my life.

(21) Incense, fragrance and sandalwood are articles used in the worship of the sun.

(22) The *cakora* is Krsna who delights in the moonbeams of his beloved Radha and the white clouds are the sudden appearance of Jatila who obstructs his vision.

(23) Dadhici; An accomplished sage whose bones were used after his demise to create a unique thunderbolt weapon. SB 6:9:51-55.

(24) *Sujava-laksmih*; As well as meaning the beautiful rose garden this can also mean Radha who is beautiful like the rose and adorned with signs of fame.

(25) *Manyam* means worthy of respect; It may also mean *ma-anyam*; (*ie*) she is mine and no one else's.

(26) Red flowers are indicative of Radha's love which allures the Krsna parrot, yet the parrot upon noting the pomegranate wonders if the fruit is actually ripe and ready to be savoured. (*ie*) Is Radha actually ready for this romantic affair or not?

(27) As the moonbeams cannot be separated from the Moon; similarly Radha, who is soft and pleasing like the moonlight, cannot be separated from the full moon like Purnamasi. Radha has just been taken away from Krsna by Jatila. Yet Purnamasi will arrange another liaison.

## End of footnotes to Act 2.

