

SRI VILAPA KUSUMANJALI, VERSE 1

*tvaṁ rūpa-mañjarī sakhi prathitā pure'smin
puṁsaḥ parasya vadanam na hi paśyasīti
bimbādhare kṣatam anāgata-bhartṛkāyā
yat te vyadhāyi kim u tac chuka-puṅgavena*

tvaṁ - you; *rūpa mañjarī* - O Rupa Manjari; *sakhī* - my dear girl-friend; *prathitā* - well known; *pure* - in the town; *asmin* - in; *puṁsaḥ* - man; *parasya* - of another; *vadanam* - the face; *na* - not; *hi* - surely; *paśyasi* - you look; *iti* - thus; *bimba-adhare* - on your lips, that look like red Bimba-fruits; *kṣatam* - bites; *anāgata* - not come; *bhartṛkāyā* - your husband; *yat* - which; *te* - you; *vyadhāyi* - caused; *kim u* - what; *tat* - that; *śuka* - parrot; *puṅgavena* - by the best of.

My dear friend Rupa Manjari! In the township of Vraja you are well known for your chastity. You don't even look at the faces of other men! It is therefore surprising that your lips, that are as beautiful as red Bimba-fruits, have been bitten, although your husband is not at home. Has this maybe been done by the best of parrots?

Notes by Ananta Das Pandit: According to Vaishnava-researchers, this *Vilapa Kusumanjali* is the final writing of Srila Raghunatha dasa Gosvami. This beautiful prayer can give us some insight into his intense feelings of transcendental love-in-separation from his Svamini (mistress, or queen), before he entered into Sri-Sri Radha-Krishna's eternal transcendental pastimes in his *siddha svarupa*, or *manjari svarupa*. Living on the bank of Sri Radhakunda he was totally immersed in the ocean of *lila-rasa*, and he had forgotten all about his body and everything connected with it, being deeply absorbed in his *svarupavesa*, his awareness of his transcendental identity. *Vilapa Kusumanjali* enables us to hear him painfully weeping as a realized maidservant of Srimati Radhika, who is suffering separation from her Svamini, or mistress, day and night. Each verse of this unique book is drenched by the tears coming out of the heart of Srila Raghunatha dasa Gosvami, that is afflicted by feelings of separation.

Each flower-like lamentation is filled with the honey of transcendental anguish. Srila Raghunatha dasa Gosvami personally revealed his mental condition in the opening verses of his *Sri Radha Astottara Sata Nama Stotram*:

*avikṣyātmeśvarīm kācid vṛndāvana maheśvarīm
tat padāmbhoja mātraika gatir dāsy ati kātārā
patita tad saras tīre rudaty āṛta ravākulaṁ
tac chrī vaktreṣanāvaptyai nāmāny etāni saṁjagau*

“Not seeing her goddess, the Queen of Vrindavana, a certain maidservant, who considers Her lotus feet the only goal of Her life became very anxious, fell down at the shore of Her lake (Radhakunda), cried loudly out of pain, and, just to see Her beautiful face, sang these names.”

A person who is bereft of the treasure of *bhajana* cannot even imagine how these severe feelings of separation are. Srila Raghunatha, dasa Gosvami was suffering because he felt deprived of the devotional service of his beloved deity (Srimati Radharani), and on top of that his heart was wounded by the fire of separation from Srila Rupa and Sanatana Gosvami. *kṛṣṇa bhakta viraha vinā duḥka nāhi āra (Caitanya Caritamrita)* -- “There is no other misery in the world than separation from the devotees of Krishna.” In the eighth verse of his *Svaniyama Dasakam* Srila Raghunatha dasa Gosvami gives some indication of this:

*parityaktaḥ preyo-jana samudayair bāḍham asudhīr
durandhro nīrandhraṁ kadana-bhara vārdhau nipatitaḥ
tṛṇaṁ dantair daṣṭvā caṭubhir abhiyāce'dya kṛpayā
svayaṁ śrī gāndharvā sva pada nalināntaṁ nayatu mām*

“Abandoned by my beloveds (Srila Rupa Gosvami and Srila Svarupa Damodara) I have become completely blind and bereft of intelligence. Even though they have disappeared I am still alive and I’m immersed in an ocean of great misery. Holding a blade of grass between my teeth I humbly and anxiously pray that Sri Gandharva (Radha) Herself may now take me to Her lotus feet.” There’s no other place where the severe heartache of separation can be cured than these lotus feet. Gradually Srila Raghunatha dasa Gosvami ended up in a terrible condition. Srila Radha Vallabha dasa, a Bengali *mahatma*, has described Srila Dasa Gosvami’s condition as follows:

*rādhā kṛṣṇa viyoge, chāḍilo sakala bhoge
śukha rukha anna mātra sāra
gaurāṅgera viyoge, anna chāḍi dilo āge,
phala gavya korilo āhāra*

Stila Raghunatha Dasa Gosvami had given up all sense enjoyment out of separation from Radha and Krishna and ate only dry tasteless food. Then, out of separation from Lord Gauranga, he gave up eating that solid food and ate only fruits and milk.”

*sanātanera adarśane, tāhā chāḍi sei dine,
kevala koroye jala-pāna.
rūpera viccheda yabe, jala chāḍi dilo tabe,
rādhā kṛṣṇa boli rākhe prāna*

“Then, when Sanatana Gosvami left this world, he gave that up also and drank only water. When Rupa Gosvami also left him, he even gave up drinking water and kept himself alive simply by saying the names of Radha and Krishna.”

*śrī rūpera adarśane, na dekhi tāhāra gaṇe,
virahe vyākula loiyā kānde
kṛṣṇa kathā ālāpana, nā śuniyā śravaṇa
uccasvare ḍāke ārtanāde*

“When he could not see Sri Rupa Gosvami and his devotees anymore, he began to cry, suffering from their separation, and when he could not hear them speaking about Krishna anymore, he loudly began to cry of grief.”

*hā hā rādhā kṛṣṇa kothā, kothā viśākhā lalitā,
kṛpā kori deho daraśan!
hā caitanya mahāprabhu, hā svarūpa mora prabhu,
hā hā prabhu rūpa sanātana!*

*kānde gosāi rātri dine, puḍi'jāy tanu mone,
kṣaṇe aṅga dhūlāya dhūsora
cakṣu andha anāhara, āpanāra deha-bhāra
virahe hoilo jara jara*

“O Radha-Krishna! Where are You? Where are you, Visakha and Lalita? Please reveal yourself to me! O Caitanya Mahaprabhu! O my Lord, Svarupa Damodara! O Lords Rupa and Sanatana!” Day and night Srila Raghunatha Dasa Gosvami was crying like this, while his body and mind were burning, and his limbs were greyed by dust (as he rolled around on the ground). He had become blind from fasting and he considered his old and worn-out body to be a great burden out of these feelings of separation.”

*rādhākuṇḍa taṭe paḍi, saghane niśvāsa chāḍi
mukhe vākya na hoy sphurana.
manda manda jihva noḍe, prema aśru netre paḍe,
mone kṛṣṇa koroye smaraṇa*

“Falling on the bank of Radhakunda, he breathed out deeply, unable to say a word. His tongue moved slowly as tears of love fell from his eyes and he remembered Krishna.”

In such an anxious, pitiful mood of separation Srila Raghunatha dasa was crying *Vilapa Kusumanjali*. Therefore this book is the incomparably relishable treasure of the practicing *raganuga* devotees, who are themselves also suffering separation from Sri Radha's lotus feet. Hence for the *samavasana samajika* (the *rasika* devotees) the practice of hearing and chanting these wonderful prayers is a beautiful means of *sadharani-karana* (identifying oneself with a transcendental role-model), and will help them to attain an astonishing relish of *vipralambha rasa* (love-in-separation). But this practice should be done in full awareness of one's *siddha svarupa* (spiritual body). A person who tries to relish these sweet mellows while (feeling himself) sitting in the prison house of the material body, simply deceives himself.

*ātmānaṁ cintayet tatra tāsāṁ madhye manoramāṁ
rūpa yauvana sampannāṁ kiśorīṁ pramadākṛtīm
sakhīnaṁ saṅginī rūpām ātmānaṁ vāsanāmayīm
ājñā sevāparām tadvat ratnālaṅkāra bhūṣitām*

(Sanat Kumara Samhita)

“An aspirant should think himself to be amongst them (the other gopis), as an enchanting beautiful young adolescent female. As a female associate of Radha and Krishna's girlfriends she is dedicated to the services that are ordered to her and she is decorated with jeweled ornaments (that are given to her by Sri Radha as remnants).”

In this verse Srila Dasa Gosvami offers a *sarasa stava* (tasty praise) to his own guru Sri Rupa Manjari in his own *siddha svarupa*. It is called *sarasa stava* because here Sri Gurudevi is a *priya sakhi*. The first three verses take place within one *lila*. When the *svarupavesa* becomes very intense in the *sadhaka deha* (material body of the devotee) the devotee can not be happy and satisfied anymore with his experiences during *smarana*, dreams and visions (*śphurana*) as he was before. He is constantly burning in the fire of want for the direct attainment of his beloved. When on top of that these visions and other such awareness also vanish from him, this fire assumes a terrible form and he finds no way to keep himself alive. In that condition his beloved Deity personally comes to console him, or His associates come to console him. In this verse Srila Raghunatha dasa Gosvami is in *svarupavesa* and sees himself as Sri Radha's maidservant, but whenever he loses hold of his spiritual absorption he suffers intolerable pain. Rolling on the bank of Radhakunda he then cries out loudly for his Svamini.

Srimati Rupa Manjari has accomplished the meeting of Radhika and Syama-sundara in a solitary cave of Govardhana Hill, and she secretly looks through a hole in that cave to witness Their sweet love-pastimes. Radha and Syama are

both intoxicated by Each other's presence. How expertly are They playing Their pastimes! At the end of these pastimes Syamasundara bites Srimati's lips, leaving a mark there. The relationship between Radhika and Rupa Manjari is so pure that all the signs of Krishna's lovemaking on Sri Radhika's body, such as His bite marks on Her lips, become manifest on Sri Rupa Manjari's body also. Sri Rupa Manjari is beside herself of ecstasy, so she's not aware of this reflection. Then she thinks to herself. "Aha! My *sakhi* Tulasi Manjari (Raghunatha Dasa Gosvami) has not seen these sweet pastimes! Where is she? Alas, I should bring her here and show this to her!", so she leaves the window and starts searching for Tulasi. When Tulasi meets Rupa Manjari, she notices Krishna's bite marks on her lips and jokingly asks her: "My dear friend Rupa Manjari! You never look at the faces of other men! You're famous in Vraja for your chastity! But, despite the fact that your husband is not at home, I see that your lips have been bitten! Has some great parrot maybe done this?" If anyone considers the words *suka pun-gavena* to indicate that Sri Rupa Manjari was enjoyed by Sri Krishna, then that would contradict the definition the *acaryas* have given of the *manjaris* within their books.

*ananya śrī rādhā padakamala dāśyaika rasadhī
hareḥ saṅge raṅgam svapana samaye nā'pi dadhati
balāt kṛṣṇa kūrṇāsakabhidi kim apy ācarati kāpy
udāśrur meveti pralapati mamātma ca hasati*

(Vrindavana Mahimamṛta 16, 94)

"The maidservants, who are exclusively devoted to the service of Sri Radha's lotus feet, which are like an ocean of nectar, do not enjoy with Sri Hari even in their dreams. When Krishna forcibly pulls at their bodices they cry out: 'No, no!' while Radhika watches and laughs."

Srimati laughs here because of the *kinkaris'* loyalty to Her service. The bee enjoys the flowers, not the buds (*manjaris*). The buds (*manjaris*) enhance the bee's thirst for the flowers. They are *manjaris* in name, *manjaris* in form and *manjaris* in nature! Sri Rupa is the bud of Sri Radha's form (*rupa manjari*), Sri Rati Manjari is the bud of Srimati's love (*rati*), Sri Vilasa Manjari is the bud of Sri Radha's love-play (*vilasa*). Sri Krishna accepts defeat at their *bhava-nistha*.

*rādhā raṅga lasat tad ujjala kalā sañcāraṇā prākriyā
cātur্যottaram eva sevanam ahaṁ govinda samprārthaye
yenāśeṣa vadhū janodbhata manorājya prapañcāvadhau
nautsukyaṁ bhavad aṅga saṅgama rase'py ālambate man manaḥ*

'One *sakhi* was picking flowers for making a *vana-mala* and Krishna, seeing her, told her: "O beautiful girl! Make your birth a success by joining Me for a while

in this *kunja!*" Hearing this, that *sakhi* (*manjari*) said: "O Govinda! I only want to serve while You make love with Sri Radha, showing Your erotic dancing arts on the stage of erotic dancing named Sri Radha. All the girls of Vraja find the limit of perfection on the strength of this service, therefore, O Gokula-candra! My mind is never eager to relish the *rasa* of Your *ananga-sanga* (erotic union). Please just engage me in this long-desired service!"

Sri Visvanatha Cakravarti writes in his *Ananda Candrika* commentary on this verse:

*tvayā saha sāṅga saṅga sukhād api jāla randhrādau śrī rādhāṅga-sanga darśanot-
tham sukham adhikam anubhūtam man manasā. na hi labdhādhika sukha jana
alpe sukhe pravartante iti bhāvah.*

"I relish more pleasure in witnessing Your sports with Sri Radha in the *kunja* looking through the holes in the vines than in personally enjoying with You. People don't endeavor for a smaller happiness when they can attain greater happiness!"

Even Sri Radha Herself fails in having them meet with Sri Krishna:

*tvayā yad upabhujyate murajid aṅga saṅge sukham
tad eva bahu jānati svayam avāptitah śuddha-dhīḥ
mayā kṛta vilobhanāpy adhika cāturi cāryayā
kadāpi maṇi mañjari na kurute' bhisāra sprham*

Sri Radhika engaged one *sakhi* to make Mani Manjari meet with Krishna, but that *sakhi* returned to Radha unsuccessfully, saying: "O Radhe! Mani Manjari finds more happiness in Your meeting with Krishna than in her own! Just see how pure her consciousness is! Although I expertly tried to tempt her to go out and meet Krishna, she never desires this!" The special reward the *manjaris* get from their *abhinava bhava-suddhi* is unattainable even for the *prestha sakhis* like Sri Lalita. Srila Raghunatha dasa Gosvami has written in his *Vraja Vilasa Stava* (38):

*tāmbūlārpaṇa pāda-mardana payo dānābhisārādibhir
vṛndāraṇya maheśvarīm priyatayā yās toṣayanti priyāḥ
prāṇa preṣṭha sakhī kulād api kilāsaṅkocitā bhūmikāḥ
kelī bhūmiṣu rūpa mañjarī mukhās tā dāsikāḥ saṁśraye*

"I take shelter of Sri Radhika's maidservants, headed by Rupa Manjari, that 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 Vrindavana (Sri Radhika) than the prana

prestha sakhis (the girlfriends that are dearer to Her than life), and She is therefore not at all shy before them!"

*rati-raṇe śramayuta, nāgarī nāgara
mukha bari tambūla yogāya
malaya-ja kuṅkuma, mrga-mada karpūra,
milītaḥi gāta lāgāya*

*aparūpa priya sakhī prema!
nija prāṇa koṭi, dei niramañchai,
naha tula lākho bāṇa hema*

"How wonderful is the love of the *priya sakhis*! They serve Nagari (heroine Radhika) and Nagara (hero Krishna) with millions of lives when They are tired of lovemaking, by filling Their mouths with betel leaves and by anointing Their bodies with sandalwood paste, vermilion, musk and camphor. Their love is so pure that it cannot even be compared to gold molten a hundred thousand times over!"

*manorama mālya, duhu gole arpai,
vijai śīta mṛdu bāta
sugandhi śītala, koru jala arpaṇa,
yaiche hota duhu śānta*

"They offer enchanting garlands to Their necks, give Them a cool breeze by fanning Them, and relieve Them from Their heated affliction by offering Them cool and fragrant water."

*duhuka caraṇa puna, mṛdu sarivāhana,
kori śrama korolohi dūra
iṅgite śayana, korolo duhu sakhī-gaṇa
sabahu manoratha pūra*

"These *sakhis* again softly massage Their feet and thus remove Their fatigue. On Their indication, they put the Divine Pair to rest and fulfill any of Their other desires."

*kusuma śeje duhu, nidrita herai,
sevana pārayaṇa sukha,
rādhā mohana dāsa, kiye herabo,
meṭabo sab mano-dukha*

"These girls, who are totally dedicated to their devotional service, then put the Divine Pair to sleep on a bed of flowers. All the mental distress of Radha Mo-

hana dasa is mitigated when he sees this." The sweet relish of this confidential pastime of the Sri Sri Yugala Kisora is the long-desired treasure of the *manjaris*. Hence the *manjaris* never desire personal meetings with Sri Krishna. But that does not mean that they are deprived of this *rasa*. Their oneness in feeling (*bhava-tadatmya*) with Sri Radha is so remarkable that they experience all of Her bodily relish in a special way.

*spr̥ṣṭi yadi mukundo rādhikāṁ tat sakhīnām
bhavati vapuṣi kampa sveda romaṅca vāṣpam
adhara madhu mudāsyās cet pibatya esa yatnād
bhavati bata tad āsām mattatā citram etat*

"How amazing! When Mukunda touches Radhika, Her girlfriends cry of ecstasy and their bodies tremble, perspire, and are studded with goose pimples, and when Krishna blissfully drinks the honey of Radhika's lips (by kissing Her), then they all become mad!" (*Govinda Lilamrita*, 11. 137)

*he sakhi rūpa mañjari, tumi ei vrajapurī,
mājha satī boliyā prathita
para puruṣera mukha, herite nā vāsa sukha,
tabe keno dekhi viparīta?*

"O *sakhi* Rupa Manjari! In this abode of Vraja you are reputed for your chastity. You feel no happiness in seeing other men's faces; but why do I see just the opposite now?"

*pati tava nahi ghare, tabu-o ye bimbādhare,
hoiyāche kṣata cihna sab
bujhi śuka-pakṣī-rāja, koriyāche ei kāja,
natuvā ei rūpa asambhava*

"Your husband is not at home, but still I see cuts all over your Bimbafruit-like lips! I understand that the king of parrots has done this, otherwise this is impossible!" (*Sri Rasika-candra Dasa*)