

RĀI RĀKHĀL

The Story of how Rādhārāṇī dresses as a cowherd boy to meet Kṛṣṇa.

This event is celebrated on the Gopāṣṭamī day (Kārtika śukla Aṣṭamī)

AṬṬĀLIKĀ PORI, BOSIYĀ KIŚORĪ, BHĀVE ŚYĀMA RŪPAKHĀNI
ŚRĪDĀMA SUDĀMA, BHĀIYĀ BALARĀMA, KOROTOHI VEṆU DHVANI

"Kiśorī Rāi sat on the veranda and meditated on Śyāma's beautiful form.
Śrīdāma, Sudāma and brother Balarāma played their flutes."

ŚUNI VEṆURAB, STABDHAMĀNA SAB, HOILO ĀHIRĪ BĀLĀ
ŚVĀSA NĀHI BOHE, PRĀṆA NĀHI DEHE, BĀḌHALO VIRAHA JVĀLĀ

"Hearing the flute song all the cowherd girls became mesmerised. Breath did not emanate from them, life did not remain in their bodies and the fever of separation increased."

HENO KĀLE TATHĀ, ĀILO LALITĀ, VIŚĀKHĀRE LOIYA SAṄGE
DEKHI KAMALINĪ, POḌILĀ DHARAṆĪ, DHŪLI DHŪSORA AṄGE

"Just then Lalitā came, taking Viśākhā along. They saw Kamalinī had fallen to the ground, Her body greyed by dust."

DEKHIYĀ LALITĀ, HOIYĀ BYATHITĀ, TULIYĀ KORILĀ KOLE
ŚUNO VINODINĪ, NIVEDANA VĀṆĪ, AVADHĀNA KORO BOLE

"When Lalitā saw Her she felt pain, lifted Her up, embraced Her and told Her:
"O Vinodini! Listen carefully to my prayer!"

ŚYĀMA GOṬHE GELO, MORĀ YĀI COLO, DHARIYĀ RĀKHĀLA VEŚA
ŚUNIYĀ VACANA, HARAṢITA MANA, KOHE YADUNĀTHA DĀSA

"Śyāma has gone to the meadows— let us go also, dressing ourselves as
cowherd boys! Yadunātha dāsa says: "Hearing these words, everyone was happy." (2)

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LALITĀ GO KEMONA UPĀYA KORI?

ŚRĪDĀMA SUDĀMA, ĀRO BALARĀMA, BONE GELO MORA HARI

"Lalitā! What shall we do? Śrīdāma, Sudāma, Balarāma and My Hari have gone
to the forest."

PRĀṆANĀTHA GELO, MORĀ YĀI COLO, ĀNO DHOṢĀ GUNJĀ GĀBHĀ
LALITĀ VIŚĀKHĀ, ĀRO INDUREKHĀ, SĀJIYĀ KOROHO ŚOBHĀ

"My Prāṇanātha is gone— let's go also! Bring dhotīs and gunjā beads to
beautifully decorate Lalitā, Viśākhā and Indurekhā!"

LALITĀ SUNDARĪ, JĀNAYE CĀTURĪ, BOLĀI SĀJILO BHĀLO
VIŚĀKHĀ SUNDARĪ, RŪPA MANOHĀRI, ŚUBALERA VEŚA KOILO

"Lalitā Sundarī is very clever — dress her up nicely like Balarāma! Viśākhā
Sundarī's form is so charming— dress her therefore as Subala!"

TUṄGAVIDYĀ ĀSI, HĀSI HĀSI BOSI, KOHE JOḌA HASTA KORI

ŚUNO PRĀṆEŚVARI, VACANA MĀDHURĪ, TOMĀRE BĀNĀBO HARI

"Tungavidyā came and laughed, saying with folded hands: "Hear my sweet words, O mistress of my life! I will dress You like Hari."

ETEKO VACANA, ŚUNIYĀ TOKHONA, KAMALINĪ DHANI RĀI
ŚEKHARA ĀSIYĀ, KOHENA HĀSIYĀ, GUNJĀ GĀBHĀ KICHU NĀI

"As Rāi Kamalinī heard all these words, Rāya śekhara came, laughed and said: "A string of *gunjā*-beads is nothing!"

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SAKHIRA SAHITE, VEŚERA MANDIRE, BOSILĀ ĀNANDA CITE
TEJI NĪLA SĀRĪ, PĪTA VĀSA PORI, CUḌĀṬI BĀNDHILO MĀTHE

"Blissfully Rāi sat down in Her dressing room with Her *sakhis*. Taking off Her blue *sārī* and putting on a yellow *dhotī* She bound a crown to Her head."

MṚGAMADA TANU, TILAKA RACILO, DU ĀŅKHI PRABHĀTERA BHĀNU
PREMERA ĀVEŚE, AŅGA ḌHARA ḌHARA, KORETE MOHANA VEṆU

"She anointed Her body with musk and put on *tilaka*, having Her eyes (red) as the morning sun. Her body staggered in loving ecstasy and She held a charming flute in Her hand."

MAKARA KUṆḌALA, ŚRUTIMŪLE BHĀLA, MADANA MOHILO MĀLE
VĀMETE HELĀYE, CŪḌĀṬI BĀNDHILO, ŚIKHI PUCCHA VANAPHŪLE

"She hung Makara-earrings on Her ears and a garland that mesmerised Cupid (around Her neck). She tilted the crown towards the left and decorated it with a peacock-feather crown and forest flowers."

**KAṬITE GHUṄGURA, CARAṆE NŪPURA, SAKHĀ SĀJE JANE JANE
KARETE PĀNCANĪ, DIYĀ ĀBĀ DHVANI, SABĀI YĀICHE BONE**

"Each of the *sakhīs* then dressed like a cowherd boy, wearing belts of Ghungura-bells around the waist, anklebells at the feet and truncheons for driving the cows in the hand. Making a big hullabaloo they all went into the forest."

**KEHO HOY DĀMA, ŚRĪDĀMA SUDĀMA, ŚUBALĀDI PRIYA SAKHĀ
COLE VṚNDĀVANE, NAṬAVARA SANE, JĀIYĀ KORITE DEKHĀ**

"One girl became Dāma, another became Śrīdāma while others became Sudāma, Subala and other *priya sakhās*. Thus they headed for Vṛndāvana to see that best of dancers (Kṛṣṇa)."

**KOHE INDUREKHI, ŚUNO VIDHUMUKHĪ, TOMĀRE SĀJĀBO HARI
YADUNĀTHA DĀSA, KOHOYE VACANA, EI NĀ UPĀYA KORI**

"Indurekhi then said: "Hear me, O moon-faced girl! I will dress You up like Hari." Yadunātha dāsa says: "That I can not help." (4)

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**MRĠAMADA KASTURĪ DIYĀ AṄGA KOILO KĀLĀ;
GOLĀY GĀNṬHIYĀ DILO KADAMBERA MĀLĀ
KAPĀLE TILAKA DILO SINDŪRA MOCHIYĀ;
KAṬITAṬE PĪTA DHOḌĀ PORĀYE ĀNṬIYĀ
MASTAKE BĀNDHILO CŪḌĀ ŚIKHIPUCCHA TĀY;**

TĀHĀTE KOTEKO ŚOBHĀ KOHONE NĀ YĀY

"She blackened Her body with musk, hung a Kadamba-garland around Her neck, wiped the sindura off Her forehead and made tilaka on it instead, wore a yellow *dhoti* around Her waist, put rings on and bound a crown of peacock feathers on Her head—thus Her beauty was indescribable."

**VINODINĪ KOHE YADI SĀJĀILĀ VANAMĀLĪ;
ŚOBHĀ NĀHI KORE KORE VINĀ GO MURALĪ
LALITĀ CATURĀ CHILO BUDDHI SIRAJILO;
NAVĪNA PADMERA KUṬI TULIYĀ ĀNILO
TĀHĀRA UPORE SAPTA CHIDRA BONĀIYĀ;
BĀJĀILO VINODINĪ TĀHE PHUK DIYĀ**

"Vinodinī Rāi said: "If You want to dress Me like Vanamālī (Kṛṣṇa), then it won't be beautiful without His Muralī flute." Clever Lalitā then picked a fresh lotus bud and made seven holes in it. Vinodinī then began to play it by blowing in it."

**ŚRĪDĀMA NĀMETE SAKHI KOHE PRĀṆA KĀNU;
KI LOIYĀ VIPINE JĀBE KOTHĀ PĀBE DHENU?
VṚṢABHĀNU PURA HOITE DHENU ĀNĀILO;
HOI HOI ROBA DIYĀ PĀL CĀLĀILO**

"One sakhī who played Śrīdāma said: "O Prāṇa Kānu! What will You take to the forest? Where will You get Your cows?" Thus She got cows from Varsānā, driving the herd by shouting 'hoi hoi!'"

**VINODINĪ HOILO KṚṢṆA LALITĀ BALARĀMA;
VIŚĀKHĀ HOILO ŚUBALA CITRĀ HOILO DĀMA**

RĀDHIKĀRA JOTO SAKHĪ RĀKHĀLA HOILO;
BALARĀMERA ŚINGĀ NĀI BHĀVITE LĀGILO
HENO KĀLE PAURṆAMĀSĪ MONETE JĀNIYĀ;
ĀNILO HARER ŚINGĀ HARAṢITA HOIYĀ
ŚINGĀ DEKHI VINODINĪ HARAṢITA MANA;
YADUNĀTHA DĀSA KOHE KOROHO GAMANA

"Vinodinī Rādhā thus became Kṛṣṇa, Lalitā became Balarāma, Viśākhā became Subala and Citrā became Dāma. Thus all of Rādhikā's sakhīs became cowherd boys. Then they thought: "Balarāma has no horn yet!" Paurṇamāsī, knowing their thoughts, then blissfully brought Śiva's horn. Seeing the horn, Vinodinī became very glad. Yadunātha dāsa says: "Now go (out with the cows)." (5)

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MURALĪ DHARIYĀ KORE, VANAMĀLĀ GOLE PORE;
TEJILO GAJAMATI HĀRA
RĀKHĀLERA VEŚA DHARE; TAPANA TANAYĀ TĪRE;
SAKHĪ SAṄGE KORE ABHISĀRA
NĪPAMŪLE JĀIYĀ BOSI, BĀJĀYE MOHANA VĀMŚĪ,
TRIBHAṄGA HOIYĀ VIDHUMUKHĪ
ŚUNİYĀ VĀMŚĪRA GĀNA, ĀNANDE HARILO PRĀṆA,
DĀSA PŪRṆĀNANDA BOḌO SUKHĪ

Holding a Muralī flute in Her hand and wearing a forest flower garland around Her neck She gave up Her pearl necklace. Wearing the dress of a cowherd boy, She came to the shore of the Yamunā with Her *sakhīs* to meet Kṛṣṇa. Sitting at the base of a Nīpa-tree, moon-faced Rādhā played Her enchanting flute, standing in a threefold bending form. Hearing this flute song, which ravishes the heart with ecstasy, Pūrṇānanda dāsa is very happy." (6)

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HOI HOI ROBA DIYĀ PRAVEŚILO BONE,
ĀNANDE BĀJĀY VĀMŚĪ HARAṢITA MANE.
ŚUNIYĀ VEṆURA DHVANI NAṬAVARA ŚYĀMA,
CITA CAMAKITA HERE ŚUBALERA BOYĀNA.
E KI APARŪPA DHVANI ŚUNILĀM ŚRAVAṆE,
EMON VEṆURA DHVANI HĀNILO PARĀṆE.
PULAKITA TANU MORA SAMBARITE NĀRI,
JE JAN BĀJĀILO VĀMŚĪ DĀSA HOBO TĀRI.
ŚUBALERA SAṄGE KORI DRUTA GATI COLE,
DEKHAYE CĀNDERA BĀJĀR KHELE NĪPA MŪLE.
TAṬASTHA HOIYĀ ŚYĀMA DĀḌĀIYĀ ROY,
JAGATA MOHILO RŪPE PŪRṆĀNANDA KOY

"They entered into the forest, shouting hoi hoi and blissfully playing their flutes. When Natavara Śyāma heard the sound of their flutes He looked at Subala's face in astonishment. "What amazing sound I just heard? Such a flute song pierces My heart! I cannot stop My body from erupting with goosepimples— I will become the servant of whoever played that flute!" Saying this, He ran off with Subala and saw a market place of moons (a host of beautiful persons) playing at the base of a Nīpa-tree. As Śyāma stood on the shore, Pūrṇānanda dāsa says: This form mesmerised the whole universe."
(7)

KĀTARA HOIYĀ KOHE NAṬAVARA ŚYĀMA;
ĀPANĀRA NĀMA KOHO, MORE PARICAY DEHO,
KON JĀTI KOTHĀY NIJA DHĀMA?
ĀMARĀ THĀKI EHI BONE, NITUI CORĀI DHENUGAṆE,
KOBHU NĀHI DEKHI HENO RĪTE.

"Anxiously Natavara Śyāma said: "Tell Me Your name, introduce Yourself. What is Your caste, and where is Your home? We live in this forest and we always tend to our cows here. We have never seen such behaviour."

**BOLĀI DĀDĀRA SAṄGE THĀKI, KABHU NĀ TOMĀRE DEKHI,
SANDEHO LĀGAYE MORA CITE.
ETO ŚUNI KOHE GORI, ŚUNO HE SUNDARA HARI,
ĀPANĀRA DEHO PARICAY.**

"I stay with My elder brother Balāi— I have never seen You, thus I have doubts in My mind. Hearing this, Gori (Rādhā) said: "Hear Me, O beautiful Hari— introduce Yourself."

**PREMA NĀMA DHARI ĀMI, BĀS MORA MEDINĪ,
MĀTĀ MORA TAVA PŪJYA HOY.
TAVA PRIYA MĀTĀ YE, TĀHĀRA GAURAVA SE, JE JAN HOY MORA TĀTE.
ĀMĀRA JE BANDHU JANE, TĀHĀRE SABĀI JĀNE,
DĀSA PŪRṆĀNANDERA SĀKṢĀTE**

"I bear the name of love and My abode is earth. My mother is worshipable by You." Whoever is the pride of Your dear mother is mine. My friends are known to everyone, including Pūrṇānanda dāsa." (8)

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**ĀRE EKA KOHI KOTHĀ, SAHODARA BAN DHU SAKHĀ,
DUI CĀRI JANA MORA ĀCHE.
KOHI ŚUNO TĀRA KATHĀ, PĀCHE HEṬA KORE MĀTHĀ,
NANĪ CURI KORO YĀRA KĀCHE
JOTO SOB GOPA NĀRĪ, LOIYĀ DADHIRA PAŚĀRI,**

**MATHURĀRA BIKE JĀY TĀRĀ
PATHA ĀGORIYĀ RAO, DADHI DUGDHA KĀḌI KHĀO,
EKI TOMĀRA ANUCITA DHĀRĀ**

Now hear another thing from Me—I have four friends here, including My brother. Listen, I will tell You about them, later you can bow your head down. I have stolen yoghurt from all the different cowherd women and went to Mathurā to sell it. You proceed on the path, snatching and eating yoghurt and milk— are these your improper manners?"

**NĀRĪGAṆA SNĀNA KORE, VASANA RĀKHIYĀ TĪRE,
CURI KORI ROHO LUKĀIYĀ
BĀJĀIYĀ MOHANA VĀMŚĪ, KULAVADHŪ KORO DĀSĪ,
KOTHĀ KOHO HĀSIYĀ HĀSIYĀ
KHĀOWĀO PARERA KHANDA, EKHONI KORIBO BANDHA,
LOIYĀ JĀBO KĀMSERA GOCARE
DĀSA RAGHUNĀTHE KOY, ŚUNITE LĀGAYE BHOY,
CAMAKITA HOILO YADUVĪRE**

"When the women bathe and keep their garments on the shore, You steal these clothes and hide Yourself. You play Your fascinating flute and thus make the housewives Your maidservants, laughing as You speak. You are feeding people other people's grains, but now I will arrest You and bring You to King Kāmsa. Dāsa Raghunātha says: "Hearing this the hero of the Yadus became astonished and scared."

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**KOHO TUMI KE BATE BONER DEVATĀ;
RĀDHĀ DARĀŚANA LĀGI ĀSIYĀCHI HETHĀ
ŚYĀMA KOHE GOVARDHANA DHARINU KUTŪHOLE
RĀI KOHE SE YAŚOMATIRA PUṆYA PHALE**

ŚYĀMA KOHE BRAHMĀDI DAMANA KORI ĀMI;
RĀI KOHE NANDERA GODHANA RĀKHO TUMI
NITI NITI HARI TUMI CORĀO BĀCHURĪ;
BĀNDHI LOIYĀ YĀBO TOMĀY MATHURĀ NAGARĪ
CAMAKITA HOIYĀ ŚYĀMA CĀHE CĀRI PĀNE;
KṚṢṆERA BĀNDHILO RĀI ĀPANA VASANE
DRIDHATARA BANDHANETE KĀTARA HOIYĀ ŚYĀMA;
CARAṆA PĀNE CĀHI DEKHE LIKHĀ ŚYĀMA NĀMA

"Tell Me, who are You? I am the godhead of the Banyan forest and I have come here to see Rādhā. Śyāma said: "I have blissfully held Govardhana Hill." Rāi said: "That is just the result of mother Yaśodā's pious acts." Śyāma said: "I subdued Brahmā and others." Rāi said: "Just herd Nanda's cows. Hari, You are always tending to Your calves— I will arrest You and take You to the city of Mathurā." Anxiously, Hari looked around in all four directions, but Rāi tied Him up in Her own garment. Śyāma began to suffer from the firm bondage, but when He looked at (Her) feet He saw the name of Śyāma written there.

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KĀTARE ŚRĪ HARI, DUI KORA JOḌI, KOHE ŚUNO PRĀṆEŚVARĪ
TOMĀRA MAHIMĀ, VEDE NĀHI SĪMĀ, NĀHI JĀNE HARA GAURĪ
RĀI BOLE ŚYĀMA, MORA NIVEDANA, TOMĀ NĀ DEKHILE MORI
GHARA TEYĀGIYĀ, ĀSILĀM DEKHIYĀ, NAṬAVARA VEŚA DHARI
SAṄGERA SAṄGIYĀ, MILALO ĀSIYĀ, RĀDHĪKĀ KĀNURA PĀŚE
PREMERA PĀTHĀRE, ĀNANDE MAGANA, KOHE PŪRṆĀNANDA DĀSE

"Anxious Śrī Hari folded His hands and said: "Hear Me, O mistress of My life! Even the Vedas do not know the limit of Your glories, nor do Hara-Gaurī know them." Rāi said: "Śyāma, hear My submission — without You I will die. I have abandoned My home to come and see You, wearing this dress of the best of dancers." Pūrṇānanda dāsa

says: "I have come here with my associates to see Rādhikā and Kṛṣṇa, merged in an ocean of transcendental bliss." (11)

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ŚÍSŪ SAB PHIRE ANVEṢĪYĀ;
KĀNĀI KĀNĀI BOLI, ḌĀKE DUI BĀHU TULI,
KOTHA GELI KĀNU ORE BHĀIYĀ.
KĀMSA CARA AVIRATA, ĀISE JĀY KOTO ŚATA, NĀ JĀNI POḌILE KON DĀY.
KI BOLIYĀ GHORE JĀY, NANDA ĀGE KI BOLIBO,
KI KOHIBO YAŚOMATI MĀY.
KI KĀJ KORILI VIDHI, KOTHĀ NILI GUṆANIDHI,
BAJARA POḌILO MORA MĀTHE.
YAMUNĀTE DIBO JHĀMP, GHUCĀBO HṚDAYER TĀP,
PRĀṆA-TYĀGA KORIBO NIŚCITE.
RĀKHĀL ĀKULA HOIYĀ, POḌE AṄGA ĀCHĀDIYĀ,
ŚUBALA ĀILO HENO KĀLE.
UṬHO BHĀI TEJO DUḐKA, KI LĀGIYA ETO ŚOKA,
DĀSA PŪRṆĀNANDA IHĀ BOLE

The cowherd boys all returned to search for Kṛṣṇa, calling out 'Kānāi! Kānāi!' Lifting both arms, they cried: "O brother Kānu! Where have You gone? Who knows what happened? Perhaps hundreds of Kāmsa's hoods have caught Him. What will we say when we come home? What will we tell Nanda and Yaśomati? What has Fate done—where has he taken our Guṇanidhi (Kṛṣṇa)? A thunderbolt has struck My head! I will jump into the Yamunā to relief My burning heart—I will surely commit suicide!" In anxiety the cowherd boys crashed to the ground. Just then Subala came. Pūrṇānanda dāsa says: "O brother, give up your sorrow— why are you so sad?" (12)

ŚUBALERA KOTHĀ ŚUNI PUCHE BALARĀMA;
KOHO RE ŚUBALA KOTHĀ NAVA GHYANAŚYĀMA.

NĀ DEKHIYĀ MUKHAŚĀŚĪ PHĀṬE MORA HIYĀ;
RĀKHOHO ĀMĀRA PRĀṆ KĀNU DEKHĀIYĀ.
ETEKO ŚUNIYA ŚUBALA KOHE BALARĀME;
DHENU PHIRĀITE GELĀM KĀNĀIRA SANE.
HENO KĀLE ĀILO TATHĀ KĀMSERA EKA CARA.
SAṄGE SAKHĀGAṆA TĀRA RŪPA MANOHAR.
ĀSIYĀ BĀNDHILO BHĀI KĀNĀIRA KORE,
DEKHIYĀ ĀKULA CITA POLĀILĀM ḌORE.
ETO ŚUNI KRODHĀVEŚE DHĀY BALARĀMA,
DŪRETE PĀILO DEKHĀ NAVA GHANAŚYĀMA.
DHĀILO SAKALA SAKHĀ PĀILO MURĀRI,
DĀSA PŪRṆĀNANDA KOHE CARITRA MĀDHURI

"When Balarāma heard Subala's words, he asked him: Tell Me, O Subala, where is young Ghanaśyāma? My heart breaks when I don't see His moon-like face. Save My life by showing Me My Prāṇa Kānu!" Hearing this, Subala told Balarāma: "I drove the cows back with Kānāi when an agent of Kaṁsa came, accompanied by friends that were enchantingly beautiful. When I saw them tying Kṛṣṇa by the hands I fled in dread." Hearing this much, Balarāma ran off in great anger. Just then He saw young Ghanaśyāma from a distance. The cowherd boys came running and thus also all met with Murāri. Thus Pūrṇānanda dāsa narrates this sweet story."

Thus ends Śrī Rādhikā's Goṣṭha Kīrtana

All songs translated by Advaitadas