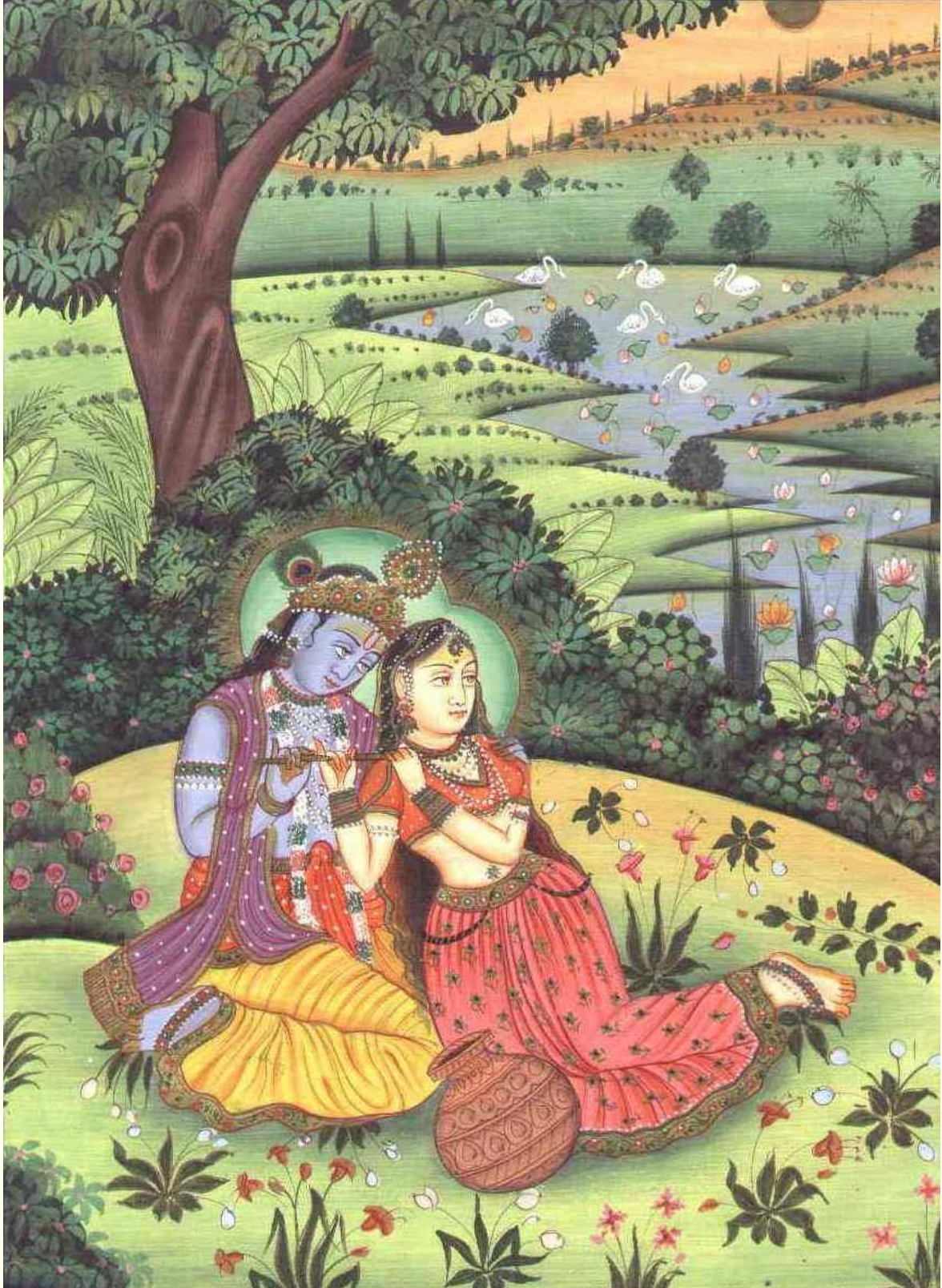


Krishna in Paradise



Krishna in Paradise¹

*But she, abasing still her glorious eyes,
And still not yielding all her face to him,
Relented; till with softer upturned look
She smiled, while the Maid pleaded; so thereat
Came Krishna nearer, and his eager lips
Mixed sighs with words in this fond song he sang:²*

O angel of my hope! O my heart's home!
My fear is lost in love, my love in fear;
This bids me trust my burning wish, and come,
That checks me with its memories, drawing near:
Lift up thy look, and let the thing it saith
End fear with grace, or darken love to death.

Or only speak once more, for though thou slay me,
Thy heavenly mouth must move, and I shall hear
Dulcet delights of perfect music sway me
Again — again that voice so blest and dear;
Sweet Judge! the prisoner prayeth for his doom
That he may hear his fate divinely come.

Speak once more! then thou canst not choose but show
Thy mouth's unparalleled and honeyed wonder
Where, like pearls hid in red-lipped shells, the row
Of pearly teeth thy rose-red lips lie under;
Ah me! I am that bird that woos the moon,
And pipes — poor fool! to make it glitter soon.

Yet hear me on — because I cannot stay
The passion of my soul, because my gladness
Will pour forth from my heart; — since that far day
When through the mist of all my sin and sadness
Thou didst vouchsafe — Surpassing One! — to break,
All else I slighted for thy noblest sake.

¹ From Jayadeva's *Gīta Govinda*, ch. x, in: Sir Edwin Arnold, *Indian Poetry*. (4th ed.) London: Trübner & Co., 1886; pp. 85-87.

² What follows is to the Music Deshīyavarādī and the Mode Ashtarālī.

Thou, thou hast been my blood, my breath, my being;
The pearl to plunge for in the sea of life;
The sight to strain for, past the bounds of seeing;
The victory to win through longest strife;
My Queen! my crowned Mistress! my sphered bride!
Take this for truth, that what I say beside.

Of bold love — grown full-orbed at sight of thee —
May be forgiven with a quick remission;
For, thou divine fulfilment of all hope!
Thou all-undreamed completion of the vision!
I gaze upon thy beauty, and my fear
Passes as clouds do, when the moon shines clear.

So if thou’rt angry still, this shall avail,
Look straight at me, and let thy bright glance wound me;
Fetter me! gyve me! lock me in the gaol
Of thy delicious arms; make fast around me
The silk-soft manacles of wrists and hands,
Then kill me! I shall never break those bands.

The starlight jewels flashing on thy breast
Have not my right to hear thy beating heart;
The happy jasmine-buds that clasp thy waist
Are soft usurpers of my place and part;
If that fair girdle only there must shine,
Give me the girdle’s life — the girdle mine!

Thy brow like smooth Bandhūka-leaves;¹ thy cheek
Which the dark-tinted Madhuk’s² velvet shows;
Thy long-lashed Lotus eyes, lustrous and meek;
Thy nose a Tila-bud;³ thy teeth like rows
Of Kunda-petals!⁴ he who pierceth hearts
Points with thy lovelinesses all five darts.

But Radiant, Perfect, Sweet, Supreme, forgive!
My heart is wise — my tongue is foolish still:
I know where I am come — I know I live —
I know that thou art Radha — that this will
Last and be heaven: that I have leave to rise
Up from thy feet, and look into thine eyes!

¹ [Bandhūka or Bandhujīva tree, *Pentapetes phoenicea*]

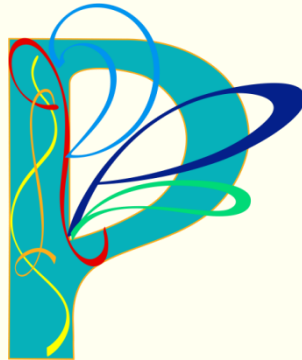
² [*Madhuca longifolia*. Its leaves are fed on the moth *Antheræa paphia*, which produces tassar silk, a form of wild silk of commercial importance in India.]

³ [*Cinnamomum iners*]

⁴ [*Jasminum pubescens*]

And, nearer coming, I ask for grace
Now that the blest eyes turn to mine;
Faithful I stand in this sacred place
Since first I saw them shine:
Dearest glory that stills my voice,
Beauty unseen, unknown, unthought!
Splendour of love, in whose sweet light
Darkness is past and nought;
Ah, beyond words that sound on earth,
Golden bloom of the garden of heaven!
Radha, enchantress! Radha, the queen!
Be this trespass forgiven —
In that I dare, with courage too much
And a heart afraid, — so bold it is grown —
To hold thy hand with a bridegroom's touch,
And take thee for mine, mine own.¹

*So they met and so they ended
Pain and parting, being blended
Life with life — made one for ever
In high love; and Jayadeva
Hasteneth on to close the story
Of their bridal grace and glory.*



¹ Much here also is necessarily paraphrased.

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