

Śrī Śrī Madhukeli Valli

"A Vine Of Spring-Pastimes"

By Śrī Govardhana Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī.

Śrīla Govardhana Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī was the grandson of Śrī Gadādhara Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, a disciple of Śrīla Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī. The descendants of Śrī Govardhana Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī are still living in Vṛndāvana, opposite the Rādhā Vallabha temple in a beautiful place called New Madan Mohan Temple.

'Madhu keli valli' is a book which describes Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's Holi-pastimes, an annual festivity which takes place in Vraja in the six weeks preceding the full moon day of March (Dola Purnimā). During Holi the people of Vraja throw colored powder and squirt colored water at each other from syringes, as signs of affection and to remember that same pastime that Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa played.

The following is only a rough translation of the book. Ed.



Kṛṣṇa and the cowherd boys danced, taking syringes filled with *kunkuma* and *gulāl* (colorful substances) in their hands. Their turbans stood on their heads in a crooked way, they wielded reeds and wore silken clothes. Seeing them, the *gopīs* became afraid. The sky was filled with the beautiful sounds of Bherīs, Mṛdaṅgas, Viṇās and flutes, that made the birds blossom of bliss and become silent and dizzy. Śrī Rādhikā's face was beautified with Cupid's *rasika* aspects like lowered, smiling eyes, a blossoming nose and restless lips.

Madhumāṅgala also danced with raised arms, loudly shouting: '*Ho ho ho Holi!*', making all the *gopīs* and *gopās* laugh with his crooked turban and his musk-anointed face on his thick neck as he rolled over his shoulders, saying: "Don't be afraid of these *gopīs*, O Kṛṣṇa! You don't know my brahminical power (that can subdue them)!" He wielded his rod, made two to three steps forward and then came back to the group of cowherd boys, loudly chastising them on Kṛṣṇa's indication, saying: "O You weakling cowherd boys! Go back home! I will chase the *gopīs* away with my own power! The power of my *gāyatrī mantra* enabled Kṛṣṇa to kill all the demons! Now these *gopīs* want to lure me in their midst to splash me with colored water! O

Kṛṣṇa! You are fortunately the son of the king of Vraja, but in the company of these cowherd-boys You became so proud and naughty! You are laughing when You see me, but, although You have learned all Your clever tricks from me, the crown jewel of all Your friends, You are now giving me sorrow! O Giridhāri! I came here to Vṛndāvana to quarrel with Śrī Rādhikā, the jewel of all *gopīs*, but unfortunately You humiliated me now in front of them! How can I stay friends with You still? I will go to mother Yaśodā, she may give me some *rabaḍī* (milk-sweet), or I may go to the assembly of Śrī Rādhikā's girlfriends and complain to them, pleasing them with my prayers! O Prince of Vraja, because of Your pride our friendship is now broken!"

Saying this, Madhumaṅgala twirled his golden stick around and entered Śrī Rādhikā's assembly in great bliss. There the *gopīs*, headed by Lalitā, stopped him, pulled at his clothes and bound him up on Rādhikā's order, smearing him in with fragrant colored pastes. Madhumaṅgala was in ecstasy and, eager to see Rādhā-Gokulānanda's pastimes, he told Rādhikā: "Hey Rādhe! Just see! I left the prince of Vraja and I'm taking shelter of You now! O pure stream of mercy! Keep me with You! I am bound up by my friends, although I am a *brāhmaṇa*-boy! This is not proper! It is Your duty to protect the souls that take shelter of You! O Gāndharvike! The arrow-like jokes of Your girlfriends hurt me more than the bondage of their ropes! O beloved of the prince of Gokula! O You who are filled with good fortune! O supreme Goddess! O stream of sweetness! O You whose beauty is desired for by all the housewives! Be kind upon me! O Lalite! Even Kṛṣṇa is afraid of you and folds His hands before You! Let me go! I've lost my faith in Kṛṣṇa! I will bring Mādhava here and He will lament to You and pray for Your mercy after I defeat Him!"

Lalitā said: "O Clever Baṭo (a nickname of Madhumaṅgala)! How come You suddenly left Śyāmasundara? He is qualified, friendly, famous, satisfied and good at fluteplaying! It is very sad!" Madhumaṅgala enviously replied: "Hey Lalite! Are you testing me or so? I know this Śyāma, who enchants you girls with His poisonous flutesong, very well! He destroys the patience of all the chaste girls, He's the crown jewel of womanizers and He's very lusty!"

Hearing these beautiful descriptions of Hari, Śrī Rādhikā bit on Her reddish lips and said: "O hardhearted Baṭo! How can you betray this most soft, spotless Mukunda, who is adorned with all qualities and who is more beautiful than Cupid?" Madhumaṅgala said: "Hey Rādhe! You speak the truth! You are the crown-jewel of all young girls! I came to the dust of Your pure lotus feet, that make Śyāma forget to

tend His cows, to play His flute, or to keep His yellow cloth on! The bondage of these ropes hurts me, please release me!"

Hearing this, Śrī Rādhikā was immersed in a nectar flood of compassion and released this best of *brāhmaṇas*, telling him: "O holy, intelligent *brāhmaṇa*! Don't be so proud, thinking that you're the greatest! You are devoid of all pious qualities!"

Madhumaṅgala said: "I have no control over my own brahminical power! Your girlfriends managed to defeat Śrī Kṛṣṇa only through my power, they are just weak girls themselves!" (He danced and jumped around shouting, making all the *gopīs* happy).

Govinda Vinodinī Rādhikā then became pleased, so Madhumaṅgala said: "Hey Rādhe! I'm hungry! Give me some sweets!" Citrā-*sakhī* said: "How amazing that this *brāhmaṇa* is hungry! Has he become a beggar because his brahminical power was lost? Why otherwise would the well behaved, humble son of Nanda have abandoned him?"

Madhumaṅgala angrily said: "Hey Rādhe! Stop this impudent girl from offending a *brāhmaṇa*! Don't humiliate me! I swear you, I left Hari to join you and to defeat Him! O merciful daughter of Vṛṣabhānu! Stop laughing and give me some fresh, tasty sweets!" Citrā then came out, said: "Come, eat some sweets!" and fearlessly smeared him in with *kuṅkuma*.

Madhumaṅgala angrily said: "Ohe Citre! It's not your fault! I was so foolish to betray Śrī Hari, and now I have to suffer for it!" and quickly backed off, but Lalitā stopped him with a stick and says: "Where are you going? I thought you were hungry! Quickly eat something!"

Rādhikā stopped Lalitā with a wink of Her eyebrows and made the friend of Her lover eat some sweets. Viśākhā, seeing Śrī Rādhikā adorned with love for Hari, sweetly told Her: "Hey *sakhī* Rādhe! Why are You suffering so much physically? Your eyes are suddenly filled with tears, Your skin is studded with goosepimples and You are shivering! You're speechless for Your voice is choked! O beautiful One! I see a slight smile on Your lips! Your activities are astonishing! I don't know if You are happy or sad!" Śrī Rādhikā said: "Sakhi! My mind yearns for that prince of Gokula, whose body is smeared with yellow sandalpaste and who is more beautiful than millions of Cupids! What can I do?" Hearing His flute, that sings Her name only, Rādhikā cast sidelong glances at Hari.

Part 2:

While Madhumaṅgala ate *laḍḍus*, restless-eyed Sudevī threw *kuṅkuma* (red powder) over his head and other *gopīs*, drunk with honey wine, squirted different kinds of colored water over Śyāmasundara's clown-like friend with golden syringes, threw lotus stems and fragrant powder at him. Kusumāsava (Madhumaṅgala), who is always eager to please Hari, ran back to Him and told Him in great distress: "Hey Gopāla! O friend of Subala! Hey Hare! Save me!"

Śrī Kṛṣṇa said: "Subala, don't you hear Baṭu's pitiful cries? Let's rescue him! Don't be afraid of the *gopīs*! A steady person like you can never be defeated!" Subala was very eager to have his Cātaka-bird-like eyes enjoy the ambrosial vision of the Kṛṣṇa-cloud adorned with strikes of Rādhā-lightning, so he happily and cleverly entered the *gopī*-group. Śrī Rādhikā said: "O mind! Why are you so anxious? Surely you will attain Hari's blissful *līlā*! Just see! Your lover's dear friend Subala is entering the assembly of *gopīs*!" Subala smiled and said: "Hey Vṛnde! Why is our friend Madhumaṅgala making all that noise?" Madhumaṅgala said: "O bold Subala! Why did you come here? I have surrendered to Śrī Rādhikā's lotus feet! I don't care for Mādhava and His friends anymore! I just screamed to test Hari's love, but instead of coming Himself, He sent You! Get out of my sight!"

Subala humbly looked down at Śrī Rādhikā's lotus feet and said: "Hey Rādhe! You are praised by all the saints! Listen! Kṛṣṇa sent me here to find out what calamity has befallen Madhumaṅgala! If you are not merciful to me, then Love itself has descended to hell and I don't know what my condition will be then!" Then Tuṅgavidyā, an expert joker, came up to Subala and smeared him in with eyeliner, mostly in the eyes. Subala then told Śrī Rādhikā: "O! Your girlfriends are very learned! I cannot understand then how they can be so indecent!" Rasavatī Lalitā smiled and said: "These customs are only seen on auspicious occasions like Holi! The king of lovers knows that!" Vṛndā said: "Hey Rādhe! Release these two friends of Nanda's son! Fix Your mind on Kṛṣṇa, the king of adolescent boys! You are, after all, a very virtuous girl!" Lalitā said: "Rādhe! Vanadevi Vṛndā speaks the truth! Release these two boys!" Kṛśodarī (slender Rādhā) did so and Madhumaṅgala and Subala quickly ran back to Mādhava. Madhumaṅgala said: "O Govinda! Just see how fortunate I was to escape from these girls! Give me some reward!" Subala laughed loudly and says: "Hey Nandanandana! What more can I say? Madhumaṅgala was intoxicated by his own pride and he doesn't count my virtues! He wants to take all the honour for himself! He was screaming loudly even when these little girls beat him with lotus flowers, and it was only on my plea that Śrī Rādhikā had him

released! If this Subala had not gone to the assembly of *gopīs* Madhumaṅgala would have been in great trouble!" Madhumaṅgala says: "This Subala is such a cheater! Look at his eyes! The *gopīs* forcibly smeared them in with eyeliner! You can see clearly that he was defeated by them! Where was his strength (*bala*) at that time? He Hare! How was Subala defeated by these weak (*abalā*) *gopīs*? Only because of his offenses to a *brāhmaṇa* like me!"

Meanwhile Hari became eager to see Śrī Rādhikā, so He said: "Bato! Your belly became so fat! Surely the *gopīs* were feeding you nicely!" Madhumaṅgala said: "O Kṛṣṇa! The Manohara- *laḍḍus*, the music and the dancing of the *gopīs* are better than those of the *gopas*! Don't be so proud of Your flute-playing! Now go, perfect Your cleverness in playing and bless Your eyes by seeing them!" Hari's heart melted when He heard this and He began to play His flute with a smile, yearning for His beautiful Rādhikā, who was pierced by Cupid's arrows when She heard it. Her body was studded with goose-pimples, She became stunned, lost Her bodily colour and wept, keeping a hand on Her friend Viśākhā's shoulder after drinking the nectar of pure love for Hari. Seeing this, Vṛndā ecstatically pointed at Her, telling Citrā: "Look at Rādhikā's ecstasy after She hears Hari's flutesong!" When Vṛndā saw how happy Govinda was from seeing the beauty of the fruits, flowers, vines and trees in the forest, she said: "Citre! Who can properly praise this flute, that rests on Kṛṣṇa's lips and that destroys the pride of all the *gopīs*? Which beautiful *gopī* can remain calm after hearing its sound, which causes their blouses and girdles to fall off and which makes them forget their duties and their husbands and run out of their houses into the forest?"

Then the sounds of drums, flutes and Viṅās arose in the sky, giving great joy to Govinda's party. The crown jewel of *sakhīs*, Lalitā, said: "O Rādhē! Why are You getting bewildered? Try to defeat that proud Govinda! I will crush His pride and bring Him here before You! O crown jewel of pure housewives! O moon-faced girl! I can't stand Kṛṣṇa's pride! As long as Your ankle-bells sing as sweetly as the swans Kṛṣṇa does not know where His yellow cloth, His stick, His flute, or His peacock feather is gone!"

Śrī Rādhikā, whose beauty defeats innumerable lotus flowers, said: "O *sakhīs*! Quickly go out for victory! Look how proudly Kṛṣṇa dances with His cowherd boyfriends! Stop them from making all this noise here in Vṛndāvana! Take jugs filled with yellow flower-scented water with you!" Hearing this, the *gopīs* loudly and blissfully began to sing, fearlessly approaching the prince of cowherds and filling

Vṛndāvana with the sound of their ambrosial songs. Loving Viśākhā humbly and beautifully began to dance, Citrā began to play Vīṇā in a wonderful way, Sudevī sang and Vṛndā played Mṛdanga. One *gopī* took a golden pot with colored water on the head and others came before Śrī Rādhā with flowerbows- and arrows, flower balls and syringes, and began to pelt each other with these missiles that caused the piercing sensation of Cupid's shafts in them. Intoxicated by new passions Śrī Rādhikā put Her lotus-hand on one *sakhī*'s shoulder. Seeing that the forest ground became red from the touch of Hari's lotus-footsles, waves of gentle smiles appeared on Her lotus-face and she told Lalitā: "Dear *sakhī*! Who is that boy, who shines like a mass of eyeliner, coloring all directions with His blackish lustre and the white glittering of His smile? He astonishes and startles My eyes!" Śrī Rādhikā became shy and happy when she saw Her beloved and she told one *sakhī*: "Sakhī! Is Hari blinking at Me from behind Subala's back? Does He want to tell Me something?"

Just then, the prince of Vraja made the whole of Vṛndāvana shine like blue lotus flowers with His squinting glances, that are full of deep love for Rādhikā and He told Subala:

"Tell Me, O friend, who is this smiling girl who plays with Her dear friends and who gives joy to everyone with Her incomparably beautiful singing and dancing, who reddens the forest soil with the reflection of Her red moonlike toe-nails and who twirls a play-lotus around in Her hand, shattering My body and mind?" Subala replied: "Hey Śaure (Kṛṣṇa, who shines like the sun)! Your beloved, who is invisible though visible (although You always see Her it is like You have never seen Her before) has appeared before You! This is not so amazing, for that is the nature of *anurāga* (constant passion)! Give up Your unconscious state!"

Hearing Subala's words, Hari smiled and said: "Aho! The Creator made one herb for Me in the form of Rādhā, to make Me very happy! There is a pretty, young desire-vine that shines beautifully and that is served by spotless Kokila-birds (or: Rādhā is a young desire-vine who sings a sweet as a Kokila-bird). I always sing Rādhā's name in the forest with My flute and I always meditate on Her, stunned and covered with goosepimples of ecstasy! Aho! When Rādhā's name drips into My ears I don't know who I am, where I am, where I came from or what I'm going to do! Other *gopīs* can make Me happy only as long as I do not remember Her! I swear you, Subala, without Rādhikā My cows, My friends and Śrī Vṛndāvana look like the fearsome fire of destruction to Me! Aho! Has the Creator collected all the sweet things of the world to make My Rādhikā, or has Love taken the form of a Vrajagopī who enchants and

excites Me?" Saying this, Nanda's son was immersed in an ocean of bliss, relishing the sight of Rādhā. Holding on to a Kadamba-tree, He stole the heart of Śrī Rādhā, the jewel of Vṛṣabhānu's family. Then Hari began to cry, His body studded with goosepimples of loving ecstasy.

Madhumaṅgala said: "O friend Hare! I think You are afraid of all the obstacles to Your meeting with Śrī Rādhikā! Your lotus-eyes are trembling! You don't see me and Your friends, nor Your flute Muralikā, anymore! You can not keep Your clothes together anymore either! O brother, look at me! Don't be afraid! Just go to Her!" Ujjvala smiled slightly and said: "O friend! This Baṭu is a coward! Just send him to Your home where some *laḍḍus* are kept for him! In his company we will all become afraid! And You, O Gokulānanda, will also be defeated by the *gopīs*, if even Madhumaṅgala was defeated by them! If You, our general, are defeated, then what can we soldiers do other than run away?" Hearing this, Madhumaṅgala became very angry and told Ujjvala: "O cheater! I'm Kṛṣṇa's well-wishing friend! You have become so contaminated by quarreling!" Then Hari was anointed with sandal paste by Rādhikā's lotus-hand to the great joy of all the assembled *sakhīs*, after which He happily started playing His flute.

Part 3:

Śrī Rādhikā hid Herself from Kṛṣṇa and went out to pick flowers, but Kṛṣṇa saw Her with His sidelong glances and squirted Śyāma-water on Her from a golden and jeweled syringe. This made Rādhikā's cheeks very beautiful and filled Her with ecstasy. Hari pretended to be angry and said, eager to drink the nectar of Rādhikā's lotus-like mouth and the nectar of quarreling with Her: "Ayī! Don't be indecent! Don't be proud of reaching My flower garden in Vṛndāvana!" The *gopīs* said: "Aho! Glory to the jewel of girls, Śrī Rādhā, to whom these beautiful vines and trees belong! O cheater! Quickly go back where You came from, before Lalita gets angry and will chastise You!" Hari said: "Where shall I go? "Where shall I go? It's Holi-time, the best month of the year, when all desires are fulfilled! I will do whatever I like! Curses won't help here! Who will listen to your blubbering? I'm no longer afraid of My superiors!" The *gopīs* replied: "Don't You know that we worship the sun-god? We are world-famous for our piety! Our bodies are very pure and we're proud of that! O whimsical boy! Your words won't work here, don't praise Yourself here! O cheater! We have seen Your strength in the forest!" Hari says: "You can give up your

crookedness, but not Your desires! I will fearlessly fulfill them all! Which *gopī* would be proud now? Everyone wants to have their desires fulfilled!"

Śyāmā-*sakhī* stifled her anklebells, came up to Kṛṣṇa from behind and suddenly smeared Him in with *kuṅkuma*, while Rādhikā threw a ball of *gulāl* (colored powder) on His cheeks with jingling bangles. Kṛṣṇa walked up to Her like a mad elephant and smeared Her face in with *kuṅkuma*. Then He folded His hands and humbly prayed to Her: "Priye! A fish can not live out of the water! I am under Your control! There is no fault in My behaviour, don't be angry with Me, O fair-faced girl! It does not look nice on Your moonlike face!" Śrī Rādhikā said: "I know Your pitiful prayers! Your *sādhū*-act will not save You here!", and beat Kṛṣṇa with Her playlotus. Vṛndā said: "O beautiful Rādhē! Smear Hari's *khañjana*-(restless) eyes in with *añjana* (eyeliner)!", so Rādhikā did so, but Her fingers began to shiver, so she placed Her other hand on Kṛṣṇa's shoulder. The *sakhīs* drowned in oceans of bliss when they saw Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa touching Each other and they began to dance and played music.

Rādhā and Mukunda threw *gulāl* at Each other and begin to dance with love, sprinkling Each other with colored water and singing as sweet as cuckoos. When the swans in the Yamunā heard this, they forgot their course out of ecstasy. Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa made Their bangles jingle sweetly as they threw lotus-stems and balls of lotus-flowers at Each other.

Kṛṣṇa gave great joy to the *gopīs* with His soft smile and His playful eyebrows. The beautifully dressed cowherd boys then made loud sounds and surround the *gopīs*. Some imitated women by lowering their heads and others imitated *yogīs* by opening their hair-knots and smearing themselves with ashes, singing and throwing powder and flower-balls.

The *gopīs*, that looked like golden sticks, took their flowerbows- and arrows, on Rādhikā's indication. Lotus-eyed Gāndharvikā, who is a desire-vine for Kṛṣṇa, took lotus flowers and soft balls in Her lotus-hand and helped the beautiful *gopīs* in sprinkling the whole of Vṛndāvana with colored water. The *sakhīs*, like Viśākhā and Citrā, as well as the parrots in the trees all sang: "Jaya Rādhē! Jaya Rādhē! Rādhikā has won! She is the Queen of Vṛndāvana!" Hearing this, Rādhikā humbly blocked Her ears with Her hands, blissfully smiling and gazing at Hari, who became eager to enjoy in a flower garden, being enchanted by Her beautiful face. Kṛṣṇa told His friends: "O *gopas*! I cannot look at the *gopīs*' faces in front of you all! I'm drowning in an ocean of bashfulness! Go home, we'll play more tomorrow! I will meditate on the supreme *brahma* while looking at their lotus faces with lowered eyes!"

Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the ocean of *rasa* (spiritual flavours) thought that the time Subala needed to make a bed of flowers for Him and His beloved in the *kuñja*, that was filled with humming black bees, took a millennium.....

Part 4:

Śrī Rādhikā, who was afflicted by desires and filled with ecstasy after seeing Her beloved, told Viśākhā: "Dear *sakhi*! How will I see Hari, who is anointed with *kunkuma* and sandalwood pulp, and whose face is covered with dust, today? Was He pierced by the shaft-like glances of Padmā and Candrāvalī, and is He now playing with them, or has He gone home out of embarrassment over His defeat in Holi? Is He playing with Madhumaṅgala or with some *gopī* in a *kuñja*? When will this Kṛṣṇa, who is expert in the art of lovemaking, who is very attached to that art, who likes love-quarrels, who destroys all miseries, whose bangles jingle when He catches the hand of His beloved, who plays in the *kuñjas* on the bank of the Yamunā, who has a crooked heart and who sings like a cuckoo, be merciful to Me and make Me happy? Alas! Without My Prāṇa Vallabhā this Vṛndāvana tastes like poison to Me! The merciless, very cool Yamunā is giving so much pain to My heart! These *kuñjas* upset Me very much!"

Subala happily told Viśākhā: "Aho Viśākhe! Where are you going? Please revive my friend! Sometimes He stands at the gate of the *kuñja*, breathing out deeply, lamenting: "Hā! hā!", and sometimes He becomes very happy, taking a golden Campaka-vine to be Rādhikā! Sometimes He wanders around the *kuñja*-cottage, keeping His head in His hands. He becomes very eager when He hears the warbling of the swans, thinking it to be the jingling of Her anklebells and then He looks in that direction!"

Hearing these words of Subala, Viśākhā came into the *kuñja* and, seeing Kṛṣṇa there, became quiet. Kṛṣṇa happily told her: "Viśākhe! Tell Me truly, where is Rādhikā?" Viśākhā: "I don't know" Hari: "Surely you know, otherwise why are you giggling?" Viśākhā: "What benefit I have from giggling? You are a debauchee!" Kṛṣṇa: "Not true! I have no one else but Rādhikā! Let Me quickly adorn the *kuñja* with Her!" Viśākhā: "No *gopī* can be compared with Rādhikā, who is there like Her? She knows everything! Don't be so proud, thinking that You're the only one who knows something! Actually You don't know anything! Why do You want to meet our *sakhi*? She's very famous for Her chastity, Her virtue and Her worship of the sungod! Why are You trying to compete with Her?"

Śrī Hari became sad and upset and told Subala: "Friend, have you come here after seeing Vṛṣabhānu-nandini's toenails or not? Didn't you see this girl, whose mind is attached to this pitiable son of Vrajendra, who is the most powerful *gopī* and who daily goes to Rādhākuṇḍa to meet Me on the pretext of worshiping the sungod? O Viśākhē, why are you giving Me pain, although you are Her friend? Make My fish-like eyes swim in the nectar-lake of Her form!" *gopī citta cora* Hari (Hari, who steals the *gopīs'* hearts) fell silent and tears of love moistened His yellow cloth. Viśākhā felt sorry for Him and said with tear-filled eyes: "O Govinda! As long as You don't appear before Her, Rādhikā is feeling great pain, considering one moment to be like an age and the whole of Vṛndāvana to be like burning poison! When She sees a Tamāla-tree She gets goosepimples of ecstasy on Her skin, and She trembles and cries, thinking it to be You! Her face dries up, Her voice falters and She sits motionless like a picture, as if She is merged in You! Look at my anxious *sakhī*, sitting in a *kuñja*, thirsty for the ever-fresh nectar of Your company! He Hare! You've become mad with desire for Rādhikā and vice-versa! O Subala! Dress Kṛṣṇa up like a *yogī*!" Then she went to Śrī Rādhikā and said: "*sakhi!* I did not meet Hari, but there's an amazing *yogī* wandering around in Vraja that I never saw before! He looks just like Hari and He wanders around with Subala! His smile shines as bright as white lilies and He's just like a bee in the lotus-like hearts of the *gopīs!* He has a spot of glistening *sindūra* on His forehead and Rudrākṣa-beads around His neck! His body is smeared with ashes and He wears a deerskin on His shoulders! His eyes shine like red lotus flowers and He has matted locks and a saffron loincloth!"

With lowered eyes Campakalatā folded her hands and said full of respect: "O perfect ascetic! O Svāmījī! Where are you from? Stay here and purify Vraja with a stream of your mercy, O destroyer of miseries!" Citrā offered the Kṛṣṇa-*yogī* a pure sitting-place, but Kṛṣṇa kicked it away, saying '*hu hu!*' and sat down on His deerskin to meditate on the ever-fresh nectar of Śrī Rādhikā's lips. Rādhikā smiled when She saw this beautiful Hari dressed like a *yogī* with nodding head, speaking blessed words with a blissful heart, occasionally interrupting Himself by sweetly saying '*bam bam!*' with an unaltered mind. Seeing this, Rādhikā swam in a shoreless ocean of bliss.

Just for fun, Viśākhā, hiding her feelings, asked Hari: "O Yogīrāja! Tell me what's on my mind! Don't stay silent!" The *yogī* replied: "O fair-teethed girl! Although I should not say it I have to tell you that I'm subdued by your devotion! You are eager to see the pastimes of a young golden girl with a young cloud-colored boy!" Rādhikā slyly said: "O fair-teethed Lalite! What the *yogī* said was not so amazing! This thought is

also on my mind! The most amazing thing is that my heart starts melting! This *yogī* can not be anyone else but Hari, the Lord of My heart, who is full of new bliss!"

Saying this, Rādhikā smiled and pierced Kṛṣṇa with the arrows of Her glances, making Him very agitated. The *sakhīs* drowned in an ocean of bliss when they saw the sweet meeting of the Yugala Kīśora, and said: "Re Viśākhē! We know your crooked tricks! Quickly make Her the *yoginī* (united girl) of the *yogī* (the united man). How many penances didn't this girl perform to get the company of this king of *yogīs*?"

Then *yogījū* put His deerskin on His shoulder and said: "I should not stay with women!" But how could He leave, being surrounded by enchanting, intoxicated *gopīs*? One *gopī* wiped the *sindūra* from His forehead, one took His Rudrākṣa beads, one pulled off His loin-cloth and another one pulled His deerskin from His shoulder and threw it on the floor. One blooming lotus-eyed *gopī* threw His hat off, another one sprinkled Him with colored water, one came up to Him from behind and smeared His eyes in with eyeliner and another one smeared His face in with flower pollen. One challenged Kṛṣṇa, making funny faces and saying: "Where is Your strength now?" and another lotus-eyed *gopī* said: "O biggest cheater of the world! Are You trying to trick us? You can call Your friends or Your parents, won't they help You? Where is Your powerful *brāhmaṇa*-friend now? They cannot help You! There is only one way out for You: To touch Śrī Rādhikā's lotus feet! She can forgive You! Don't cheat us anymore now!"

The *gopīs* began to dance and smiled and wielded their sticks just to frighten Kṛṣṇa, Citrā smeared His face with musk and Viśākhā made different decorations with *sindūra* on Him. Lalitā held a mirror before Kṛṣṇa's face and Śaśikalā quickly and without hesitation drew pictures on His body. Kṛṣṇa tried to put His yellow cloth back on again, but failed out of ecstasy, so slender Lalitā helped Him to put it on. Kṛṣṇa said: "Aho, bold Girl! All My clothes, except for My underwear, are gone!" and entered a solitary *kuñja* with deeply sighing Rādhikā.

Thus ends a summary translation of Śrī Govardhana Bhaṭṭa
Gosvāmī's 'Madhu Keli Valli', A Vine Of Spring-Pastimes.

Translated by Advaita Dāsa in 1989.