CANTO 9
THE MEETING ON THE RIVERBANK
Go·mukha started to make cuts in a lotus leaf that was as soft as the cheek of a lovelorn lady*. In the flowing water the leaf-figure seemed to come to life with the movement of the impetuous river. Singing Go·mukha’s praises, we watched the leaf-figure floating downstream; it had become more than the sum of its parts.

When we asked him to tell us, Go·mukha described in detail the defining characteristics of a leaf-figure. “On this matter, my lord, one should know that leaf-figures are, briefly, divided into the following categories: triangular, square, rectangular and round. With triangular ones are made things like quadrupeds, mountains and houses; with square ones, rivers, roads, creepers, snakes and such like; with round ones, things like ornaments and pairs of birds.”

As Go·mukha was saying this, Maru·bh´utika arrived and said, “My lord, a great miracle has happened!”

Hari·shikha said to him, “Everything is miraculous for people like you who are as blinkered as tortoises in a well!”

“Take a look, you incredulous fellow!” replied Maru·bh´utika, and he showed us the riverbank, exclaiming, “This is the miracle!”

At this Hari·shikha laughed loudly and said, “Behold the miraculous riverbank! Homage to this visionary! Water is flowing along the riverbed: if the sandy bank is miraculous then what, fool, have you got against the water?”
THE EMPEROR OF THE SORENDERERS

So 'bravīt, «kena 'pulinaṃ 'āścaryam iti bhāṣitaṃ?
pulina yat tad 'āścaryam atha vā 'dṛṣṭatām iti!»

Ten' 'oktaṃ «'pulinaṃ san'ti 'sikatāḥ kiṃ tad abdhutam?»
«n' 'ēty» 'ukte tena 'dṛṣṭa tu 'pulinaṃ 'Go'muko 'bravīt,

9.15 «mā mā bhadrāṃmuhakaṃ kaś ca 'paribhūḍ 'Marubhūtikam
maya hi 'pulinaṃ 'drṣṭaṃ 'saṃnivitaṃ 'padādvyayaṃ.»

Uktaa 'Hariśikha' 'āpi, «yady 'āścaryam 'padādvyayaṃ
ātyāścaryam idaṃ paśya 'padakoṭiṣ ca 'tur'īdaśaḥ!»

Ten' 'oktaṃ, «s' 'ānubandhasu na 'āścaryam 'padakoṭiṣu
idaṃ 'vichhinnaśaṃtānaṃ ten' 'āścaryam 'padādvyayaṃ.»

Ten' 'oktaṃ, «yādi 'ṛṣeṇi parāṃśṛṇīni 'pāṇinā
dhreyur iti?» ten' 'oktaṃ, «tataḥ 'ṣyađ eva 'valukā.»

«Y' 'ēyaṃ 'tiraṭaroḥ 'śākha 'pulinaṃ 'yāvad 'āgata
tāyā 'gav' 'avatiṇaḥ 'ṣyat kaś ca 'cin 'nāgara ko 'yadi.

9.20 Etaṃ eva 'saṃtāmbya 'dūtram 'alaṃbaṇpallavāṃ
nivartet 'ēti
ten' 'okte, «paṇṛ'ākīrṇa 'mahī 'bhavet.»

«Kasya 'taraḥ 'itī?» ten' 'okte, «divyasy 'ēty' 'abравit sa 'taṃ
divyānāṃ 'kataṃsasy 'ēti?» sa 'vidyādham 'aḍiśat:

«Na 'sṛṣānti 'bhuvāṃ 'devāḥ 'sthitavād 'yakṣaṣaṃsām
dūtraṃ 'padāni 'majjanti 'pulineṣu 'viśeṣaṭaḥ.
Tapaḥṣeṣāmasyaśarīratvāt 'śiddhānāṃ 'ṣūbhāḥ 'saha
āśvyaṇāt 'āṇuśiṃśyaṇaśādiśekapāṃ 'jāyate 'padām.

CANTO 9: THE MEETING ON THE RIVERBANK

Maru-bhūtika replied, “Who said the riverbank was
miraculous? It's what's on it that's miraculous: have a look!”

Hari-shikha replied, “There are grains of sand on the
bank. Is that amazing?”

When Maru-bhūtika said it was not, Go-mukha looked
at the riverbank and said, “Don't be rude to goodly Maru-
bhūtika, for I can see a pair of footprints on the bank”.

Hari-shikha said, “If a pair of footprints is a miracle,
then this is beyond miraculous—look: one hundred and
forty million pairs of footprints!”

Go-mukha replied, “There is nothing miraculous in tens
of millions of footprints in succession; what makes this pair
of footprints a miracle is that it is alone.”

Hari-shikha answered, “What if the rest have been rubbed
out by hand?”

Then there would be loose sand,” replied Go-mukha.
Hari-shikha said, “There's a tree on the other side of
the river. Do you see the branch that reaches this bank?
What if some clever fellow* climbed along it and got down
here? He might have returned by grabbing hold of the same
branch—its shoots hang down a long way.”

Go-mukha replied, “The ground would be strewn with
leaves.”

When Hari-shikha asked, “Then to whom do the foot-
prints belong?,” Go-mukha replied, “To a divine being.”
When asked what sort of divine being, he specified that it
was a sorcerer: “ Gods do not touch the ground. Because
they are heavy, the footprints of Yakṣas and demons make
deep indentations, especially on riverbanks. The bodies of
perfected saints and sages are emaciated because of their
asceticism, so their feet leave indistinct imprints of their toes, heels and other parts. Those of other human beings depend on how they are made. A man’s is deep at the front, a woman’s is the opposite. This man has a heavy load.”

Hari·shikha asked: “What might his load be: a rock, a tree or a foe?” “If it were a rock it would be deeper; if it were a tree there would be leaves scattered about; if it were a foe, he would not have put him down on this lovely riverbank. Therefore this fellow’s burden is a sorceress who has not mastered magic: those who have mastered magic do not become lame. The suitor’s right footprint is deeper, so he sat her on his right arm. Do you not notice the smell given off by the jasmine flowers that fell from her head and are scented with her pomade? This river is most agreeable; he will not have strayed from it, so let’s carefully look elsewhere for footprints.”

The townspeople and my retinue searched about the place and found the footprints of a man and a woman near the water. Go·mukha accompanied us there. He looked at them and said that that same gentleman must have made them too. When he was asked how he knew, he laughed and replied, “What in this is hard to work out? All right, I shall tell you. Carrying out the wishes of another and suppressing one’s own: that’s what gentlemen consider gentlemanly conduct. His lover is walking slowly and he is following her. He is a gentleman because he does not go in front of her. They passed just now: look at the path, the grass is still bent over from being pressed down by their feet.”
THE EMPEROR OF THE SORCERS

Following those fresh footprints, we came across a sapta-parṇa tree. It was a riot of busy bees. Go-mukha described what had passed in secret between the two sporting lovers at the foot of that tree as though he himself had been involved: “She was angry with him here . . . here he won her over. . . here they made this bed of twigs and flowers. . . tired, she sat down here. Look, this is where she sat: the twigs are broken from being pressed down by her bottom. Placing her hands on her buttocks, she lowered her heavy behind; the earth here has been pressed down by her toes as she stretched.”

Investigating like this, we followed their footprints away from the foot of the sapta-parṇa tree. Then we noticed a dense thicket of mādhavī bushes, impervious to the moon, the sun, fire and wind, but no obstruction to lovers. It was tightly enclosed by blossoming priyāṅgu creepers which were being ravished by drunken bees. When he saw it Go-mukha said, “Our beau is right here! This spot is hidden and lovely: he wouldn’t have left it. It would not be right to . . . retire somewhere else for a while.” We waited under a banyan tree, in the shade of its leaves, its foot dark and cool with dūrva grass.

CANTO 9: THE MEETING ON THE RIVERBANK

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Then Hari-shikha said, “At first you say he’s there but now you say he isn’t. You are completely mad!”
Go-mukha answered, “Why is this pair of peacocks coming out of the mādhavī thicket unruled and silent? Are you blind? Can’t you see them? If there were anyone in there, they would have cried out in alarm and flown up to the safety of a tree.”

I dispatched some attendants to investigate. Waving their hands about, they signalled that the creeper bower was empty. We went there ourselves and saw that a large bed had been made, on which twigs were scattered as though by the rolling about of a colt. We saw a garland, some ankle bracelets and a girdle hanging from the branch of a tree, and fine linen clothes strewn about the place, as red as the petals of a lotus. And in another spot we saw precious armor, the prized possession of a sorcerer. It looked like a fallen sun and made us squint with the brilliance of its sparkling jewels. I had all those ornaments and other things gathered together by the men so that I might return them to the fellow when we found him.

Then Go-mukha said, “He and his beloved must have been abducted by an enemy: they have abandoned their jewelry and so forth because they have been captured. The fellow shall have a long life. Some of his hair got caught in the branch of a tree: it is glossy and still fragrant.”

Investigating like this, we searched all around and had not gone far when, in a grove of tall trees, we saw a sorcerer attached to the trunk of a kadamba tree by five iron spikes, as still as if he were a waxwork. I told the men to get him down from the tree trunk, and moved away to shelter in the shade of a tree. However Go-mukha said, “There is no
way that these spikes can be pulled out, not even by all the gods.”

Then I remembered something and said, “I heard the king mention that the following five herbs are apparently always found in a suit of armor: one that heals arrow wounds, one that makes flesh grow, one that remedies cuts, one that restores the complexion, and the fifth, the ultimate herb, which brings the dead back to life. If they are in the suit of armor then use them to bring him back to life.”

Not long after Go·mukha returned, and said with a smile, “By the grace of Your Highness, the sky-rover has been revived! We found those potent herbs in his suit of armor, and tried them one by one on a deer that had been pierced by an arrow. When we had established their effects, we used them to restore the body of the handsome sorcerer. As soon as he had recovered, he said, ‘Who brought me back to life after I had been impaled?’ and I replied, ‘Our master, using clever means.’ He said, ‘Is he your master too?’ and when I replied that he was, he said, ‘He is not human. He is also my master, and a god or a sorcerer. Please ask him to be so gracious as to favor me with his presence.’ I replied, ‘Our prince told us that after we revived you, you should be sent on your way and not be allowed to see him. Out of modesty he does not want to see you after assisting you. So, sir, please be on your way. We shall meet again.’
Then, with his hands hanging down, he dropped to his knees, sighed, and in a voice choked with misery said, 'Now I might as well be dead, because I cannot see my master, the future emperor, who has favored me with the gift of life. If he is regretting having given me life, I shall give it up again. If not, let him see me!'

When I gave my consent and said that he could do what he wanted and see me, he knelt down, touched the ground with his head, and said to me, 'May the ruler of all the sorcerers look upon the humble sorcerer Amita·gati, son of the sage Káushika.'

I called him over, saying, 'Come here!,' and touched him on the back—he had been healed. Under the gaze of my friends he sat down near me, overjoyed.

Hari·shikha said, 'What Go·mukha said is true: this fellow, with his agreeable conversation, is indeed a most courteous gentleman.'

When he heard this, Amita·gati said to us, 'I am not just being courteous: listen to my story.

On the charming and beautiful peak of Snow Mountain there is a sage called Káushika to whom stone and gold are as one. An Apsaras called Bındumati left Indra's paradise and served him zealously for a very long time. One day Káushika told her to ask for a boon and she replied, 'If Your Holiness is pleased with me, then let him give me children.'

He had two children in succession by her: a son, me, and a daughter, my sister, who has the same name as me. It was he who made me what I am—he taught me everything. I bear his magical sciences, so I have become a sorcerer*. One day
I saw my father crying and said to him, ‘You have fathered
a son like me: how can you cry?’

He replied, ‘My son, I have realized that you will not be
an emperor; you were born from my body in vain.’

I asked him to tell me who would be my master and he
replied, ‘Whoever is the emperor. You must seek him out!’

I said, ‘Your Holiness, use your wisdom to ascertain
the signs by which the emperor is to be recognized, and
tell me them.’

He replied, ‘You are to recognize as your master the man
who brings you back to life after an enemy has impaled you
with iron spikes.’

I befriended two men called Angára and Vyálaka, and
I passed the time happily in their company, like a brother.

There was a king called Váyu·patha whom I accompanied
to a charming city called Kashyapa·sthálaka. One day I was
wandering about the city when I saw a young girl calledKusumálika walking in a garden with a group of other
girls. With her laudable complexion and beauty she be-
came firmly fixed in my mind, like a laudatory inscription
written on a rock-face in the Vindhya mountains.

I won her, and with her and my two friends I wandered
about beautiful rivers, mountains and forests in pursuit of
pleasure. One day I saw Angára looking lustfully at Kusu-
málika. Nervously twisting his neck he cast her a sideways
glance. He noticed that I had seen him, and without saying
aword to me the wretch quietly stood up and left with his
younger brother. He was in love and had been thwarted in
his aims; I was scared of him. I became alarmed and did
not know where to go with my beloved. Today I arrived at
na jñānī. kṣva yām' iti ca kītaḥ saha kāntaya.

9.100 Adya ca' ēṁāṁ samāsādyā ramaṇīyāṁ nag'āpagaṁ avatirṇo' smi puline ko'mal'ājimalāvāluke.
Sūrat'ānubhave yogām dṛṣṭvā tac ca suṣaṃvṛtam latāṛgham ahaṁ prāptaḥ phullāśyāmālaṁ' āvṛtam.
Yac ca šeṣam aśeṣaṁ tat kathitaṁ Gomukhena ваḥ tasmād āpt'āpadesā' yaṁ na nāgarakatā mama.
Ko hi vidyādharair baddham avidyādharasainyāpaḥ mocyen mādṛśāṁ? tasmā tath" edam śīvadhītām.
Sevante sevakaḥ sevyān prajñāprāṇaḍhan'ādibhiḥ yena ten'ātmaraḵṣ̌ārtham madvidyā grhyatām iti."

9.105 Sadyāḥ kṛ'opakāreṇa mayā mand'ādareṇa ca na gṛhit" ābruvaṁ ca' āinam, "anugaccha priyāṁ iti!"
Abravic ca, "dīnād āsmāt pareṁ' aham ahariniśām āpramatato bhaviṣyāmi bhavatāṁ dehārakṣeṇe.
Smartavyāḥ samkete' c' āham!" ity utkṛt naḥ praṇāmya ca vegen' ākāśam utpātya prāgād Angārakaṁ prati.

9.108 Ādityaśārma vacaṁ vacaṁ ca yaksya yānaṁ pradaḵṣaṇam iṣoṣ ca marun/'īrgaṇām prahlādin' āmitagateṁ kathitena jātaṁ utkhātaṁ saṁśaya akāraṇaṁ vīśuddham.
iti pulina'darśana'śargaḥ.

THE EMPEROR OF THE SORCERERS

CANTO 9: THE MEETING ON THE RIVERBANK

this beautiful mountain river and landed on the riverbank with its fine white sand. When I saw the creeper bower, fit
for lovemaking, well hidden and covered with blossoming priyāṅgu creepers, I went inside. Go-mukha has told you all
that happened afterward. Thus my behavior is not because of my courtesy, but of what I learned from a trusted source.
When someone like me has been captured by sorcerers, who other than a sorcerer general could free him? So what
the sage said was true.

Servants serve their masters with, among other things, their wisdom, their lives and their wealth, so, in order to
protect yourself, accept my vidyā." Because I had just helped him* and because I was not inter-
ested, I refused it. I said to him, "Go after your beloved!"
He replied, "From this day forth I shall be ready day and night to protect you. Think of me in times of trouble!" After
saying this he bowed to us, flew quickly up into the sky and went after Angāraka.
The words of Aditya-shārma, the words of the Yākjī and
the arrow's circuit around the wind-deer were confirmed by Āmita-gati's delightful speech and the resultant removal of
the stain of doubt.

Thus ends the Meeting on the Riverbank canto.