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With a Foreword by Gieve Patel

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“Peace”
“Compassion” &
“The Mission of the Goose”
Poems and Prayers From South India
by Appayya Dikshita, Nila kantha Dikshita & Vedanta Dешика

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COMPASSION
P
dhāryaḥ

Śrīnivās’ānukampayā
ikṣu|sāra|sravanty” āva
yan|mūrtīḥ śarkarāyitaṃ.

vigāhe tīrtha|bahulāṇaḥ
śītalāṇaḥ guru|saṃtatiṃ
Śrīnivāsa|day”|āmbodhi|
parīvāha|paramparāṃ.

kṛtinaḥ Kamal”|āvasa|
kāruṇy’|āikāntino bhaje,
dhatte yat|sūkti|ṛupeṇa
tri|vedī sarva|yogyatāṃ.

Parāśara|mukhān vande
Bhagīratha|naye sthitān
Kamalākānta|kāruṇya|
Gaṅgā|plāvita|mad|vidhān.

a|śeṣa|vighna|śamanaṇaḥ
anik’|ēśvaram āśraye
Śrīmātaḥ karaṇ”|āmbodhau
śikṣā|srota iv’ āttitaṃ
Prelude

I surrender to this mountain,
this stream of sugar-cane sap
turned solid, as God’s Compassion
takes crystal form.

I swim in the cool
steady flood of God’s Compassion,
in its deep pools, eddies, currents
flowing through the long line
of our teachers, which
never fails.

I follow unique poets
immersed in the mercy of Káma’s lord.
It is only their songs
that open up all three Vedas
for everyone to hear.

I hold high those sages,
starting with Paráshara,*
who take their lead from the man
who brought the Ganges down to earth.*
The river that is God’s Compassion
swept them away
as she now floods me.

I pray to God’s General, Vishvak-sena,
who washes all obstacles away.
He rises, steady, from the ocean of God’s Compassion
like a river flowing uphill.
samasta|jananīm viṁ vande

caitanya|stanya|dāyinīm,

śreyasīm Śrīnivāsasya

karaṇām iva rūpiṇīm.

cī m Vṛṣa|gir’|īśasya

mahiśīm viśva|dhāriṇīṃ,

taṭ|krpā|pratighātanāṃ

kṣamayā vāraṇaṃ yayā.

niśāmayatu māṃ Nilā

yad|bhoga|paṭalair dhruvaṃ

bhāvitaṃ Śrīnivāsasya

bhakta|doṣev a|darśanaṃ.

kam apy an|avadhiṃ vande

karaṇā|Varuṇ’|ālayaṃ

Vṛṣa|śaila|taṭa|sthānāṃ

svayaṃ vyaktim upāgataṃ.
She mothers all there is.
She nourishes us with the milk
they call awareness.
I bow to her, Compassion embodied,
the best thing about God.

And to Earth, the highest queen
of the Lord of Bull Hill.*
She bears us all
and bears with us all.
She won’t let us strike back
at God’s Compassion.

Nila,* I pray for your attention.
When God makes love to you,
we can be sure his eyes turn blind
to the faults that we, who love him,
may commit.

That unfathomable, unending
ocean of kindness
who makes himself visible
to anyone who climbs the slopes
of Bull Hill—
I bow to him.
a|kiṃcana|nidhīṃ, sūtim

apavarga|tri|vargayoh

Añjan’|ādr’|īśvara|dayām

abhiṣṭaumi nir|añjanāṃ.

anucara|ṣakty|ādī|guṇām,

agre|sara|bodha|viracit’|ālokāṃ,

sv’|ādhīna|Vṛṣa|gir’|īśāṃ,

svayaṃ prabhūtāṃ pramāṇayāmi dayām.

api nikhila|loka|su|carita|

muṣtim|dhaya|durita|mūrcchan’|ājuṣṭaṃ

saṃjīvayatu, daye, māṃ

Añjana|giri|nātha|rañjanī bhavatī.
I praise you, Compassion,
who belong to the god of Ánjana Hill:*
You are pure gold
to those who own nothing.
You alone deliver final freedom
and the other three ends of men.

Power and other such traits
follow her everywhere.
The light of wisdom
goes before her.
The Lord of Bull Hill
is her servant.
That’s how I recognize Compassion
when she comes to be
of her own accord.

I’ve been bad.
I’m losing my mind.
My terrible record
is a fist in the face
of any good deeds
that others have done.
Mother Compassion! Bring me back
to life. Be the lover
of the god on Ánjana Hill.
bhagavati daye, bhavatyā

Vṛṣa|giri|nāthe samāplute tuṅge
a|pratigha|majjanānāṁ

hast’|ālambo mad|āgasāṁ mṛgyaḥ.

kṛpañaljana|kalpa|latikāṁ

kṛṭ’|āparādhasya niṣkriyāṁ ādyāṁ,

Vṛṣa|giri|nātha|daye, tvāṁ

vidanti saṁsāra|tāriṇīṁ vibudhāḥ.

15 Vṛṣa|giri|grha|medhi|guṇāḥ

bodha|bal’|āiśvarya|vīrya|śakti|mukhāḥ
doṣā bhaveyur ete

yadi nāma, daye, tvaya vinā|bhūtāḥ.

ā|śrṣṭi|saṁtatānāṁ

aparādhānāṁ nirodhiniṁ jagataḥ,

Padmāsahāya|karuṇe,

pratisaṁcara|kelim ācarasi.
When you flood even the god
on the peak of Bull Hill,
surely my burden of evil
will drown, too.
Compassion, great goddess:
would it be too much to ask you
to give it a hand?

You’re bounty unending
to anyone in want,
immediate expiation
for anyone who’s done wrong.
Goddess Compassion who lives with the god
on Bull Hill: those who know,
know you can guide us
to the other shore.

Omniscience, might, mastery, vigor,
and all the other blessed qualities
of the god at home on Bull Hill
would be nothing but a curse, Compassion,
if not for you.

People commit crimes non-stop
from the beginning of time, and you,
God’s Compassion, block them with a torrent
at every end of time, as the curtain falls
on your dance.*
anugunana|daś”|ârpitena,
Śrīdhara|karuṇe, samāhita|snehā
śamayasi tamaḥ prajānāṁ
śāstramayena sthira|pradīpena.

rūḍhā Vṛṣṭ’ācala|pateḥ
pāde mukha|kānti|patrala|cchāyā,
karuṇe, sukhayasi vinatān
kaṭ’|ākṣa|viṭapaiḥ kar’|āpaceya|phalaiḥ.

nayane Vṛṣṭ’|ācal’|éndos
tārā|maitrīṁ dadhānayā, karuṇe,
dṛṣṭas tvay” āiva janimān
apavargam a|krṣṭa|pacyam anubhavati.

samay’|ōpanatais tava pravāhair,
anukampe, kṛṭa|saṃplavā dharitrī
śaraṇ’|āgata|sasya|mālin” īyaṁ
Vṛṣṭa|sai̇l’|ēśa|krṣīvalaṁ dhinoti.
Then, after the deluge, when you see all living beings no better than dead matter, you despair, Compassion, and bless them with the burden of vital senses and a body—you who belong to the god of Bull Hill.

With the unwavering lamp of Scripture, its coiled wick lit at the right moment and burning with your love, you, Mother Compassion, dispel the darkness in people’s minds.

If God is a tree on Bull Hill, you grow at his feet, you’re the lush shade flowing from the foliage at his head, and to delight those who bow to him, Compassion, you bend the long boughs that are his glances heavy with fruit within reach.

God, rising like the moon on Bull Hill, supplies the eyes, but you, Compassion, give him sight. If your gentle gaze falls, star-like, on anyone alive, they’ll find freedom, a rich yield from an untilled land.

When the earth is flooded on time by you, Compassion, pilgrims crop up in field after field to the great joy of that Peasant who farms Bull Hill.*
kalaś’|ōdadhi|saṃpado bhavatyāḥ,
karuṇe, saṃmati|mantha|saṃskṛtāyāḥ
amṛt’|āṃśam avaimi divya|dehaṃ
mṛta|saṃjīvanam Añjan’|ācal’|ēndoḥ.

jala|dher iva śītatā, daye, tvaṇ
tVaśa|śail’|ādhipateḥ sva|bhāva|bhūtā.
pralay’|ārabhāṭi|naṭī|m tad|īkṣāṃ
prasabhaṃ grāhayasi prasattilāsyāṃ

praṇata|pratikūla|mūlalghātī
pratighaḥ ko ’pi Vṛṣ’|ācal’|ēśvarasya
kalame yavaś’|āpacāya|nītyā,
karuṇe, kiṃkaraṭāṃ tav’ ōpayāti.

a|bahiṣṭkṛta|nigrahān vidantaḥ
Kamalākāntalguṇān sva|tantrat’|ādīn,
a|vikalpam anugrahāṃ duhānāṃ
bhavatīm eva, daye, bhajanti santoḥ.
When you whipped yourself into cream in the butter-churn of your willing mind, Compassion, Ocean of Milk, a spoonful became God’s body rising like the moon on Bull Hill that pulls the dead back to life.*

Like coolness to the ocean, you, Compassion, are the very nature of the god on Bull Hill. When his gaze does the wild dance that devastates the world, you sternly retrain it in the soft step of peace.

Someone always has to weed a field of growing paddy. God’s infinite rage that uproots the enemies of those who come to him at Bull Hill takes its orders from you, Compassion.

Good people know that among his other fine features, God is wholly free—but not quite free from judgment. That’s why they stick to your free-flowing kindness, Compassion, no questions asked.
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