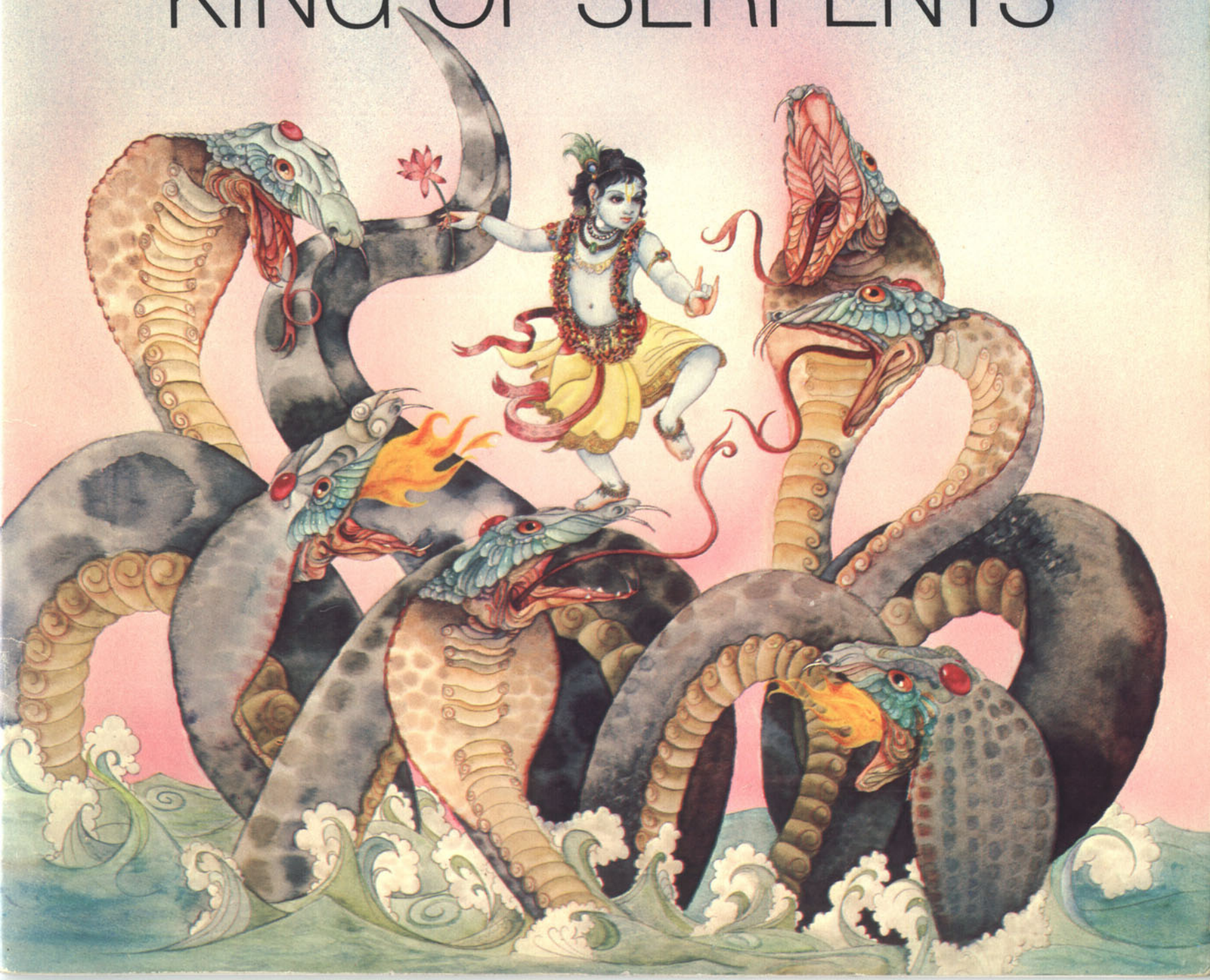


THE CHILDHOOD PASTIMES OF KRISHNA

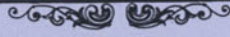


Kaliya

KING OF SERPENTS



THE CHILDHOOD PASTIMES OF KRISHNA



KING OF SERPENTS

as retold by Joshua Greene
(Yogeśvara dāsa)

artwork by Patrick Wire
(Parasatya dāsa)



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KALIYA, KING OF SERPENTS

On a far-away island lived Kaliya, King of serpents. A splendid jewel glowed on each of his hoods. Kaliya was strong and possessed large amounts of poison. Thus he was very proud.

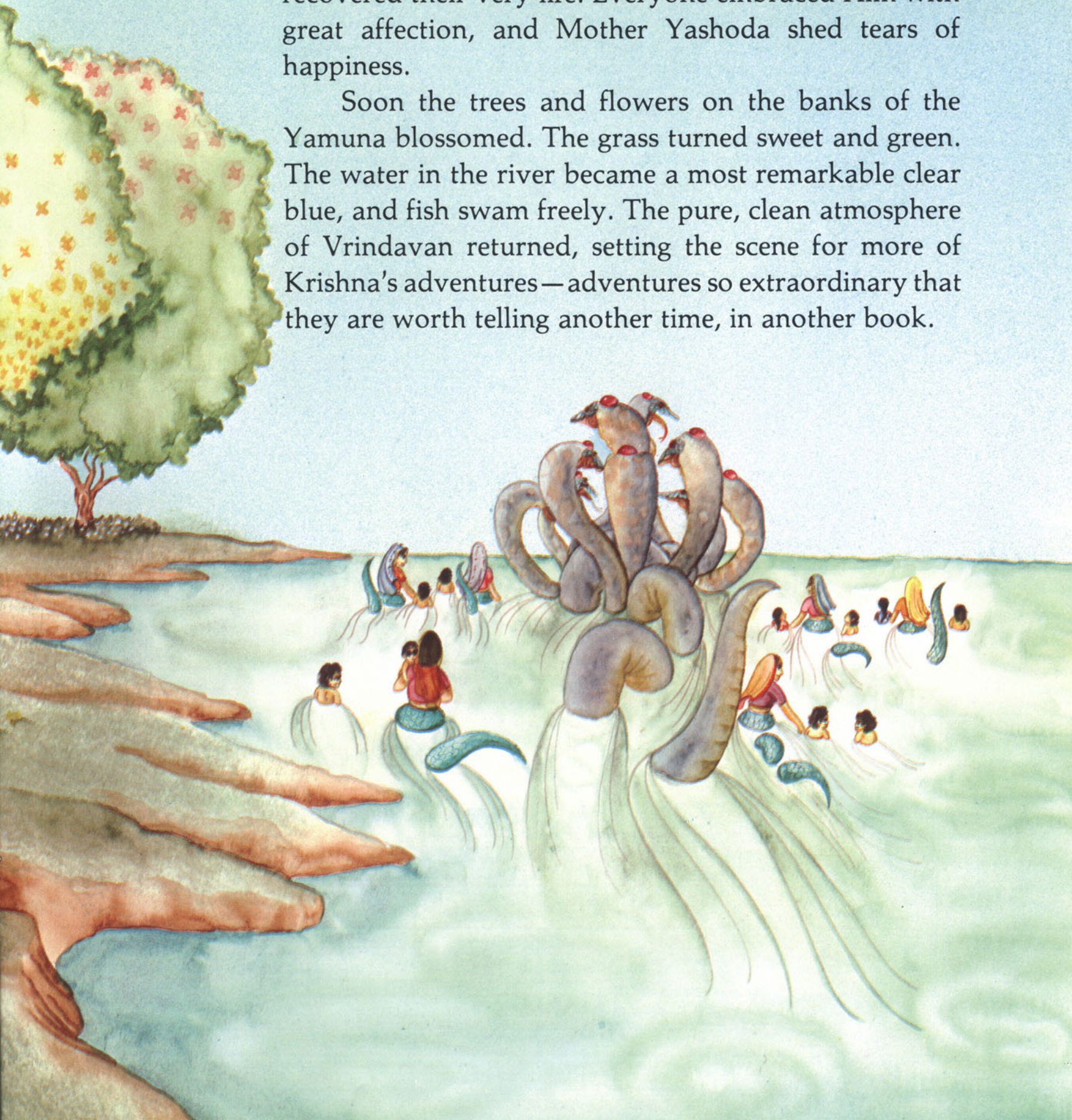
On nights when the moon was half full, the snakes of the island made offerings of food to Garuda, the mighty bird-carrier of Lord Vishnu. Kaliya grew envious. "Why should that bird get all those delicious offerings?" he thought. So he began to eat them himself. Garuda was very fond of these gifts of food. When he learned that Kaliya was stealing them, he rushed to the island. Garuda struck the huge serpent with his shining wings. Kaliya fought with his many hoods and sharp, poisonous teeth, but Garuda was too powerful. Kaliya fled for his life.





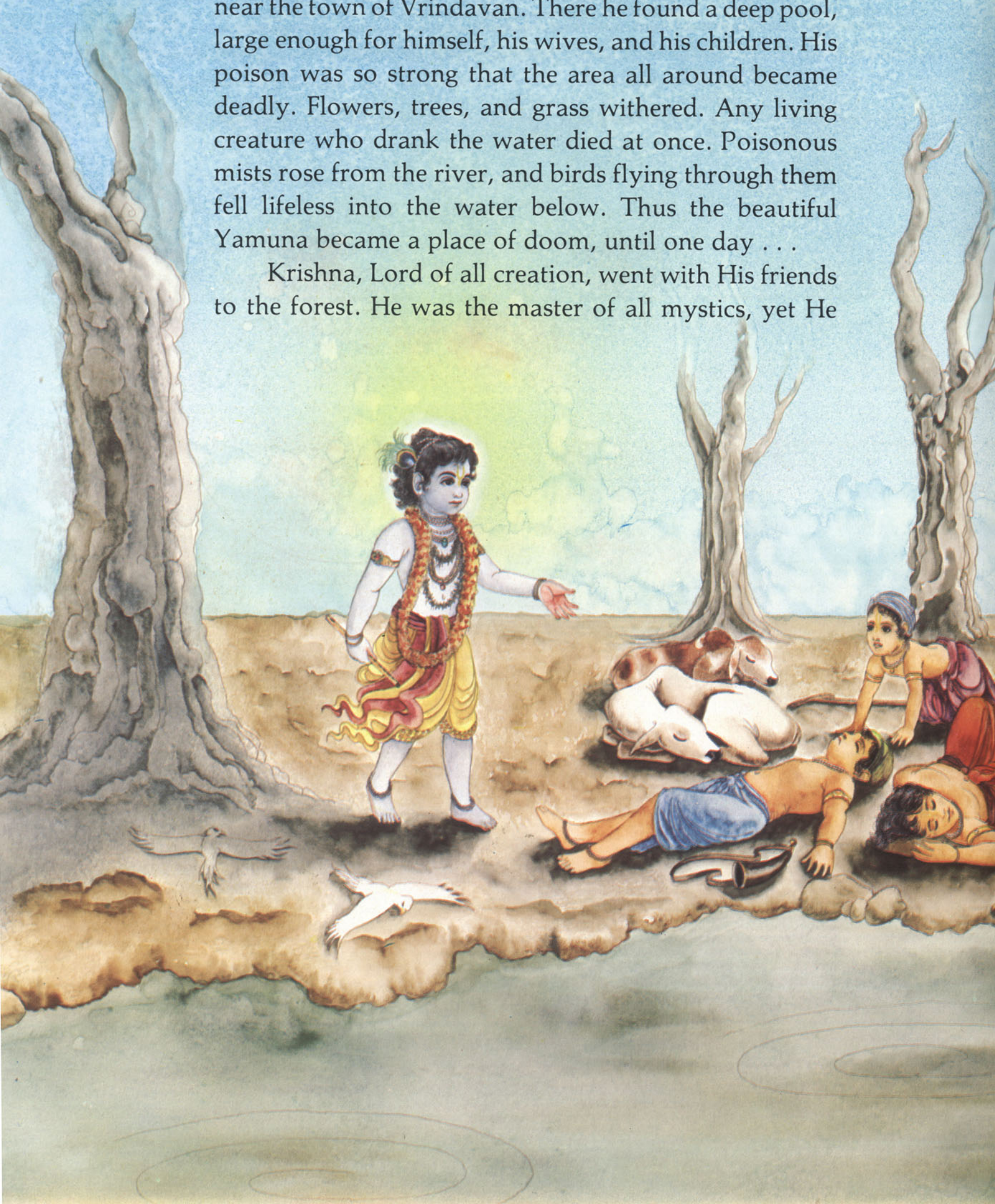
When Krishna finally came out of the Yamuna River, He looked more beautiful than ever. Gazing upon Him, the people of Vrindavan felt as though they had recovered their very life. Everyone embraced Him with great affection, and Mother Yashoda shed tears of happiness.

Soon the trees and flowers on the banks of the Yamuna blossomed. The grass turned sweet and green. The water in the river became a most remarkable clear blue, and fish swam freely. The pure, clean atmosphere of Vrindavan returned, setting the scene for more of Krishna's adventures—adventures so extraordinary that they are worth telling another time, in another book.



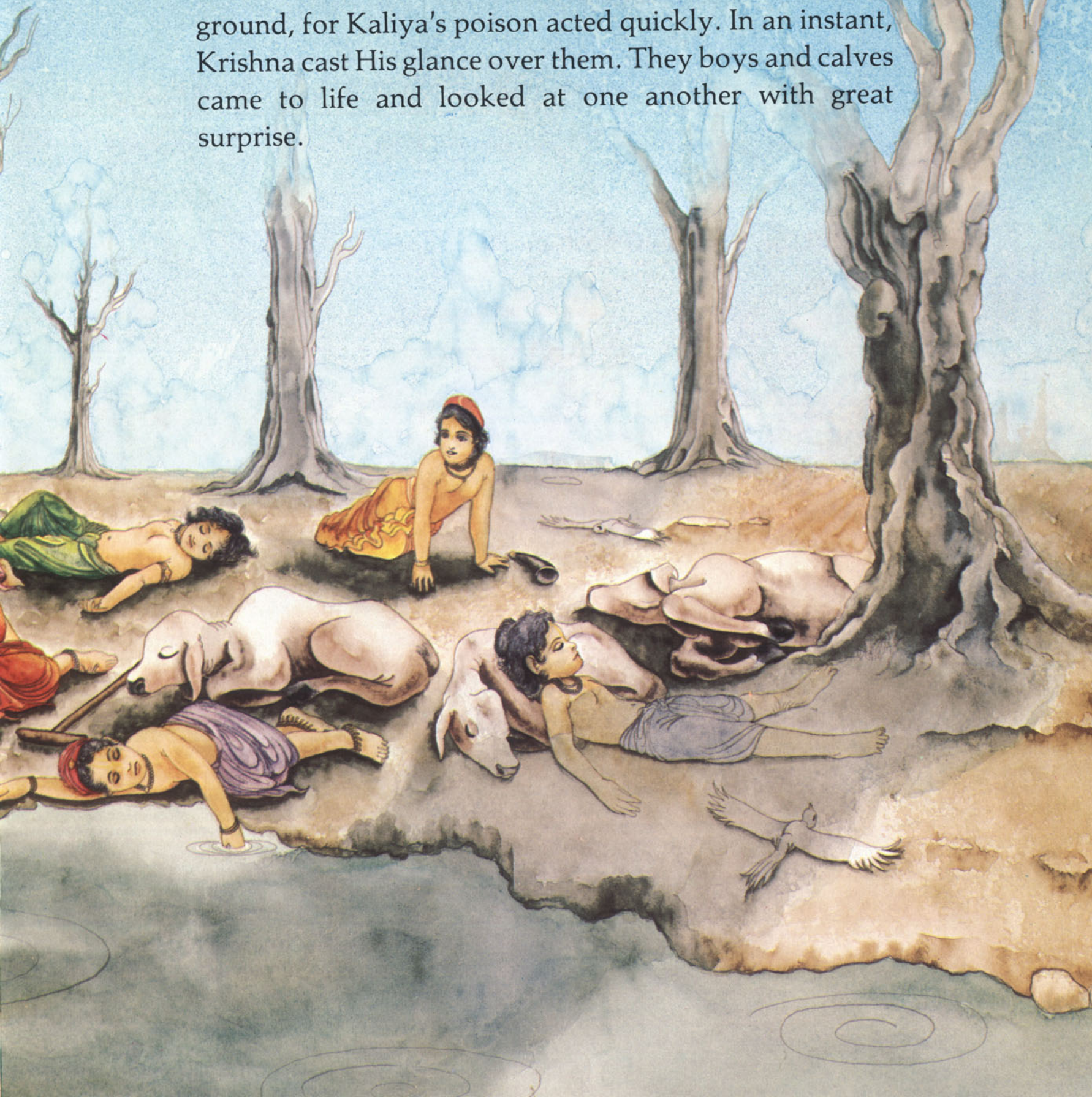
Kaliya made his new home in the Yamuna River, near the town of Vrindavan. There he found a deep pool, large enough for himself, his wives, and his children. His poison was so strong that the area all around became deadly. Flowers, trees, and grass withered. Any living creature who drank the water died at once. Poisonous mists rose from the river, and birds flying through them fell lifeless into the water below. Thus the beautiful Yamuna became a place of doom, until one day . . .

Krishna, Lord of all creation, went with His friends to the forest. He was the master of all mystics, yet He



played like an ordinary boy, tending the cows and running through the soft grass with His friends. The cowherd boys played their flutes, sang, danced, and wrestled with one another in the shade of tall flowering trees.

The boys and calves were thirsty and began to drink the water of the Yamuna. Suddenly, they fell to the ground, for Kaliya's poison acted quickly. In an instant, Krishna cast His glance over them. They boys and calves came to life and looked at one another with great surprise.



Krishna knew that Kaliya had been polluting the waters of the Yamuna River. Now He had seen His own dear friends poisoned. He climbed swiftly to the top of a big Kadamba tree, tightened His belt, flapped His arms like a wrestler, and dove into the water. Krishna had come to earth to protect His devotees, and He was going to do just that.



Splash! Krishna swam about like a playful elephant and made a great noise that disturbed Kaliya.

"Sssssomeone has invaded our home!" he hissed. Kaliya went out to fight. He came before Krishna and saw that He was a beautiful little boy. Krishna's smile was sweet and His features pleasing, but Kaliya felt great anger in his heart. He grabbed Krishna with his mighty coils.

