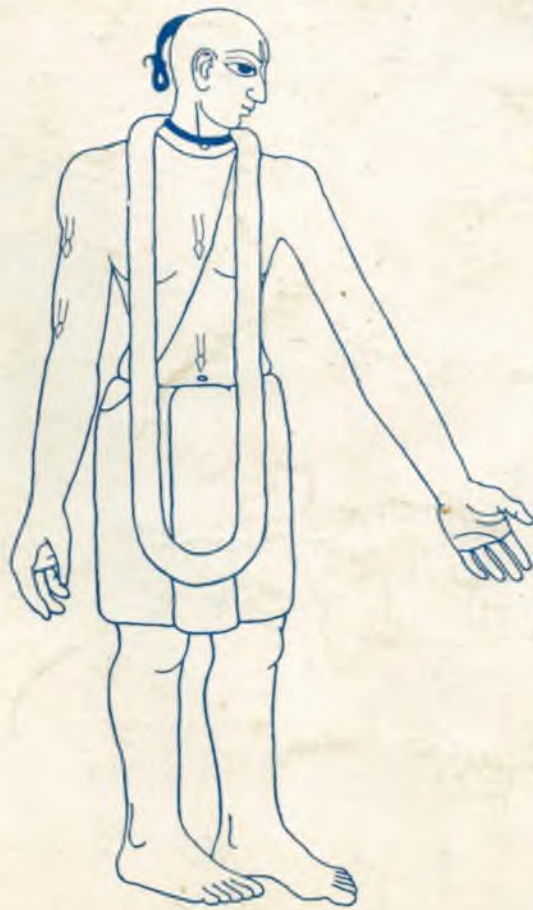




ON THE ROAD TO  
VRINDĀVANA



# ON THE ROAD TO VRNDĀVANA

THE MEDIEVAL BENGALI HISTORY OF ŚRĪ CAITANYA MAHĀPRABHU'S

PILGRIMAGE FROM JAGANNĀTHA PURĪ TO VRNDĀVANA

RECORDED BY KṚṢṆADĀSA KAVIRĀJA GOŚVĀMĪ

TRANSLATED BY HIS DIVINE GRACE A.C. BHAKTIVEDANTA SWAMI PRABHUPĀDA

On His way to Vṛndāvana, Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu passed through the forest of Jhārikhaṇḍa and made all the tigers, elephants, deer and birds dance and chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra. Thus all these animals were overwhelmed by ecstatic love.

All glories to Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu! All glories to Lord Nityānanda! All glories to Advaitacandra! All glories to all the devotees of the Lord!







When autumn arrived, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu decided to go to Vṛndāvana. In a solitary place, He consulted with Rāmānanda Rāya and Svarūpa Dāmodara Gosvāmī.

The Lord requested Rāmānanda Rāya and Svarūpa Dāmodara Gosvāmī to help Him go to Vṛndāvana.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu said, "I shall leave early in the morning and go incognito, taking the road to the forest. I shall go alone and not take anyone with Me.

"If someone wants to follow Me, please stop him. I don't want anyone to go with Me.

"Please give Me your permission with great pleasure and do not be unhappy. If you are happy, I shall be happy on My way to Vṛndāvana."

Upon hearing this, Rāmānanda Rāya and Svarūpa Dāmodara Gosvāmī replied, "Dear Lord, You are completely independent. Since You are not dependent on anyone, You do whatever You desire.

"Dear Lord, kindly hear our one petition. You have already said that You will derive happiness from our happiness. This is Your own statement.

"If You will please accept just one request, we shall be very, very happy.

"Our Lord, please take one very nice brāhmaṇa with You. He will collect alms for You, cook for You, give You prasāda, and carry Your waterpot while traveling.

"When You go through the jungle, there will be no brāhmaṇa available from whom You can accept lunch. Therefore please give permission for at least one pure brāhmaṇa to accompany You."

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu said, "I shall not take any of My associates with Me because if I choose someone, all the others will be unhappy.

"Such a person must be a new man, and he must have a peaceful mind. If I can obtain such a man, I shall agree to take him with Me."

Svarūpa Dāmodara then said, "Here is Balabhadra Bhaṭṭācārya, who has great love for You. He is an honest, learned scholar, and he is advanced in spiritual consciousness.

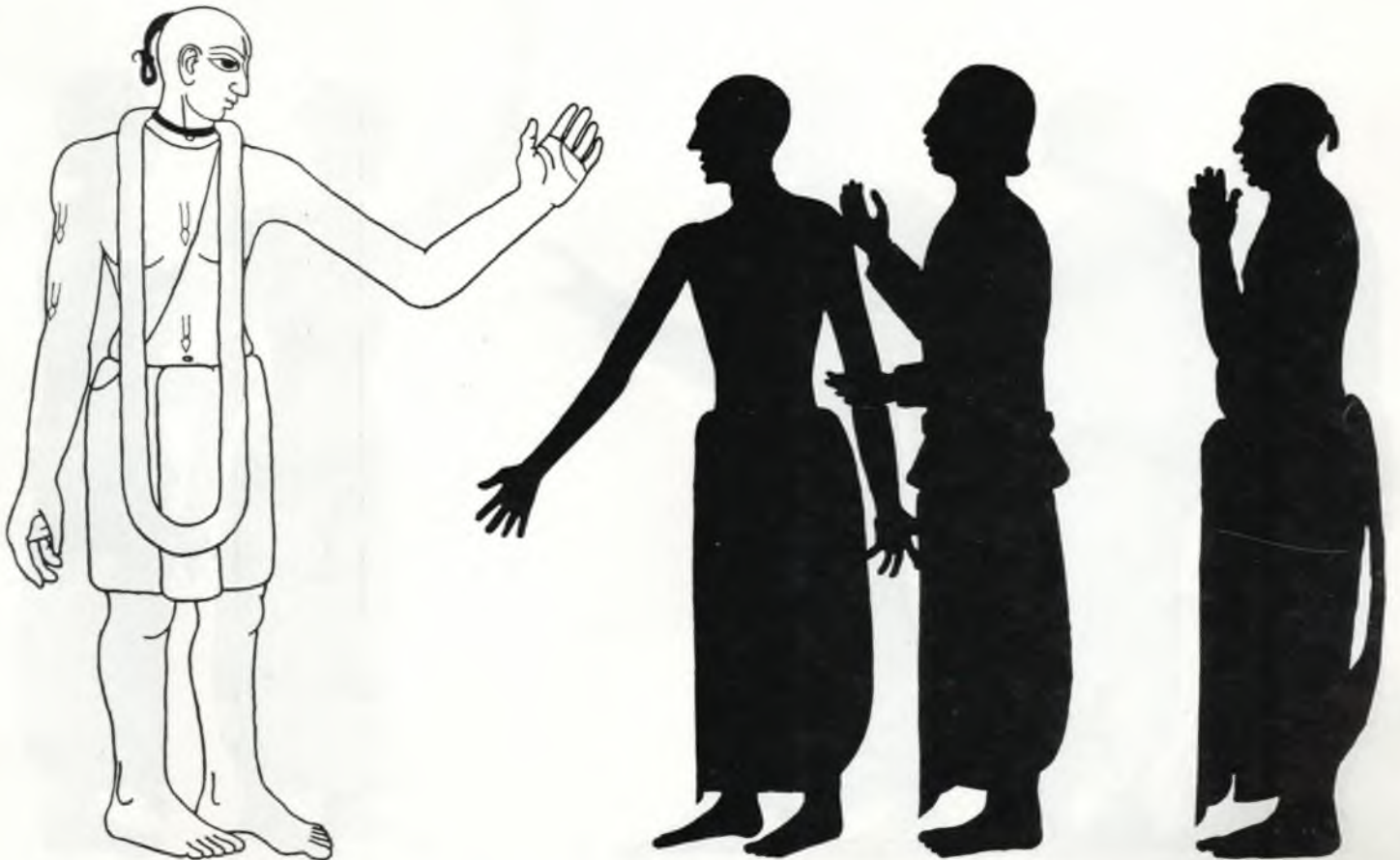
"In the beginning, he came with You from Bengal. It is his desire to see and visit all the holy places of pilgrimage.

"In addition, You may take another brāhmaṇa who would act as a servant en route and make arrangements for Your food.

"If You can also take him with You, we will be very happy. If two people go with You through the jungle, there will certainly be no difficulty or inconvenience.

"The other brāhmaṇa can carry Your cloth and waterpot, and Balabhadra Bhaṭṭācārya will collect alms and cook for You."

Thus Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu accepted the request of Svarūpa Dāmodara Paṇḍita and agreed to take Balabhadra Bhaṭṭācārya with Him.





On the previous night, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu had visited Lord Jagannātha and taken His permission. Now, near the end of night, the Lord got up and started immediately. He was not seen by others.

Because the Lord had departed, the devotees, unable to see Him early in the morning, began to search for Him with great anxiety.

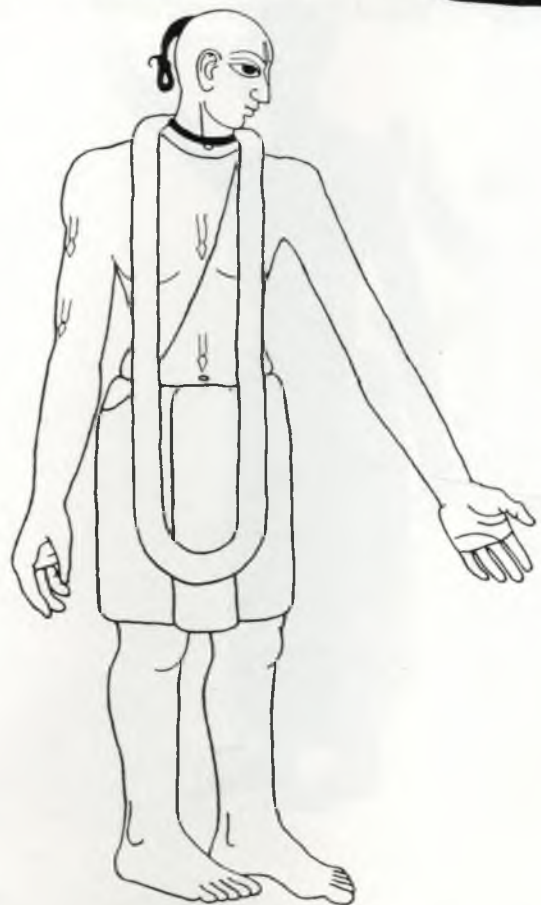
While all the devotees were searching for the Lord, Svarūpa Dāmodara restrained them. Then everyone fell silent, knowing the mind of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.



The Lord abandoned walking on the well-known public road and went instead along a bypass. He thus kept the city of Kaṭaka on His right as He entered the forest.

When the Lord passed through the solitary forest chanting the holy name of Kṛṣṇa, the tigers and elephants, seeing Him, gave way.

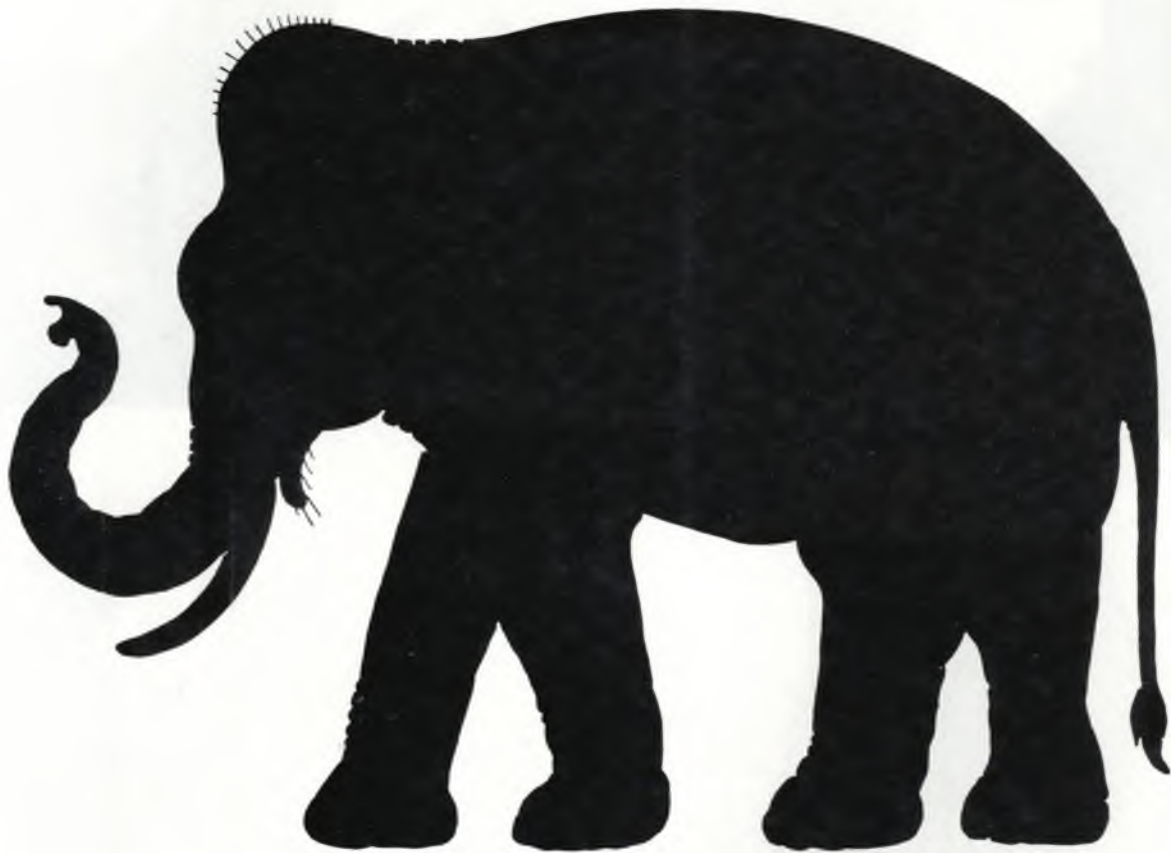






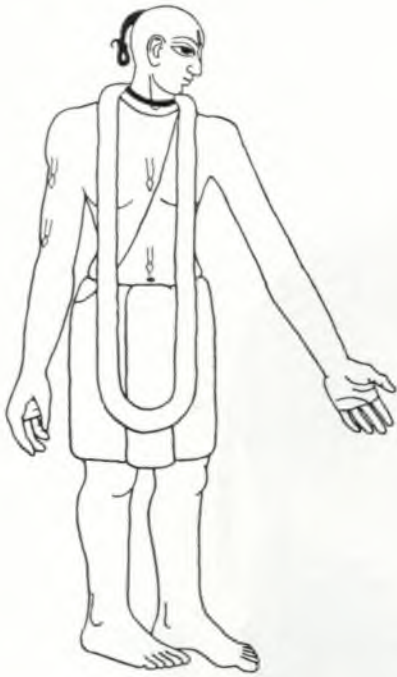
When the Lord passed through the jungle in great ecstasy, packs of tigers, elephants, rhinoceros and boars came, and the Lord passed right through them.

Balabhadra Bhaṭṭācārya was very much afraid to see them, but by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's influence, all the animals stood to one side.







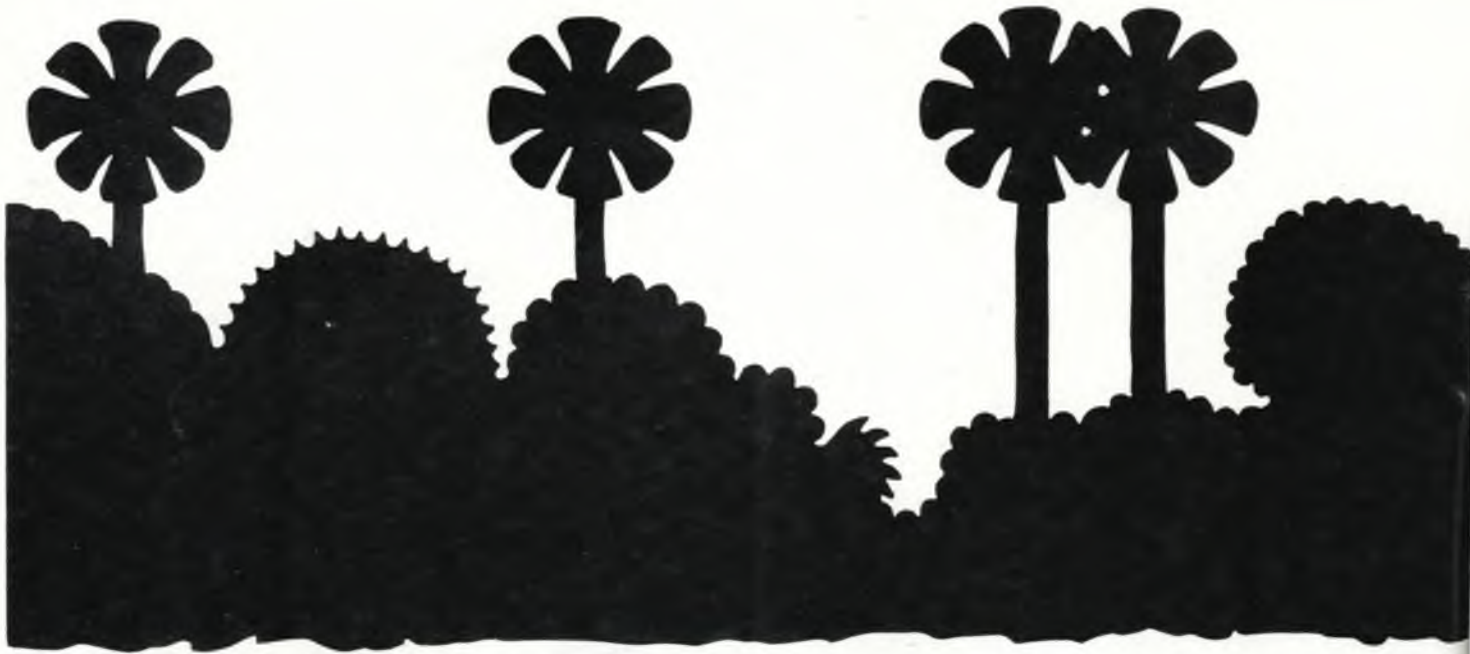


One day a tiger was lying on the path, and Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, walking along the path in ecstatic love, touched the tiger with His feet.

The Lord said, "Chant the holy name of Kṛṣṇa!" The tiger immediately got up and began to dance and chant, "Kṛṣṇa! Kṛṣṇa!"

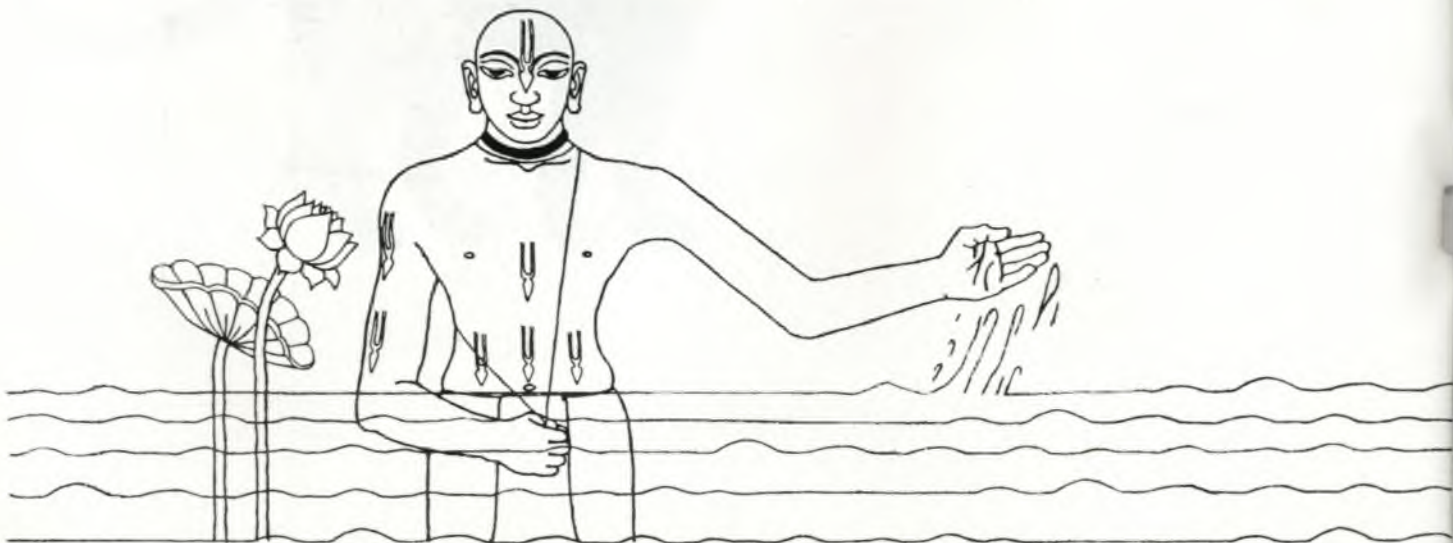


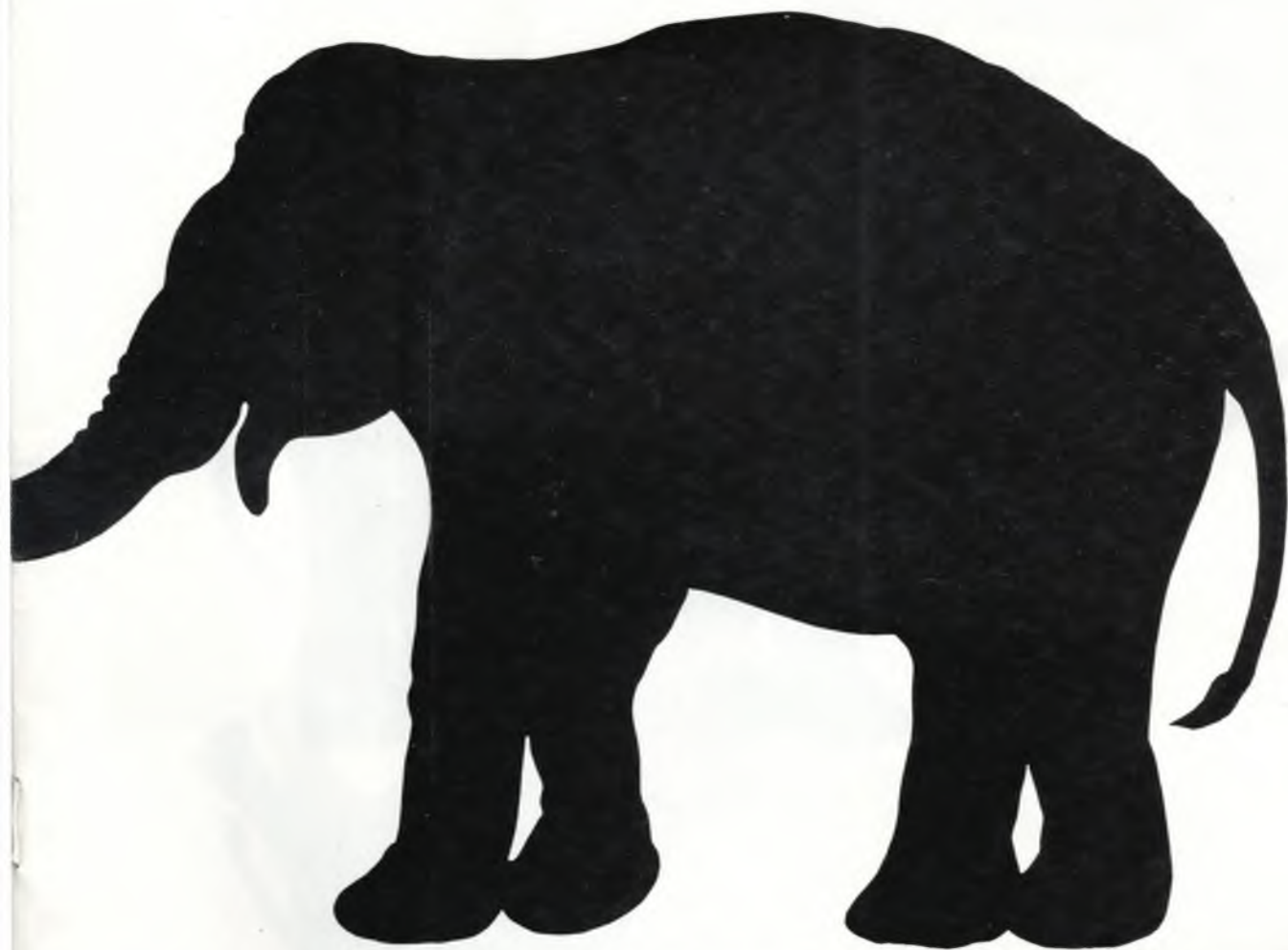
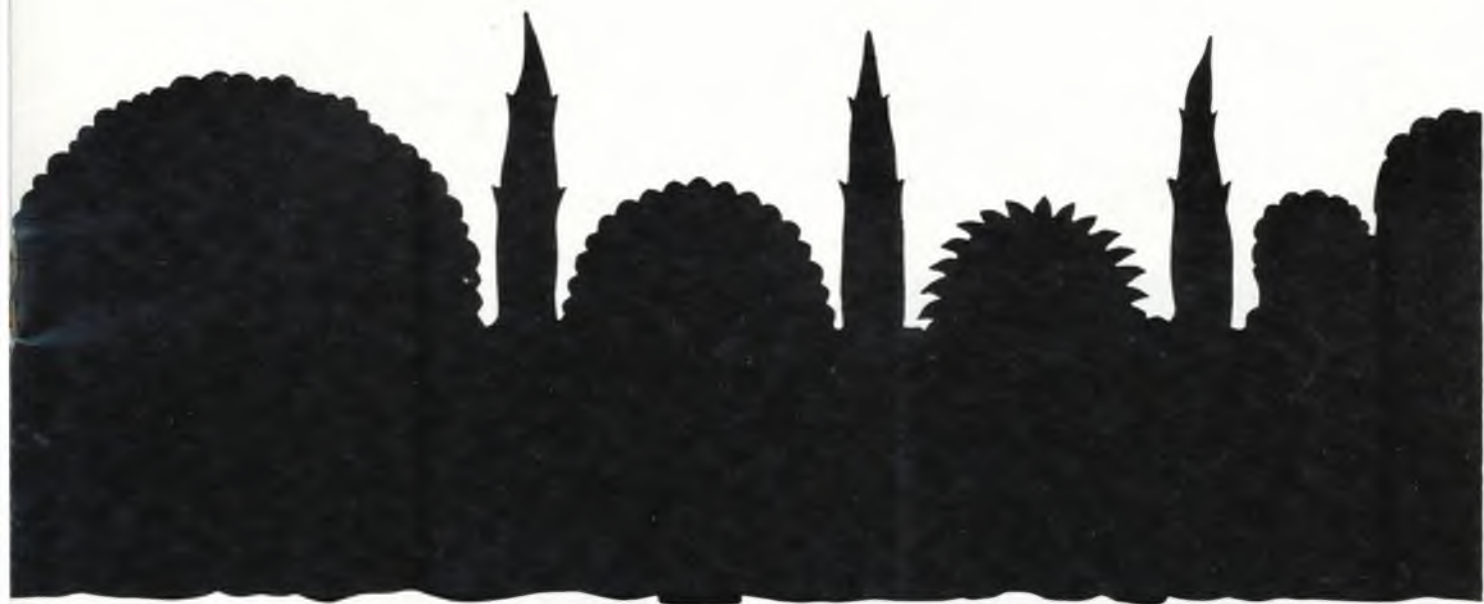




Another day, while Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu was bathing in a river, a herd of maddened elephants came there to drink water.

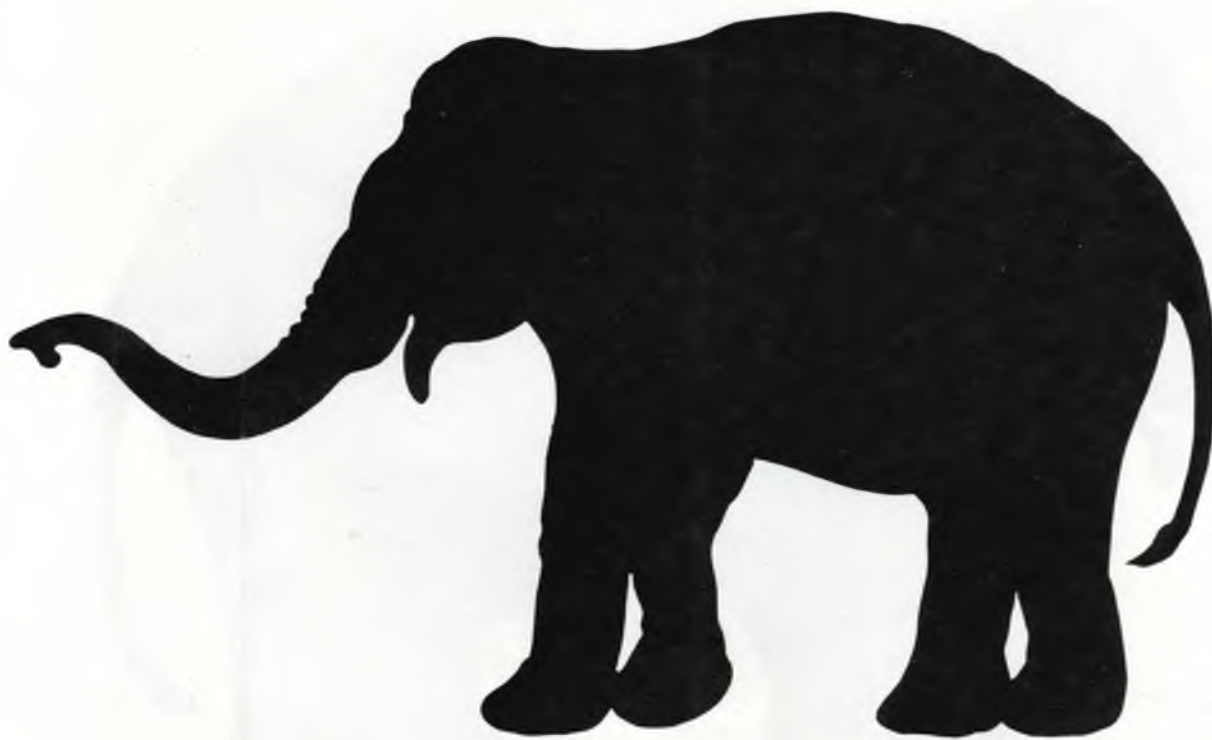
While the Lord was bathing and murmuring the Gāyatrī mantra, the elephants came before Him. The Lord immediately splashed some water on the elephants and asked them to chant the name of Kṛṣṇa.



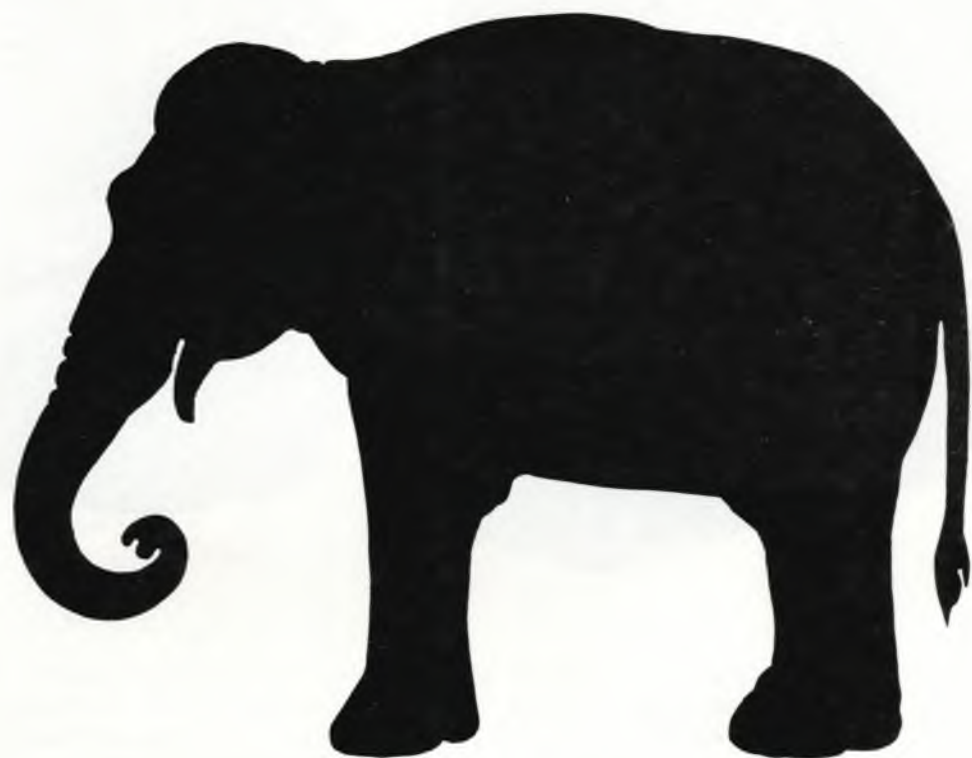


The elephants whose bodies were touched by the water splashed by the Lord began to chant, "Kṛṣṇa! Kṛṣṇa!" and dance and sing in ecstasy.

Some of the elephants fell to the ground, and some screamed in ecstasy. Seeing this, Balabhadra Bhaṭṭācārya was completely astonished.







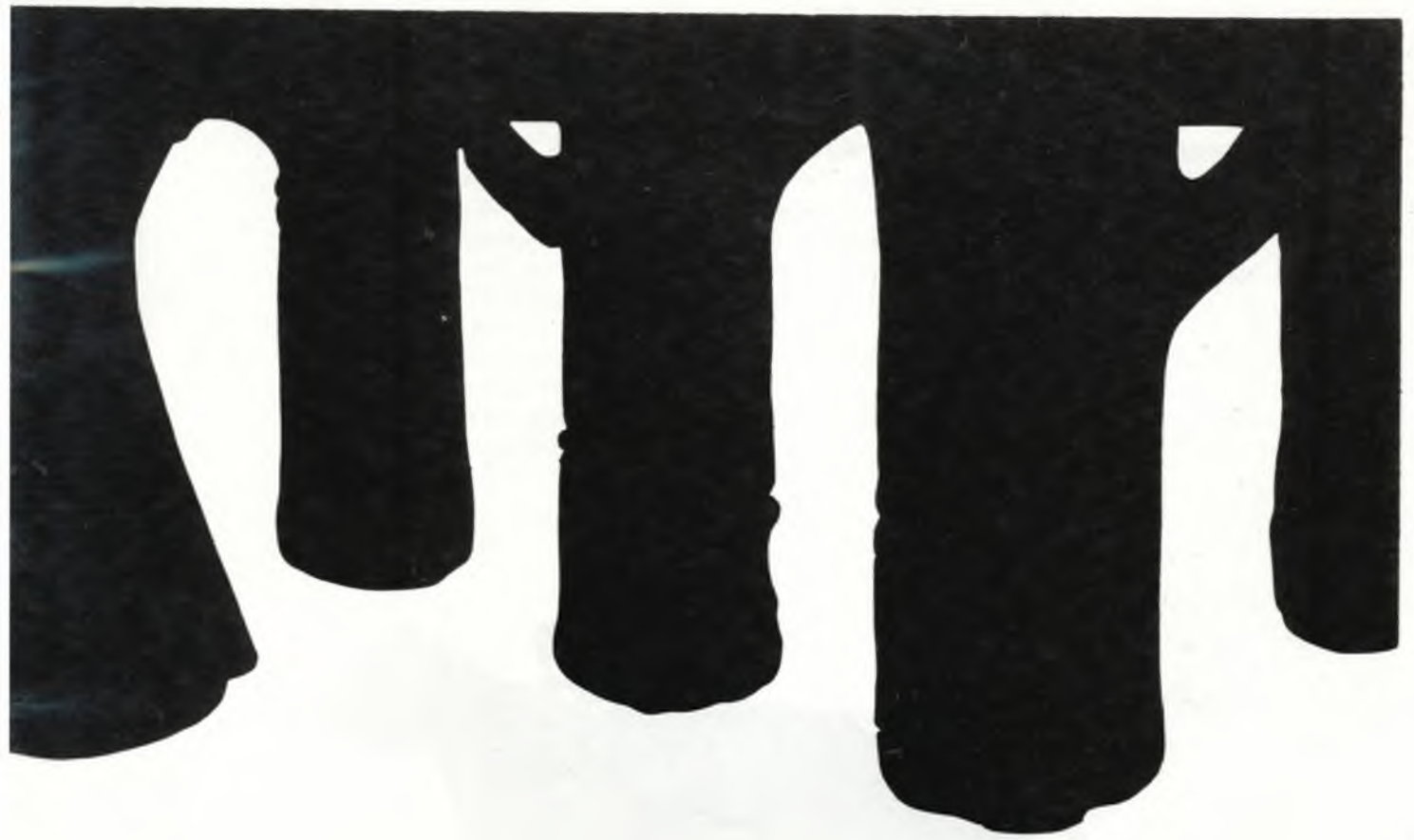


Sometimes Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu chanted very loudly while passing through the jungle. Hearing His sweet voice, all the does came near Him.

Hearing the Lord's great vibration, all the does followed Him left and right. While reciting a verse with great curiosity, the Lord patted them.

"Blessed are all these foolish deer because they have approached the son of Mahārāja Nanda, who is gorgeously dressed and is playing on His flute. Indeed, both the does and the bucks worship the Lord with looks of love and affection."

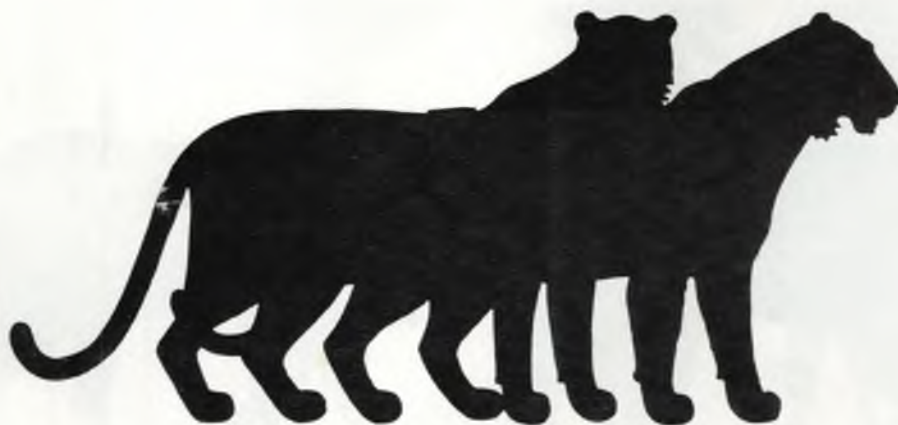






While Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu was passing through the jungle, five or seven tigers came. Joining the deer, the tigers began to follow the Lord.

Seeing the tigers and deer following Him, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu immediately remembered the land of Vṛndāvana. He then began to recite a verse describing the transcendental quality of Vṛndāvana.



“Vṛndāvana is the transcendental abode of the Lord. There is no hunger, anger or thirst there. Though naturally inimical, both human beings and fierce animals live together there in transcendental friendship.”

When Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu said, “Chant Kṛṣṇa! Kṛṣṇa!” the tigers and deer began to dance and chant, “Kṛṣṇa!”

When all the tigers and does danced and jumped, Balabhadra Bhaṭṭācārya saw them and was struck with wonder.

Indeed, the tigers and deer began to embrace one another, and, touching mouths, they began to kiss.

When Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu saw all this fun, He began to smile. Finally He left the animals and continued on His way.







*Hare Krishna Hare Krishna  
Krishna Krishna Hare Hare  
Hare Rama Hare Rama  
Rama Rama Hare Hare*