



**Padayatra
ADVENTURE**

DIARY OF A YOUNG DEVOTEE

**COLOURING
BOOK**

for Children of All Ages

by Shyam Priya dasi



*Nama om visnu-padaya krsna-presthaya bhuta-
srimate bhaktivedanta-svamin iti namine
Namaste sarasvate deve gaura-vani-pracarine
nirviseśa-sunyavadi-pascatyā-deśa-tarīne*

My obeisances and gratitude to
H.H. Lokanath Swami, captain of Padayatra worldwide,
by whose grace I have been able to develop my artistic abili-
ties in the service of His Divine Grace Srila Prabhupada.

My sincere thanks to all those devotees who
have made the wonderful experience of Padayatra
available to all of us around the world, by way of
participation, organisation or finance.

Sincere thanks to:

Sakshi Gopala das for the storyline and his invaluable advice,
technical and visionary. His ideas and criticism
have made the book what it is today...

...to Bhogini dasi, who re-worked the story, bringing new life to
the pictures through her skill with words...

...to Shyama devi dasi for her research and encouragement...

...and thanks to all those devotees and friends who
facilitated my work in various ways.



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A COLORING BOOK for
Children of All Ages

by Syam Priya dasi

THIS BOOK BELONGS TO

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August 2nd

We were sitting around in the cowfield at the Manor today.
Even the trees seemed bored.

Then Gaura discovered an advert in the newsletter— it was an invitation
to join Padayatra in Spain this summer.

Gaura and Madhava were into it straight away and I am now as well!

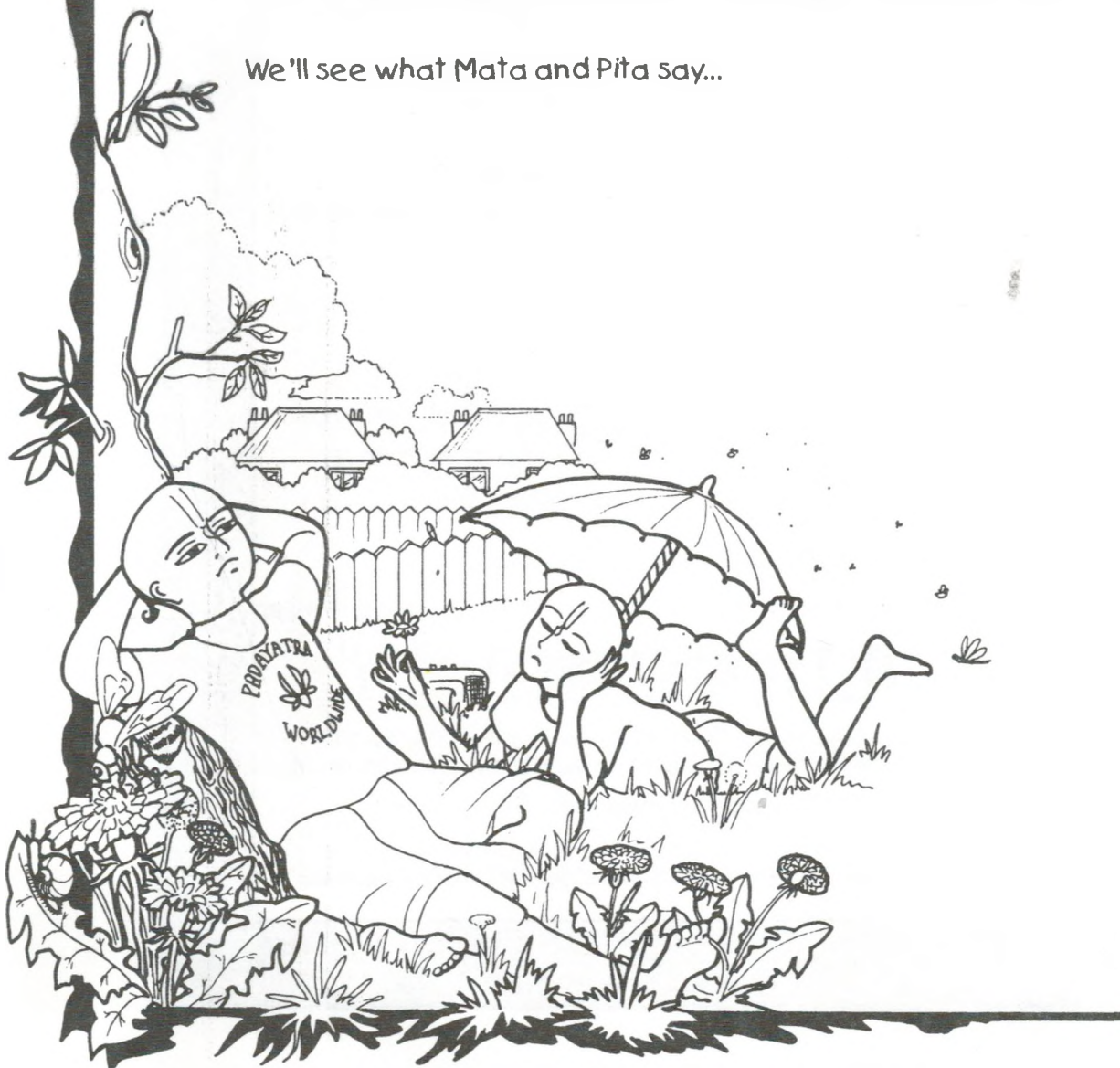
Just think—a whole month of camping out under the stars at night!

I'm not so sure about all that walking and preaching,
but the kirtan and chanting will be great.

And prasadam distribution could be *real fun*.

I love the idea of travelling with the deities on a cart pulled by the oxen.

We'll see what Mata and Pita say...





"Hey kids, who wants to go on Padayatra?"

August 3rd

Surprise of all surprises — THEY AGREED !!!

Pita's friend in Spain, Prabhu Rupa is also going on Padayatra and he actually said we can go with them.

This is going to be such an adventure—the three of us without Mata and Pita.

Gaura and Madhava are packing already.

Summer clothes for the day, warm clothes for the chilly mornings.

Sandals, tilak, towel. Madhava's taking his karatals. Gaura wants to take his drum, but I think that we haven't got room with all the sleeping bags and the tent as well.

August 9th

Hey! It's really HAPPENING!

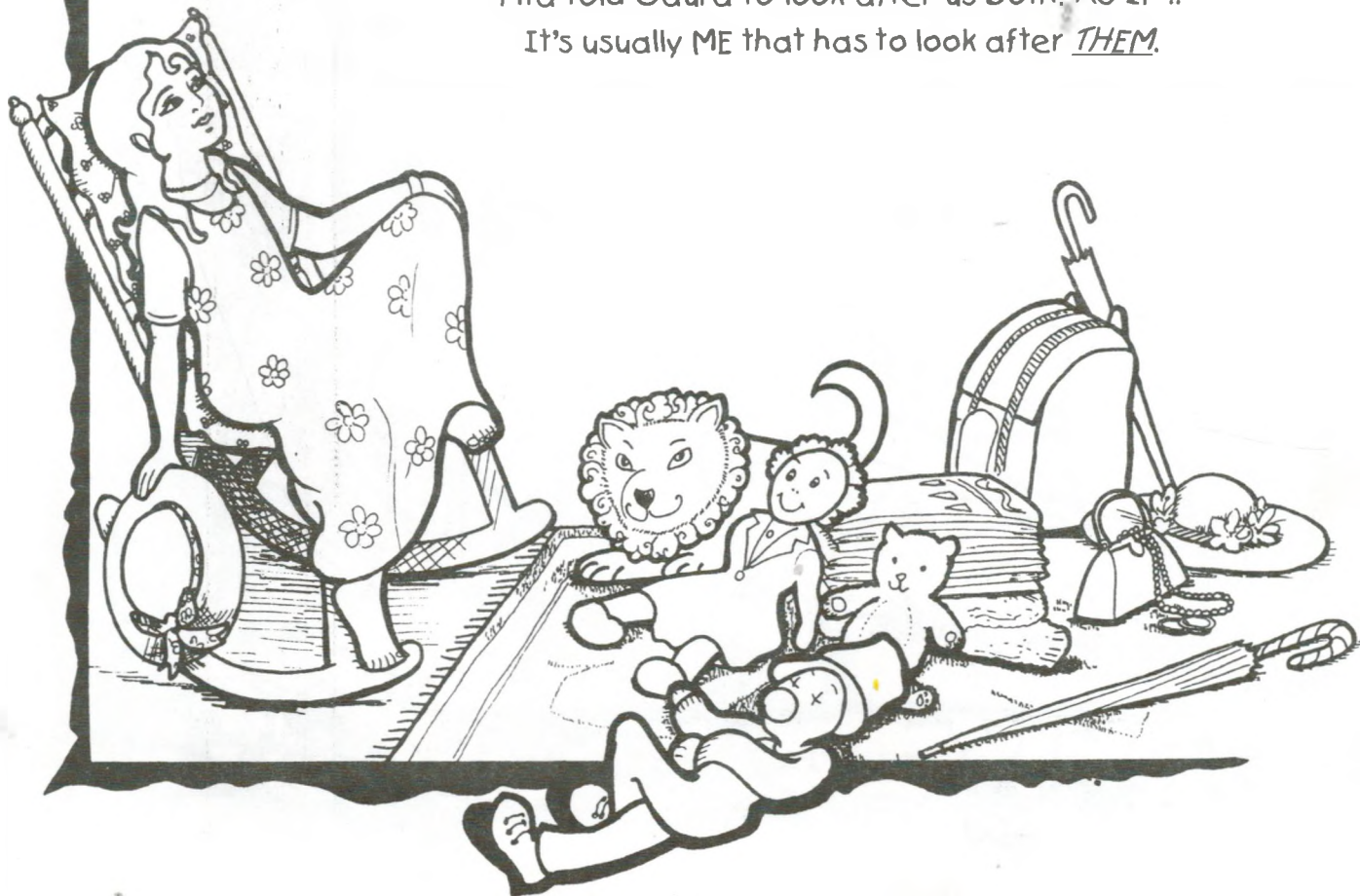
Pita has booked the tickets.

I'm going to miss Mata.

She is always taking such good care of us.

Pita told Gaura to look after us both. AS IF !!

It's usually ME that has to look after THEM.





*To Mata and Pita we say our goodbyes
There's love in their voices and tears in their eyes*

August 9th (continued)

The plane was pretty scary during take-off.

It roared and shook like a monster and I really felt like I was being pushed back into my seat.

As the plane swept up into the sky, high above the fields and roads, Gaura pointed out the M25 ringroad, but I was busy looking for the Manor, which I didn't see.

Madhava was all over the place with excitement:

"Look, there's the River Thames and there's Big Ben! They're so *small*. Oh, everything's so small, it looks like a map."

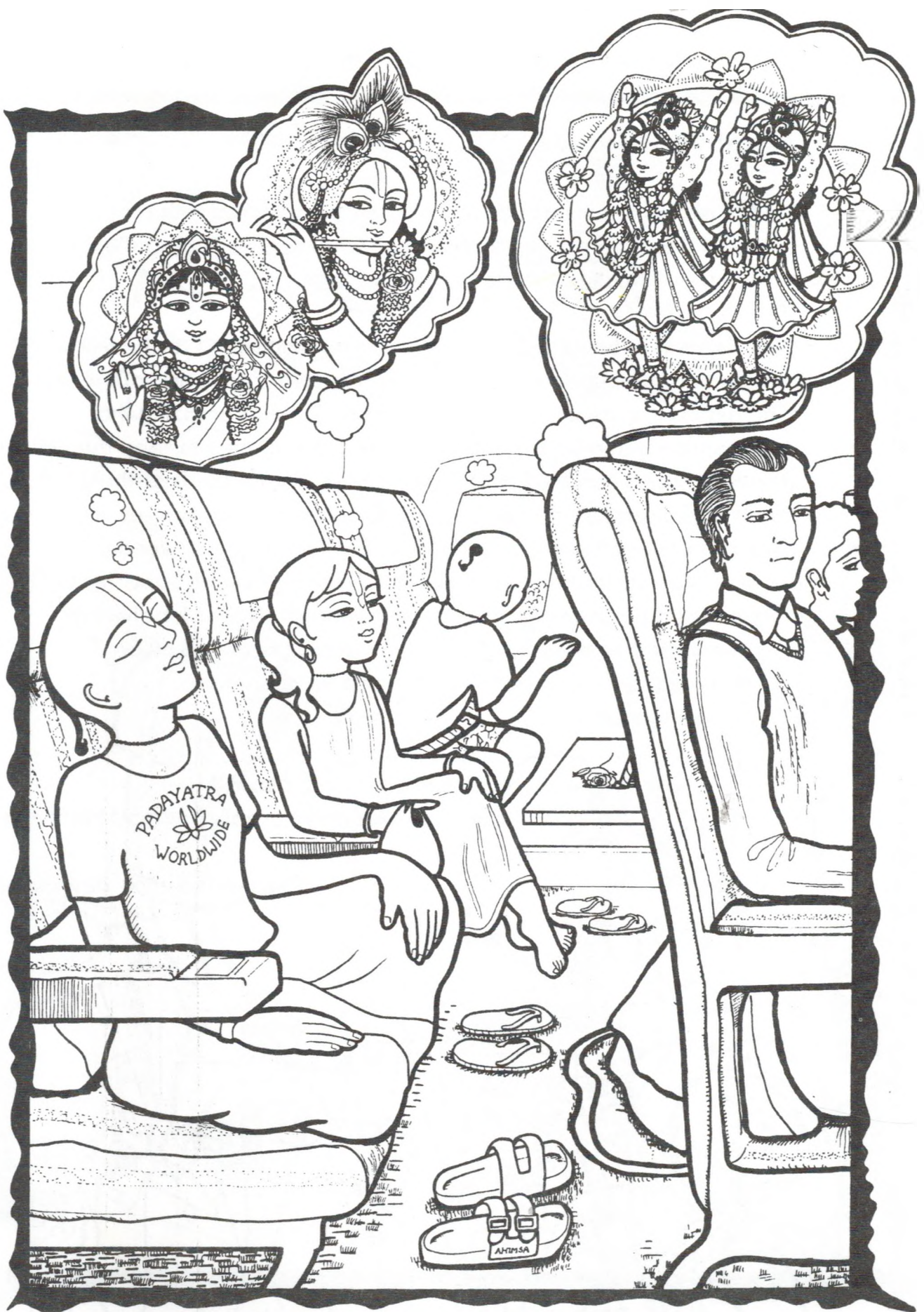
Then we went through a cloud and it went all white outside the window and that was the end of that.

Still the plane kept climbing and later, some time after we levelled out, the captain made an announcement about some air turbulence ahead.

"Nothing serious" he said, but it felt pretty serious. We were all bumped around for a while.

I have to say, I did pick up my bead bag just to be on the safe side.





*From high up in the sky we look down on the ground
When the flight gets too bumpy—we chant some good rounds*

August 9th (continued)

Madrid airport seemed huge after being cramped up in that plane. We followed the other passengers through what seemed like endless corridors and eventually collected all our luggage.

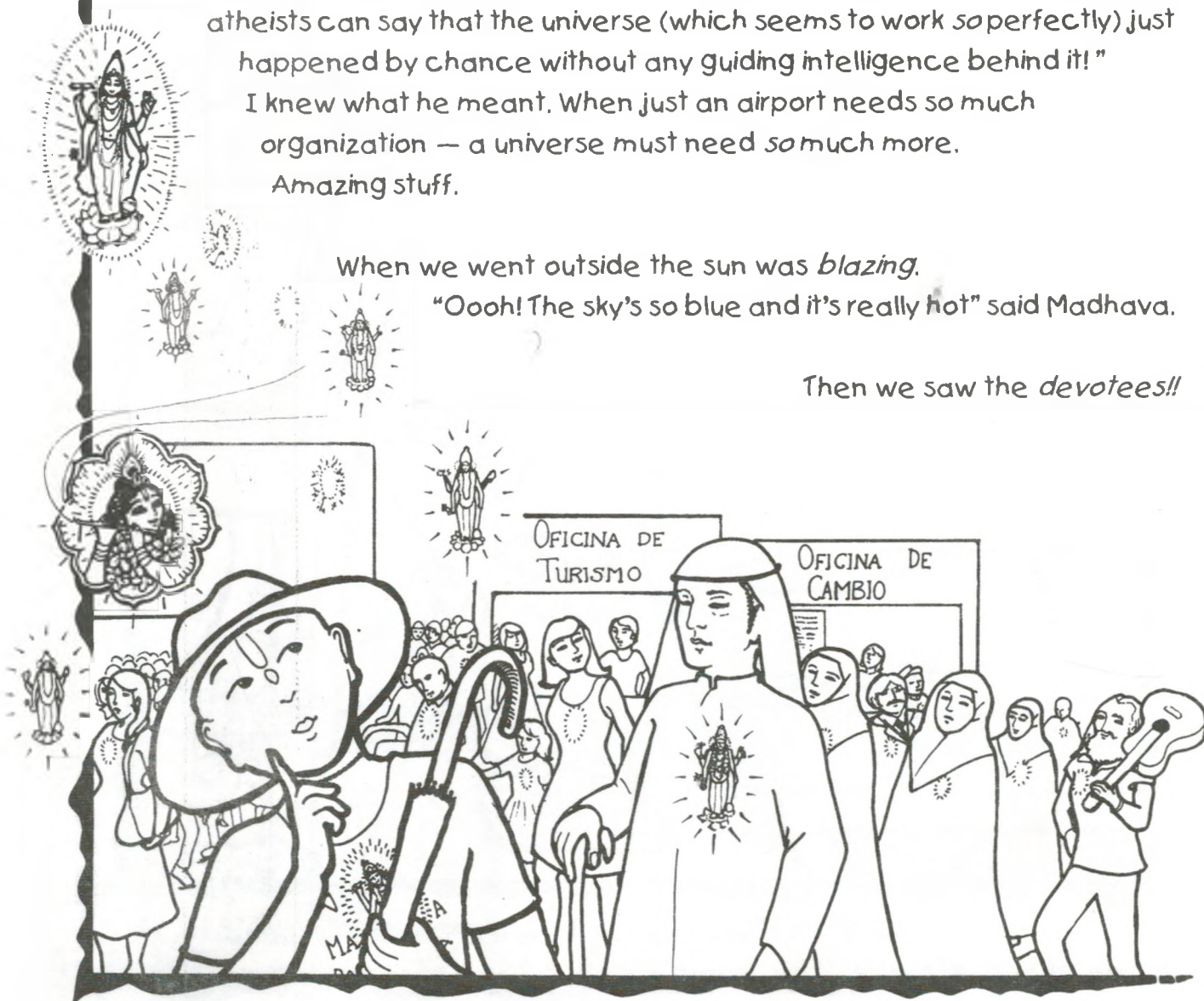
Gaura was in a thoughtful mood. He was thinking about all the millions of people of all colours, shapes and sizes from different parts of the world. "The airport is quite a mixing pot" he said, "and it's amazing the organization that must be going on behind the scenes to keep the airport running. There's hundreds of planes taking off and landing, there's thousands of passengers and all their bags, coming and going—all on different planes, twenty four hours a day. It makes me wonder how the atheists can say that the universe (which seems to work so perfectly) just happened by chance without any guiding intelligence behind it!"

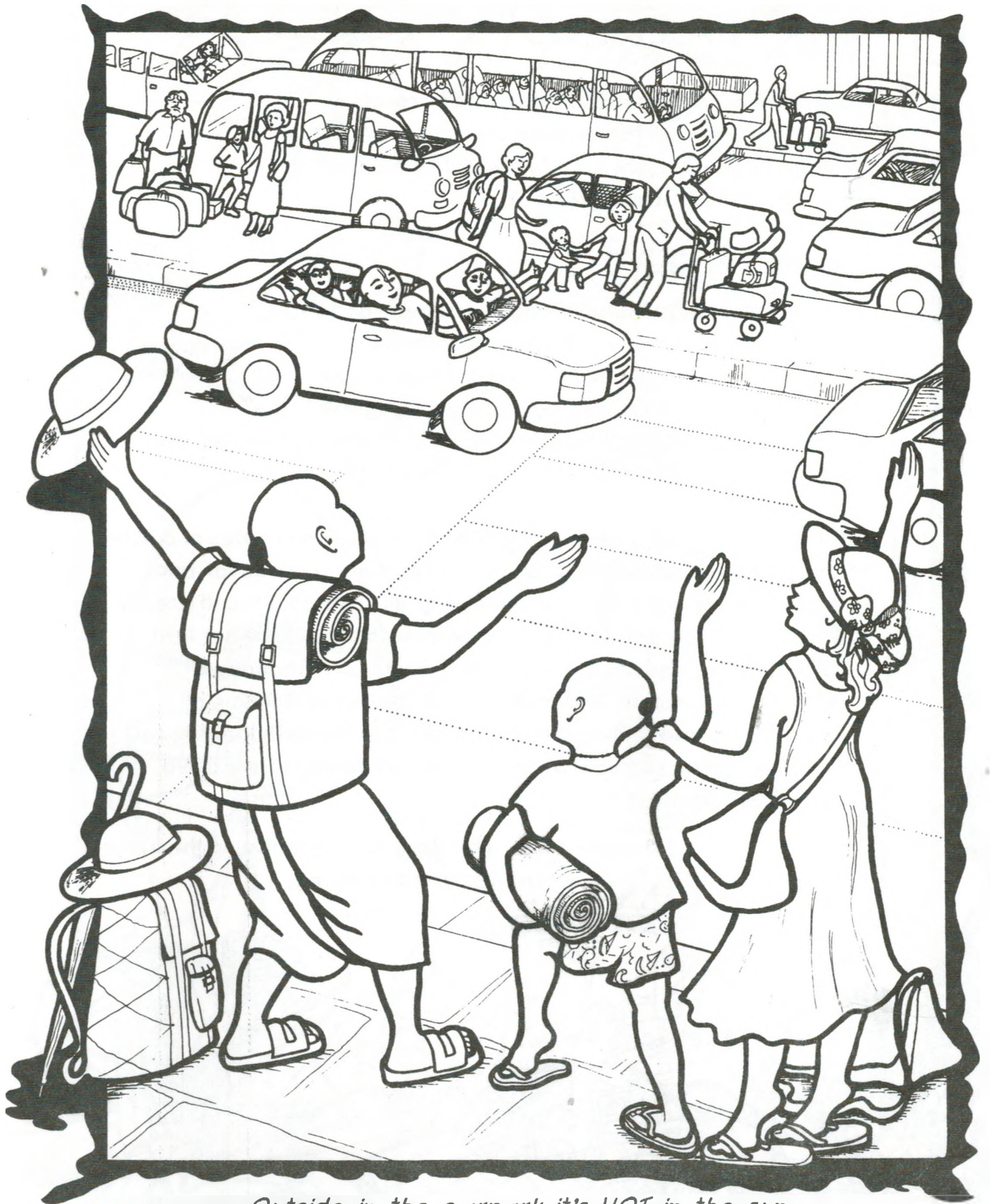
I knew what he meant. When just an airport needs so much organization — a universe must need so much more.
Amazing stuff.

When we went outside the sun was *blazing*.

"Oooh! The sky's so blue and it's really hot" said Madhava.

Then we saw the *devotees*!!





*Outside in the carpark it's HOT in the sun,
And here come the devotees—we're heading for fun!*

August 9th (continued)

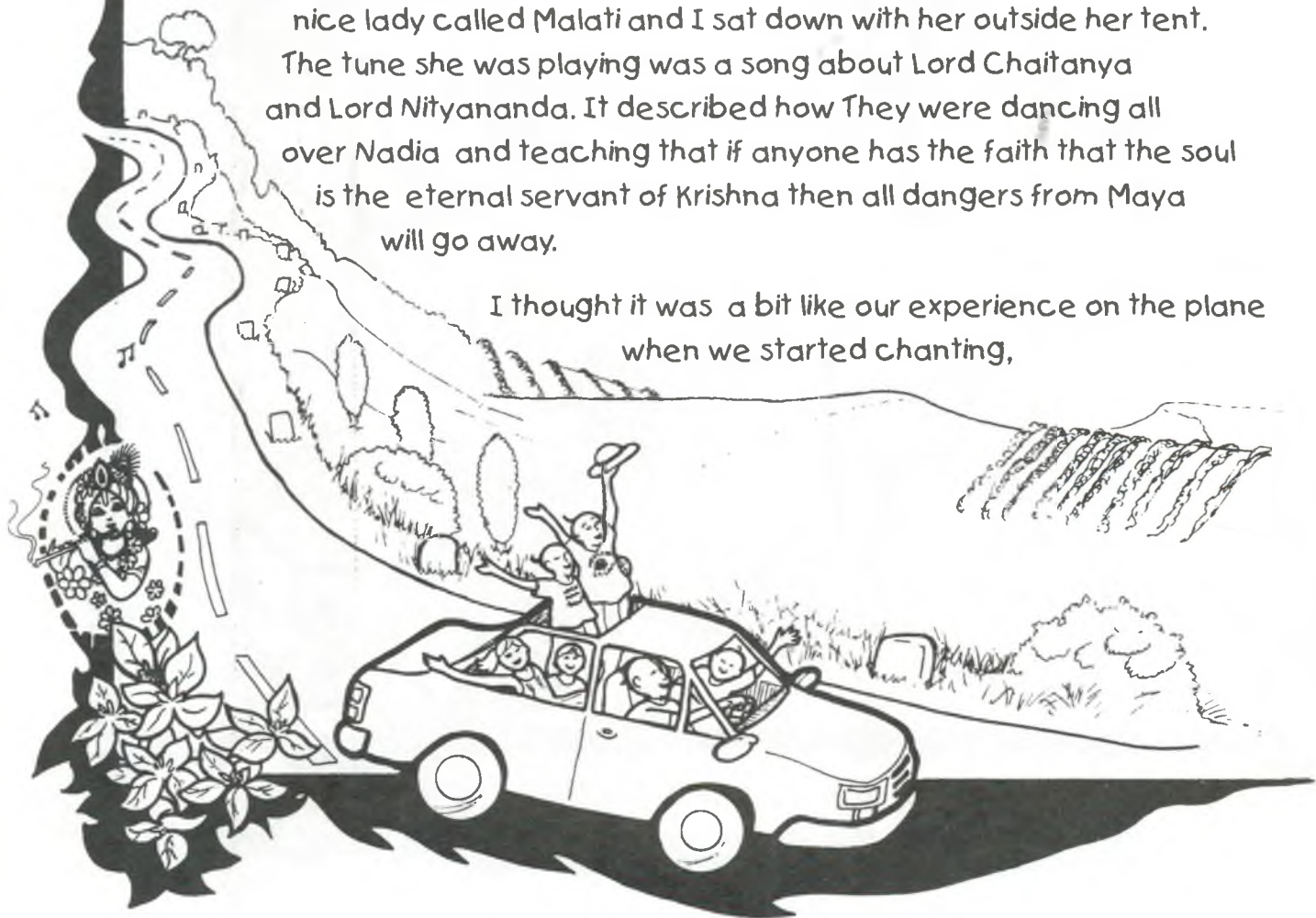
There were our smiling friends amidst the crowds of hundreds of unknown faces. Soon we were speeding off down the road out of the city towards the distant mountains. It took about two hours.

Boiling hot in the sun.

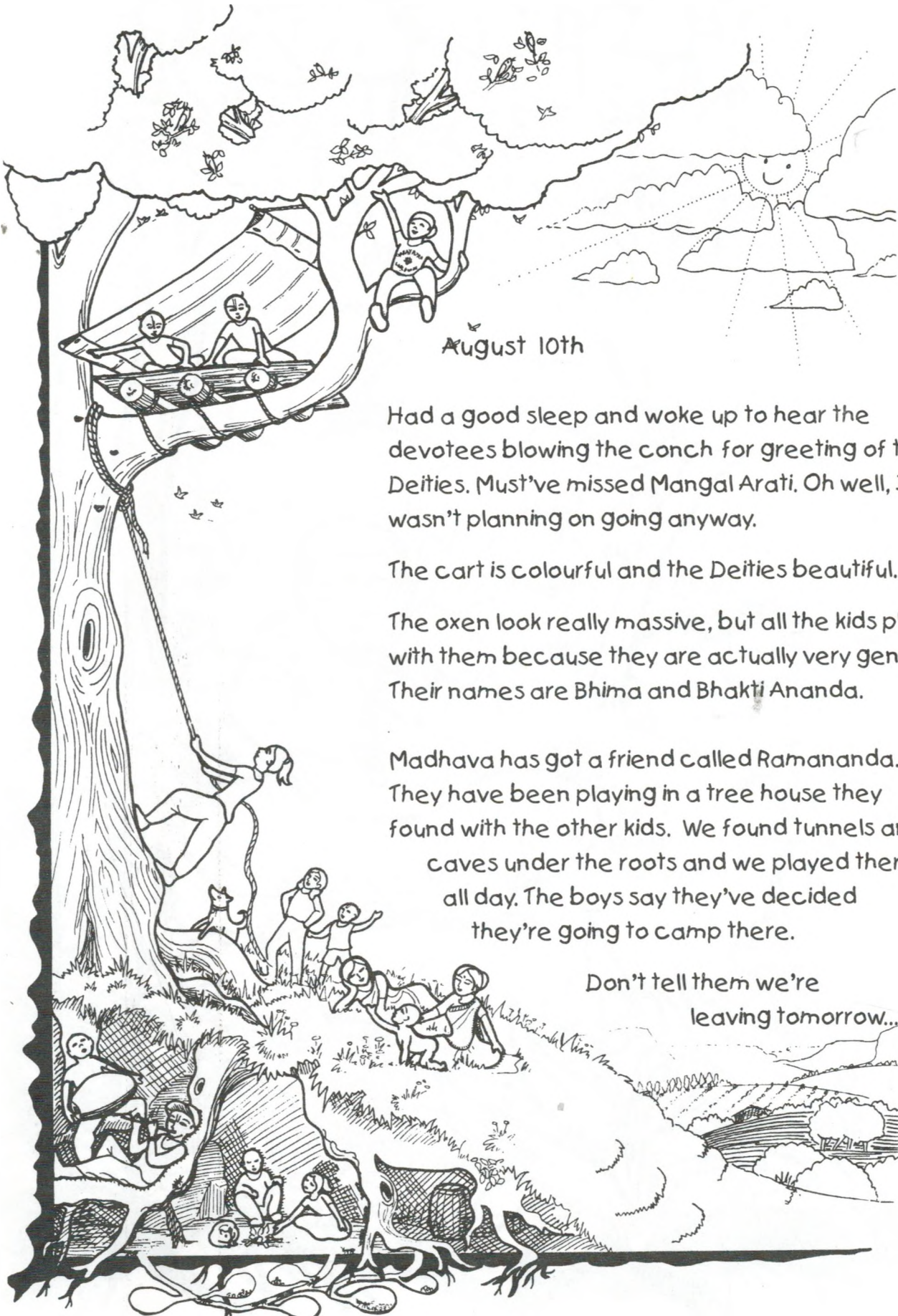
The campsite is beautiful with long grass, trees and freshwater springs. We found a nice spot for our tent, in the shade of the trees. It was a bit of a laugh trying to put the tent up. Well, Gaura wasn't laughing, but Madhava and I *certainly* were. Anyway, Madhava soon got lost (as requested) with a kid about his age—and a dog.

THEN, from out of the woods echoed the beautifully soft notes of a flute. I followed the sound like the gopis must have done in Vrindavan and soon discovered that it wasn't Krishna after all. Instead, I found a really nice lady called Malati and I sat down with her outside her tent. The tune she was playing was a song about Lord Chaitanya and Lord Nityananda. It described how They were dancing all over Nadia and teaching that if anyone has the faith that the soul is the eternal servant of Krishna then all dangers from Maya will go away.

I thought it was a bit like our experience on the plane when we started chanting,







August 10th

Had a good sleep and woke up to hear the devotees blowing the conch for greeting of the Deities. Must've missed Mangal Arati. Oh well, I wasn't planning on going anyway.

The cart is colourful and the Deities beautiful.

The oxen look really massive, but all the kids play with them because they are actually very gentle. Their names are Bhima and Bhakti Ananda.

Madhava has got a friend called Ramananda. They have been playing in a tree house they found with the other kids. We found tunnels and caves under the roots and we played there all day. The boys say they've decided they're going to camp there.

Don't tell them we're
leaving tomorrow...



August 10th

(continued)

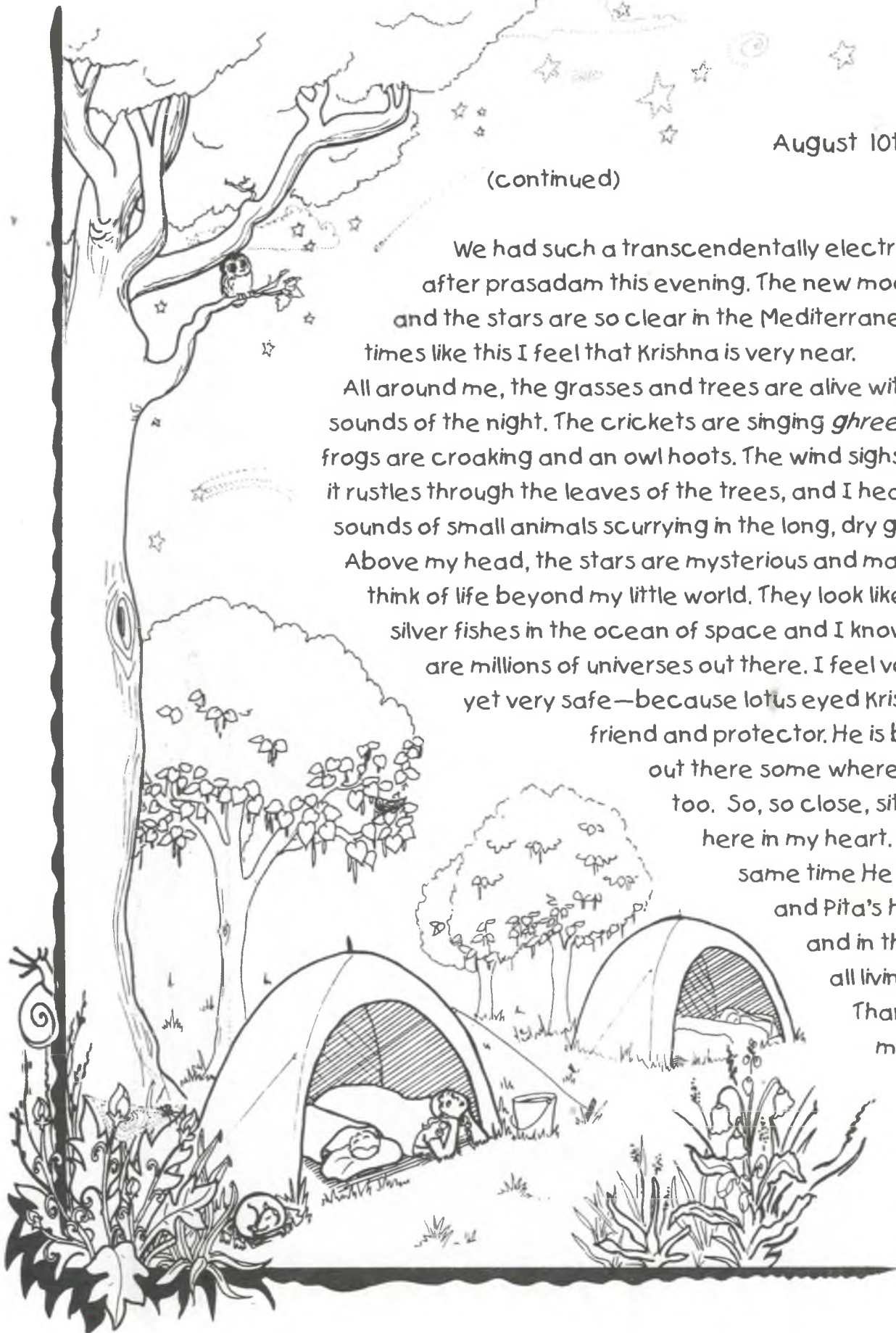
We had such a transcendently electric kirtan after prasadam this evening. The new moon is bright and the stars are so clear in the Mediterranean sky. At times like this I feel that Krishna is very near.

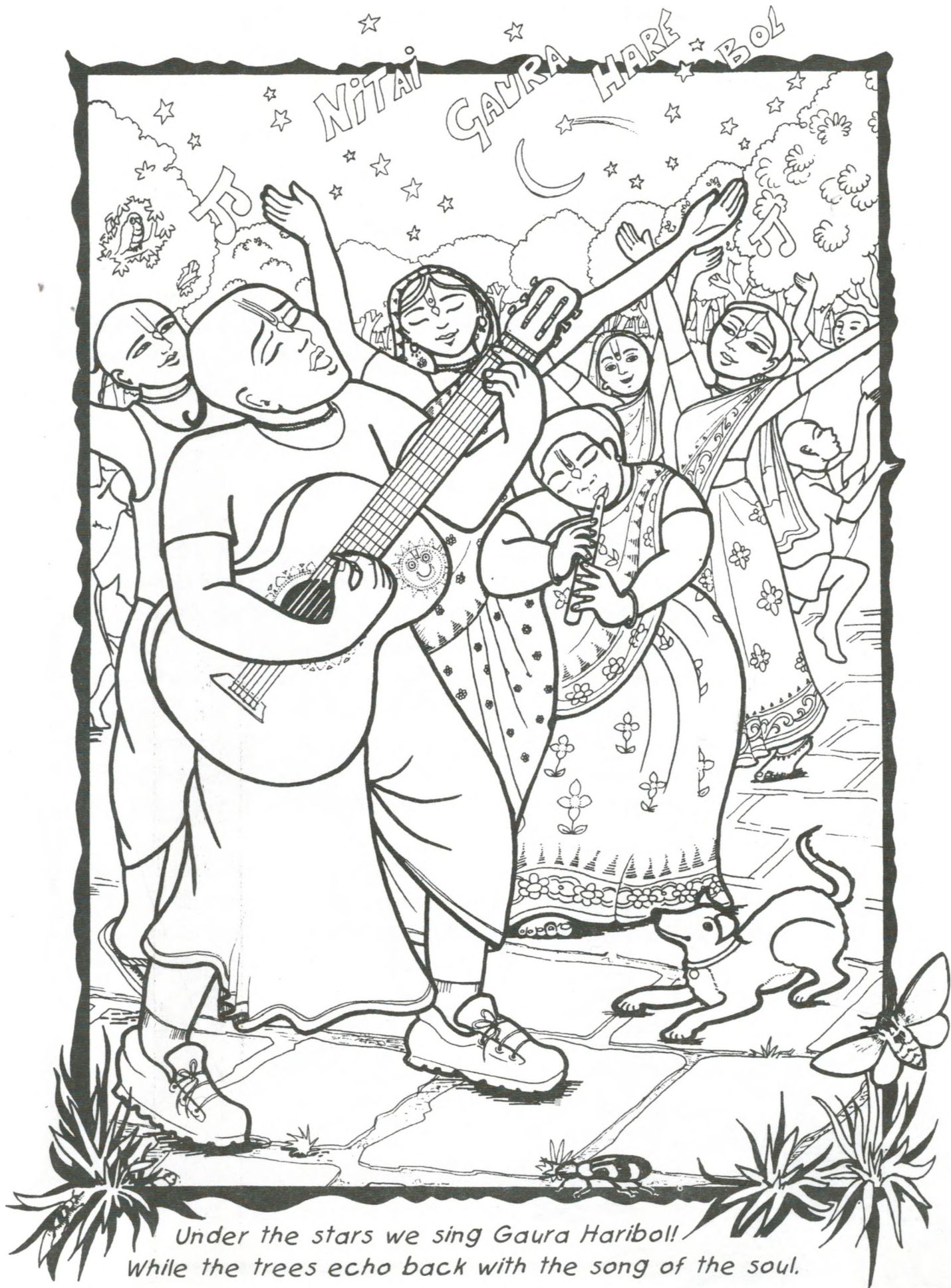
All around me, the grasses and trees are alive with the sounds of the night. The crickets are singing *ghree ghree*, frogs are croaking and an owl hoots. The wind sighs gently as it rustles through the leaves of the trees, and I hear the sounds of small animals scurrying in the long, dry grass.

Above my head, the stars are mysterious and make me think of life beyond my little world. They look like spinning silver fishes in the ocean of space and I know there are millions of universes out there. I feel very small, yet very safe—because lotus eyed Krishna is my friend and protector. He is beyond, out there some where, but close too. So, so close, sitting right here in my heart. And at the same time He is in Mata's and Pita's heart too and in the heart of all living things.

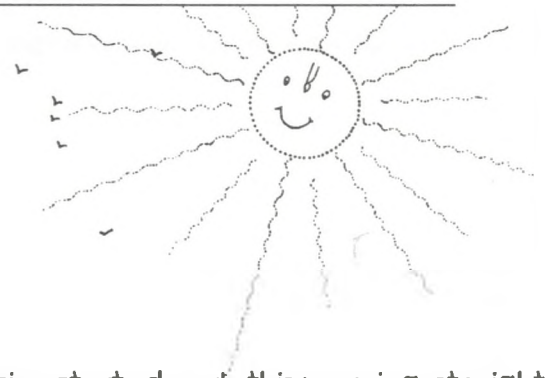
Thank you so much

Krishna,
thank you
for the
beauty
of Your
creation.





*Under the stars we sing Gaura Haribol!
While the trees echo back with the song of the soul.*



August 11th

The Padayatra procession started early this morning, straight after class and breakfast prasadam. We had to take down all the tents and pack them in the van along with everyone's luggage. It's really hot— I'm so glad I brought my hat. The countryside is green and hilly. We chant all day as we are walking. Madhava got a bit tired so we rode on the back of the cart. The simplicity of this life-style seems to be refreshing my soul.

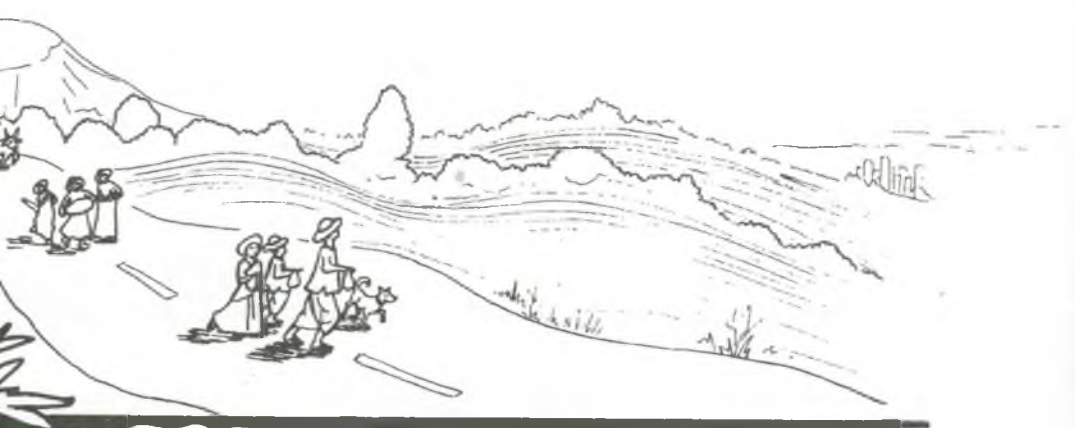
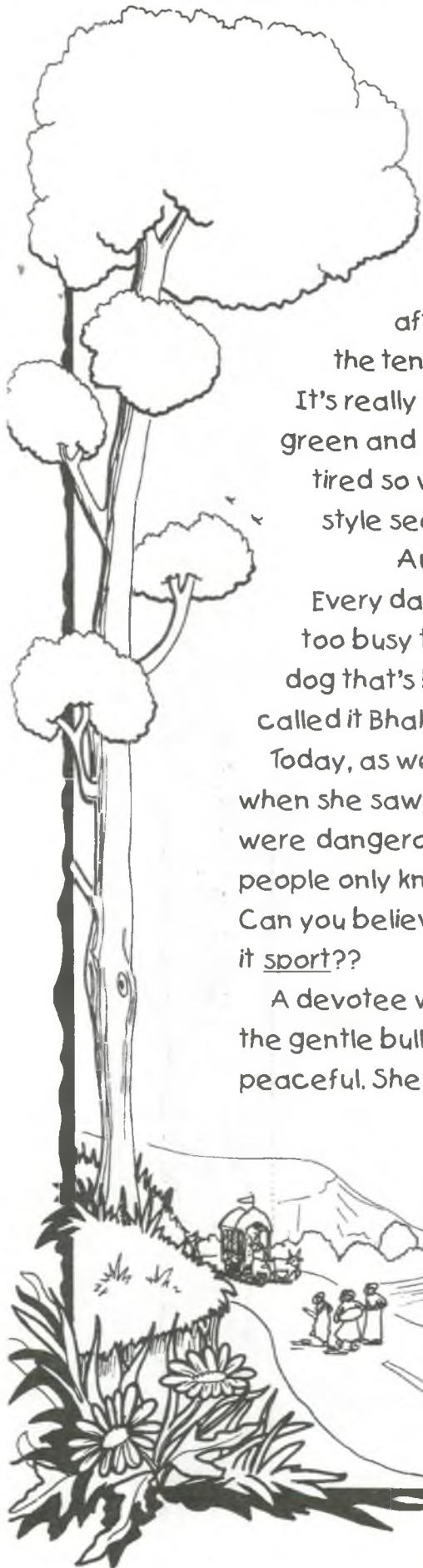
August 14th

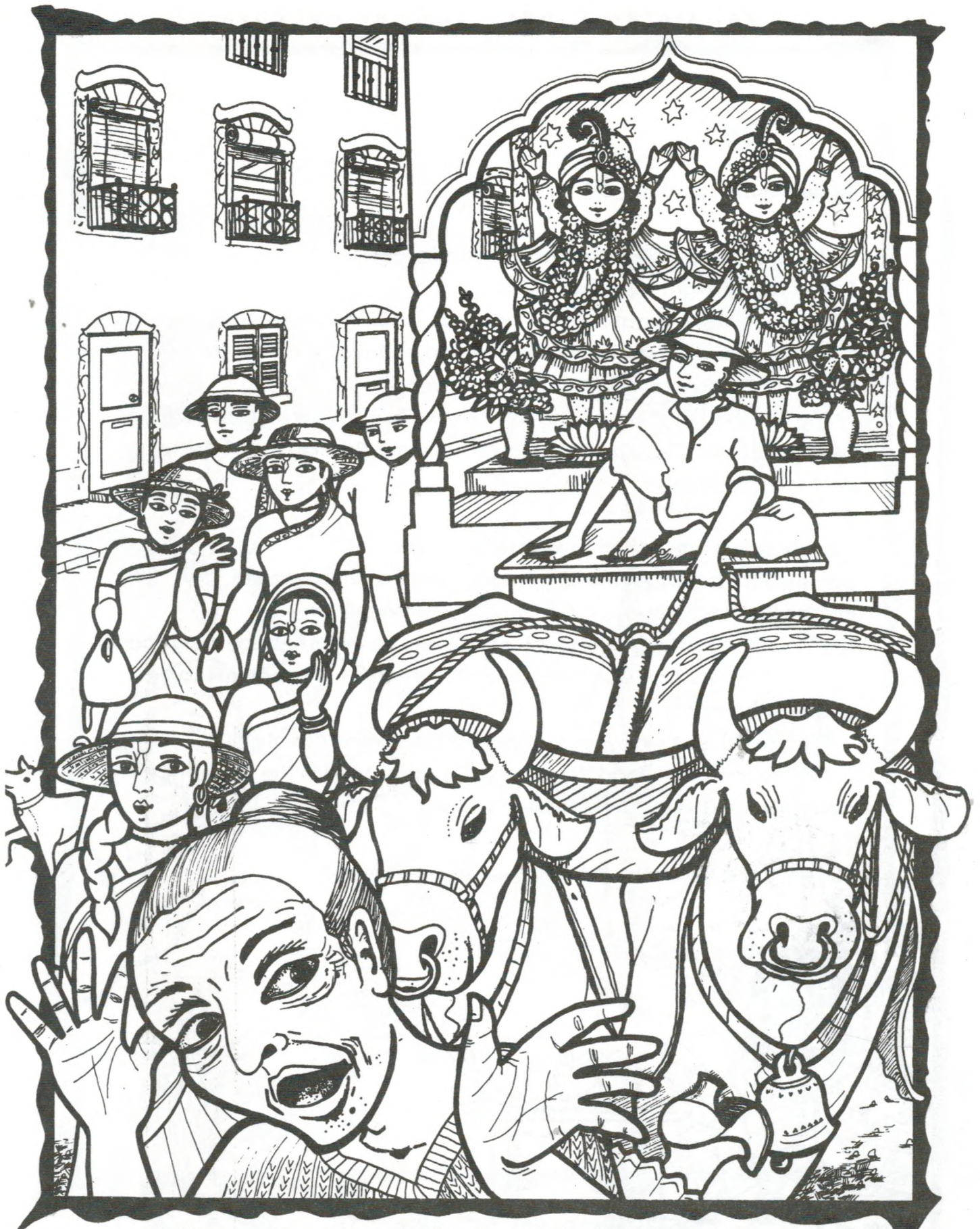
Every day we walk many miles and chant as we go. I have been too busy to fill in my diary. Madhava has found a new companion—a dog that's been following him for the last three days. The boys have called it Bhakta Perro—which means devotee dog!

Today, as we walked through a town, one old lady started to scream when she saw the bulls. They took her by surprise and she thought they were dangerous. *What a commotion!* Ramananda says that in Spain people only know bulls as fierce because they are provoked for sport. Can you believe it, they kill bulls in front of big crowds of people and call it sport??

A devotee was able to calm the lady down and she made friends with the gentle bulls. I gave her prasadam and she became happy and peaceful. She called me: "*cerrida ninya chicita*"— dear child.

Isn't that sweet?





*At the sight of the oxen she's off down the street—
will she calm down if I give her a sweet?*

August 14th (continued)

We're in a nice place with trees for shade.

I think today might be Sunday.

Anyway we had a great feast of samosas, cauliflower pakoras, sweetballs, sweet rice and a big fruit salad. Who said Padayatra is austere?

"This prasadam tastes like it's from heaven."

"Better than that, it comes from Goloka" said Gaura, "because it's been offered to Gaura Nitai." Gaura is always thinking, but it certainly did taste fantastic.

But where we were sitting was pretty rough.

Somewhere between the spiky plants and the sharp stones.

Places like this Madhava calls "*muchos pinchos*."

We all had a good laugh. He's such a case and he thinks he's speaking Spanish.

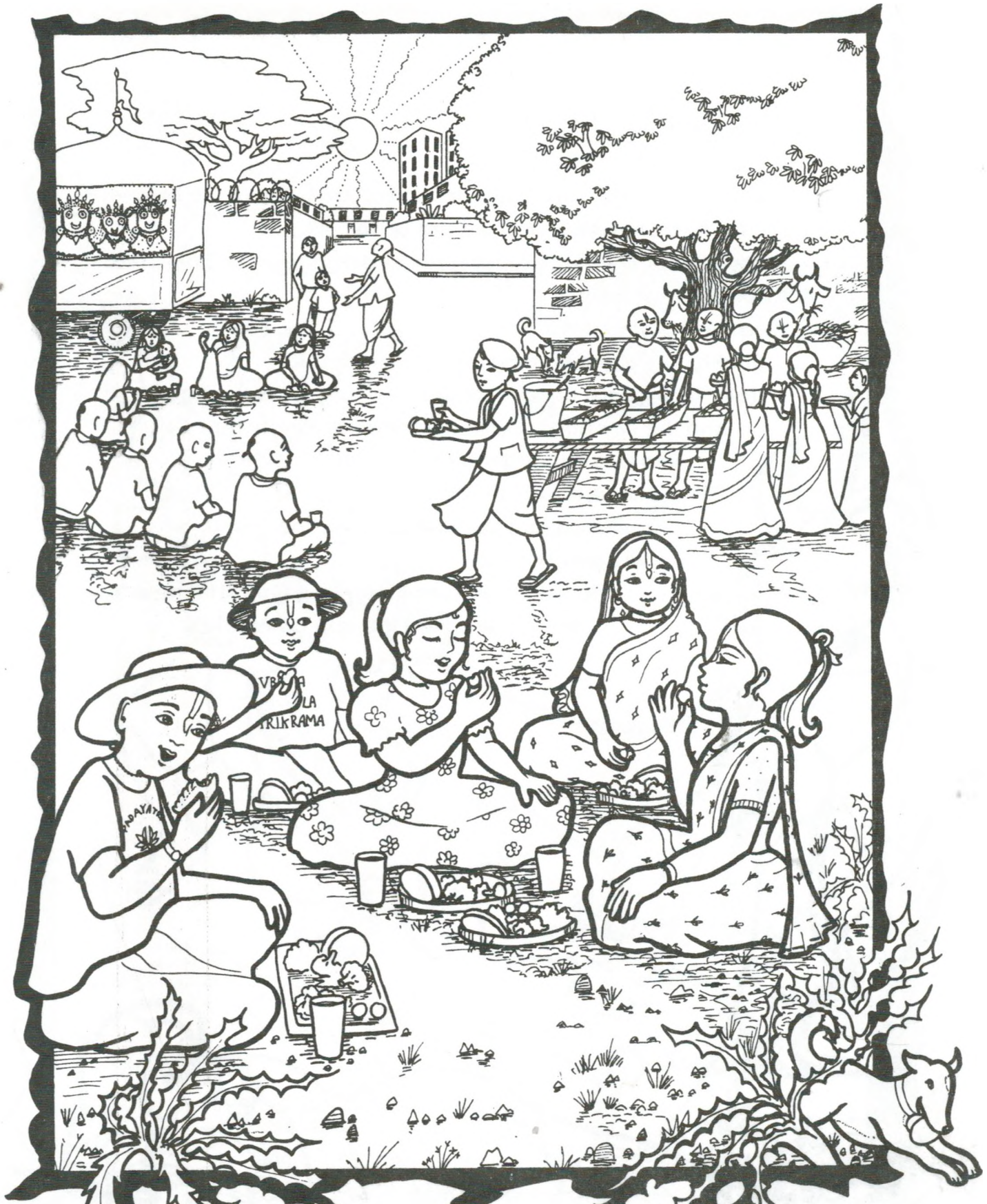
"*Ouchos! Ouchos! Ouchos!*" he whimpered as he limped off to get second helpings.

"This feast is so nice, but my feet hurt" said one devotee.

"In the material world there's always some sand in the sweet rice" commented Gaura. There he goes again!

Luckily there was none in mine.





At the end of the day
there's prasadam all around: for
devotees—on their plates. For the dogs—off the ground

August 15th

Sometimes we get an early morning visit from Bhima the bull. It's like he's checking what we are up to.

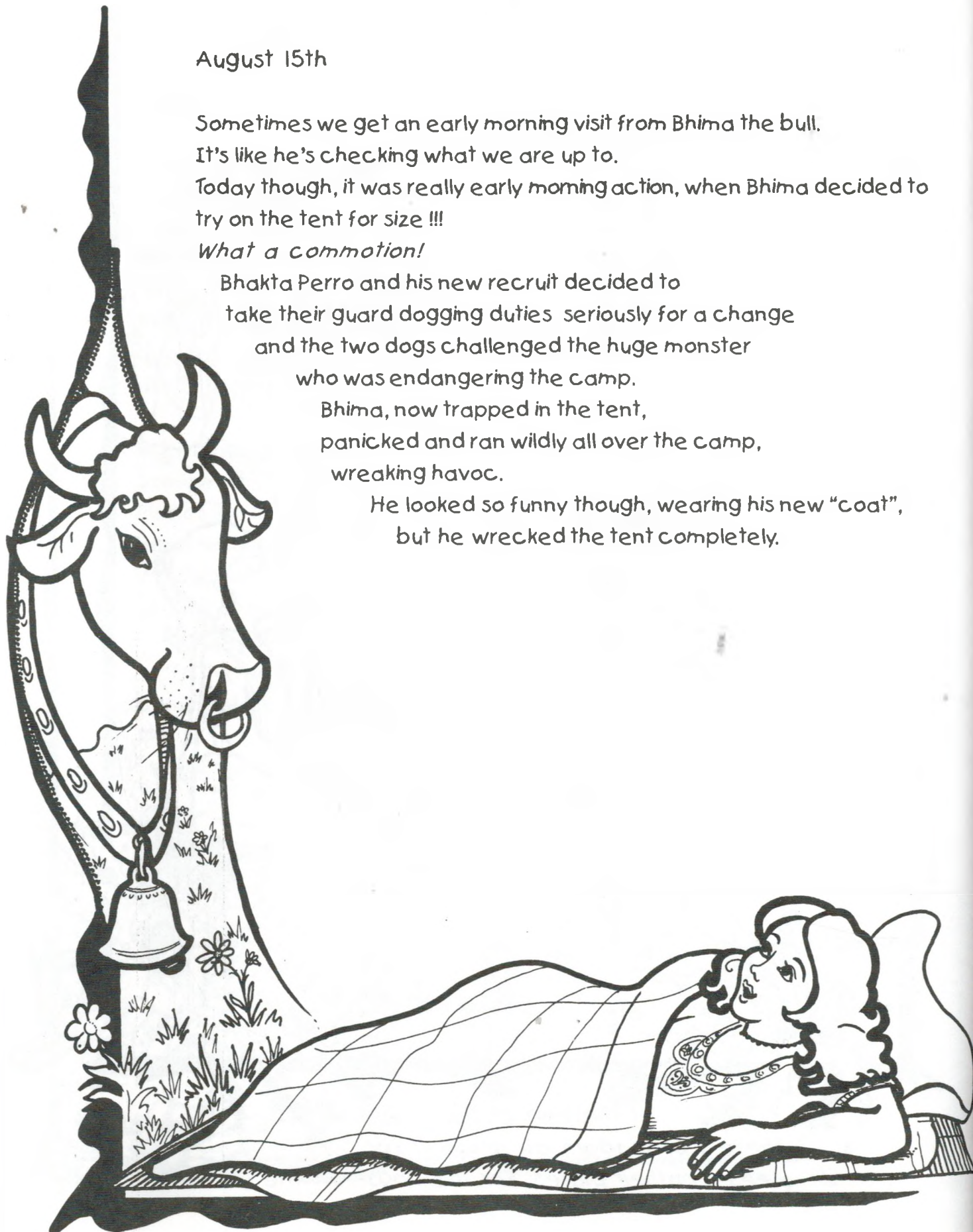
Today though, it was really early morning action, when Bhima decided to try on the tent for size !!!

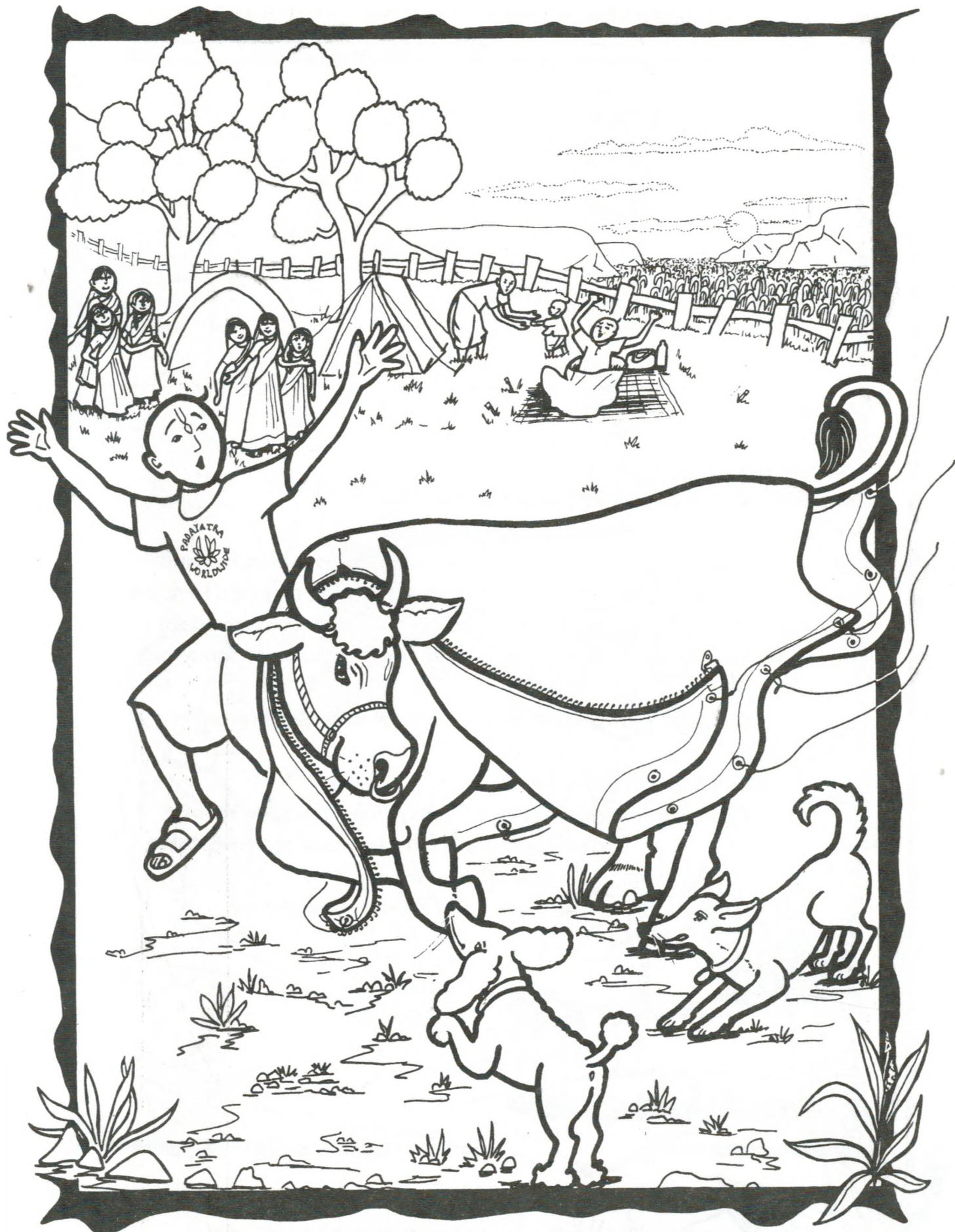
What a commotion!

Bhakta Perro and his new recruit decided to take their guard dogging duties seriously for a change and the two dogs challenged the huge monster who was endangering the camp.

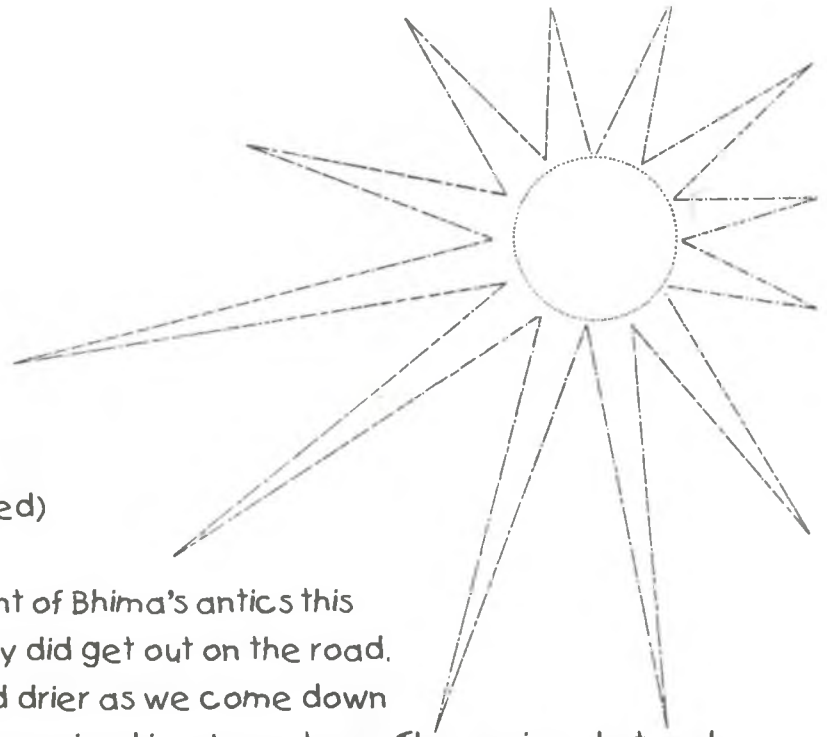
Bhima, now trapped in the tent, panicked and ran wildly all over the camp, wreaking havoc.

He looked so funny though, wearing his new "coat", but he wrecked the tent completely.





Bhima the bull tries on his new coat...!



August 15th (continued)

Despite the excitement of Bhima's antics this morning, we eventually did get out on the road. It is getting hotter and drier as we come down out of the hills. We have arrived in a large town. The sun is so hot and there's no trees, just lots and lots of high rise flats. We stopped to rest on a building site. While the devotee in charge checked which road we have to take, everyone just disappeared into the shade of some big concrete pipes.

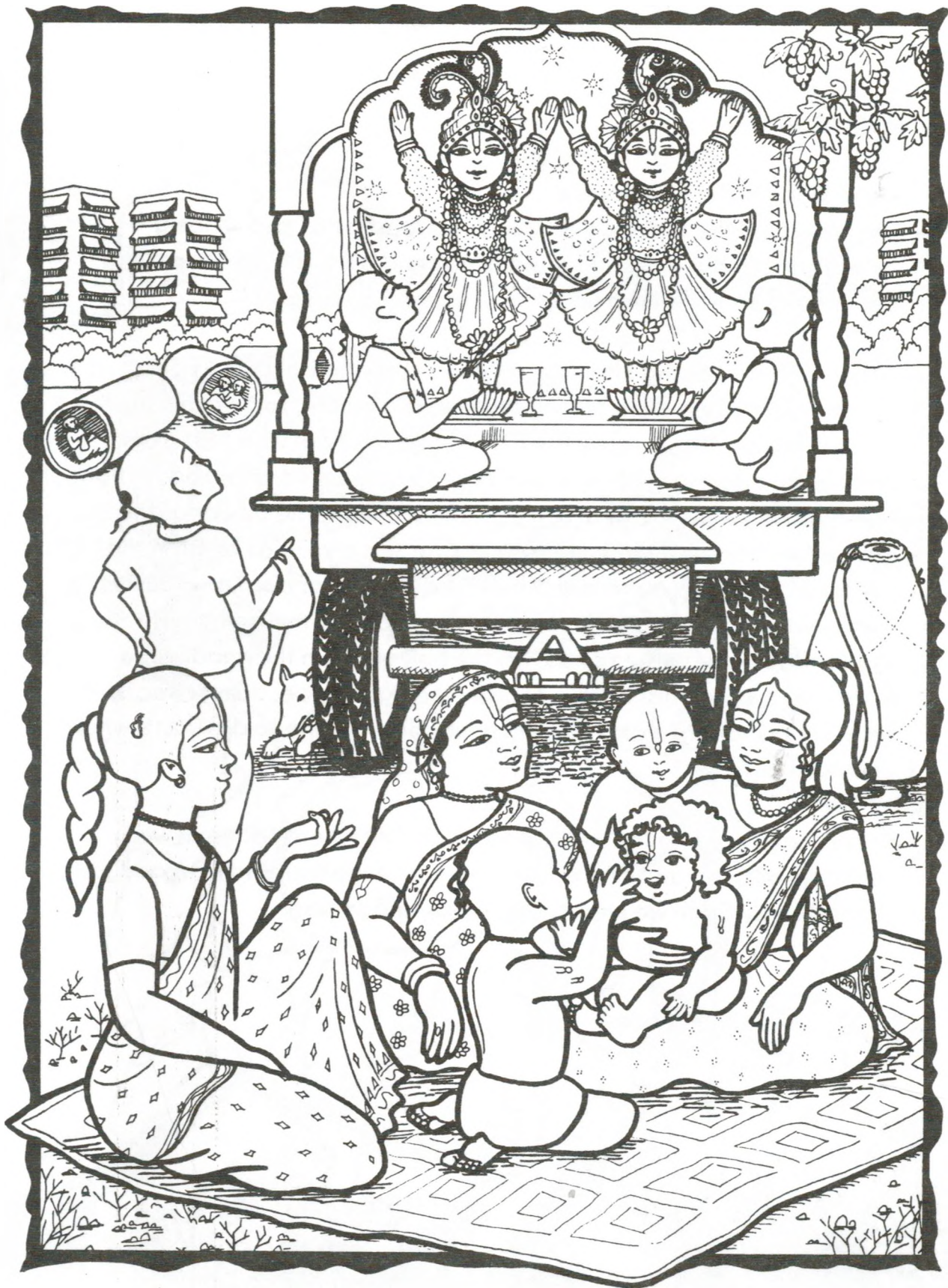
All except Spanish matajis that is, who just sat in the sun in front of the Deities.

I don't know how they do it.

Maybe they really feel that the rays from the toenails of Lord Nityananda's lotus feet are more soothing than millions of moons.

I'm lucky if I know it in theory.





*Midday sun—no shady trees
We pray to Krishna for a cooling breeze*

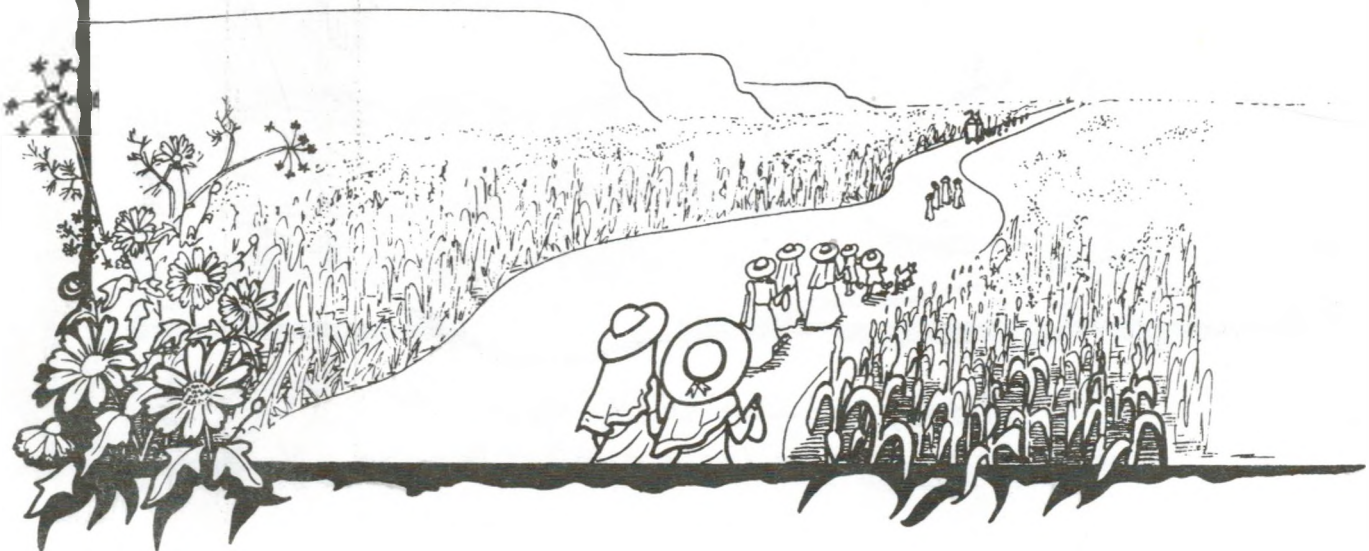
August 21st

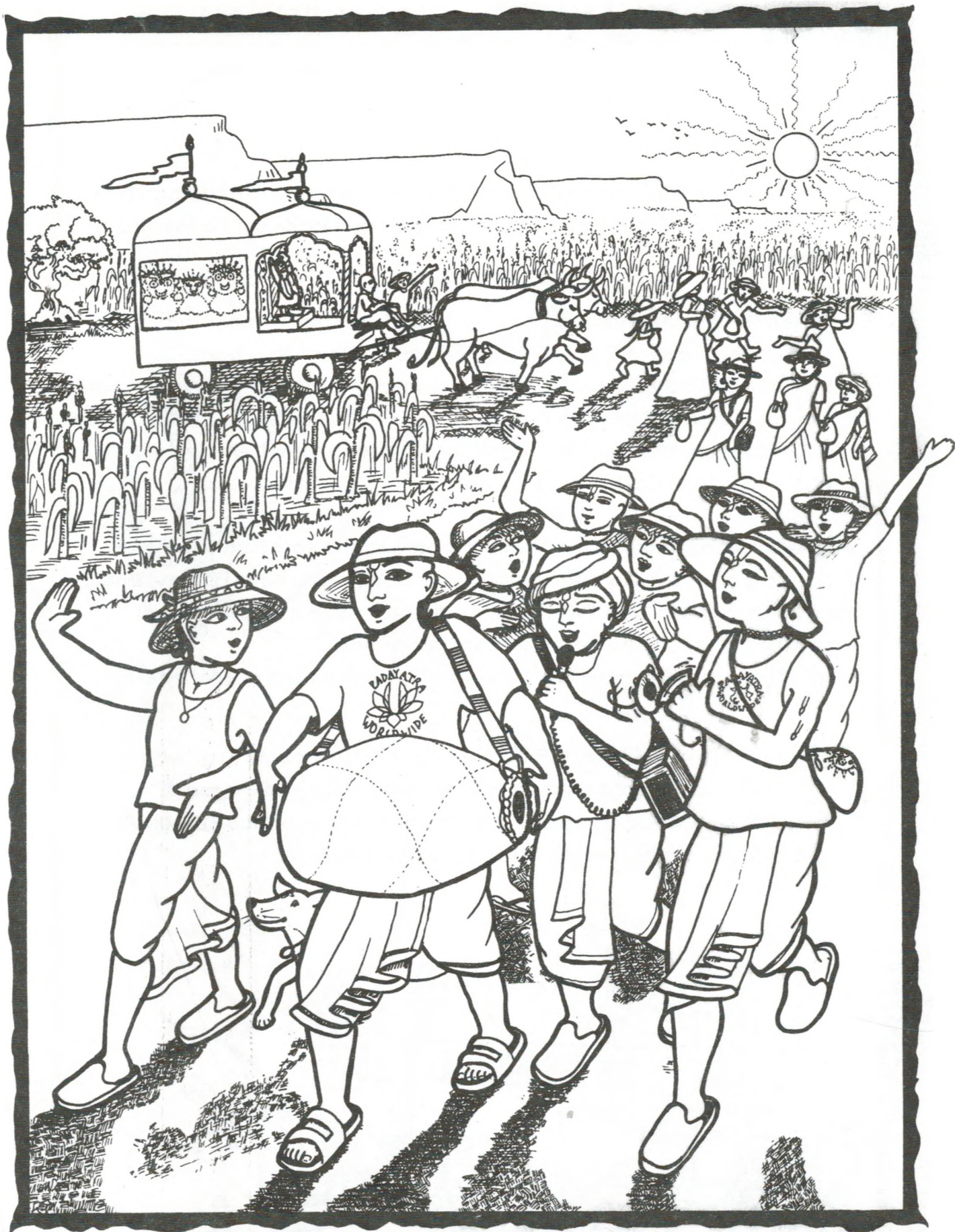
We're back in the countryside.

The hills are in the distance now and the road is flat and winding through enormous fields of ripening maize. It's like a huge yellow sea, shimmering in the hot sun under the clear blue sky.

Gaura is really getting into kirtan. I don't know how he keeps going all day in the heat. We were talking this evening and he told me his secret. He said "When it gets really hot I try to see the heat as a test from Krishna. He's asking me how much I can surrender to chanting His holy name. I don't fight the heat, I try and appreciate the power of the sun and see it as Krishna's energy. Either I can see myself as being in the middle of nowhere, surrounded by endless fields of corn on a dusty road somewhere in Spain, or I can try to focus on me being surrounded by devotees chanting the holy name in the middle of a kirtan. Then I feel that I am in exactly the right place, doing exactly what Lord Chaitanya and Srila Prabhupada want me to do. That's when I feel really happy."

I can't say I am into the walking so much, but when Madhava was getting a bit tired and cranky, we chanted together and his mood just passed away. Soon we were both happy and smiling.





*More blazing sun and tired feet—
But Krishna's name brings sweet relief*

August 16th

One devotee was singing this lovely bhajan this morning and I copied it down because it's so beautiful. It reminds me a lot of our Padayatra adventure.

"When the eastern horizon became tinged with the redness that heralds the rising of the sun, the jewel among the twice born, LORD GAURA SUNDARA, immediately awakened. Taking His devotees with him, He journeyed through the towns and villages of Nadia. The karatalas and mrdangas resounded and the Lord's golden form trembled slightly in ecstatic love of God.

"The Lord called out to the townsfolk: "You spend your nights uselessly sleeping and your days decorating your bodies, you have achieved this rare human birth. Don't you care for this gift? With every rising and setting of the sun another day passes and is lost. Why then do you remain idle and not worship the Lord of your heart?"

I try to imagine the sound of the sweetest kirtan I could ever wish to hear. Then, as the Lord dances, His garland swings and the most beautiful fragrance fills the air. I try to think of this Lord as very grateful and merciful. He personally takes care of His devotees.





HARE KRISHNA
HARE KRISHNA KRISHNA KRISHNA HARE HARE
HARE RAMA HARE RAMA RAMA HARE HARE

VRAJA

PADAYATRA
WOL...

August 20th (continued)

Every day so many new and unexpected things happen.

On Padayatra I find that I'm living in the present and dealing with things as they come. Call it "living the life."

Our party is quite a big attraction— so many people come to see the oxen and the cart—and then they have darshan of Sri Sri Nitai Gaurasundara.

We get a lot of opportunities to talk to them and tell them about Krishna and our philosophy.

Everyone loves the prasadam.

Today one lady invited us to camp in the grounds of an old people's home.

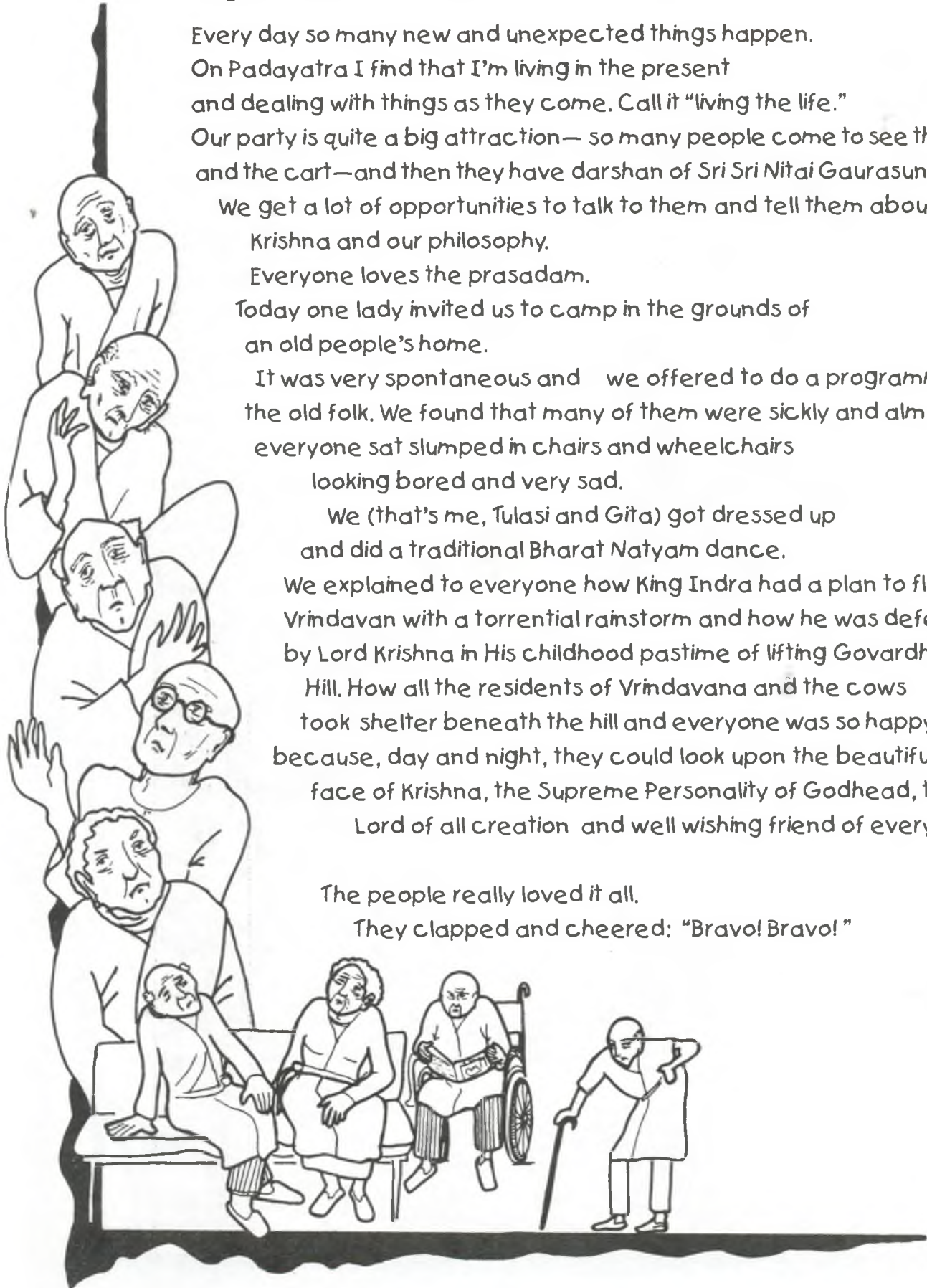
It was very spontaneous and we offered to do a programme for the old folk. We found that many of them were sickly and almost everyone sat slumped in chairs and wheelchairs looking bored and very sad.

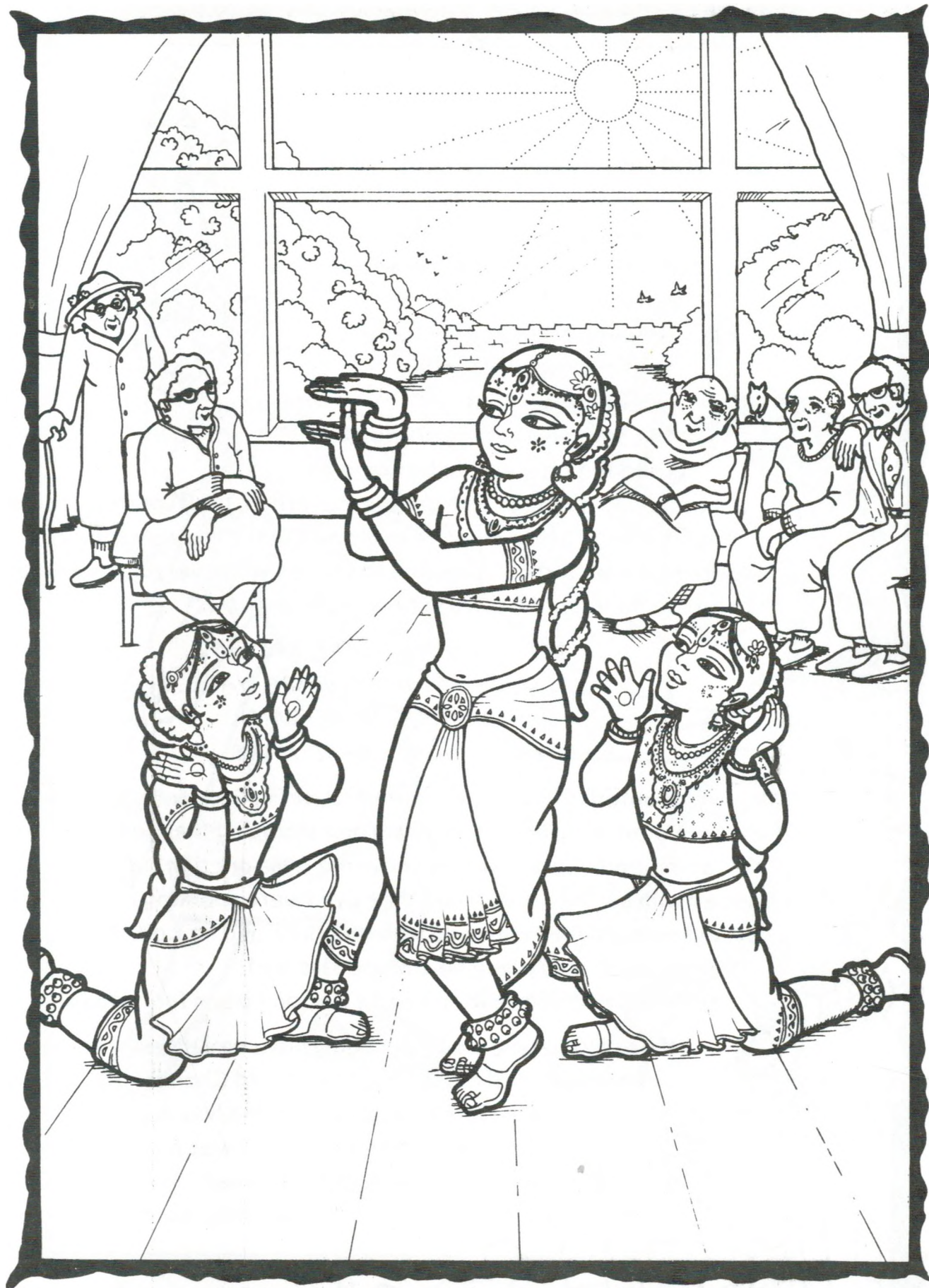
We (that's me, Tulasi and Gita) got dressed up and did a traditional Bharat Natyam dance.

We explained to everyone how King Indra had a plan to flood Vrindavan with a torrential rainstorm and how he was defeated by Lord Krishna in His childhood pastime of lifting Govardhan Hill. How all the residents of Vrindavana and the cows took shelter beneath the hill and everyone was so happy because, day and night, they could look upon the beautiful lotus face of Krishna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the Lord of all creation and well wishing friend of everyone.

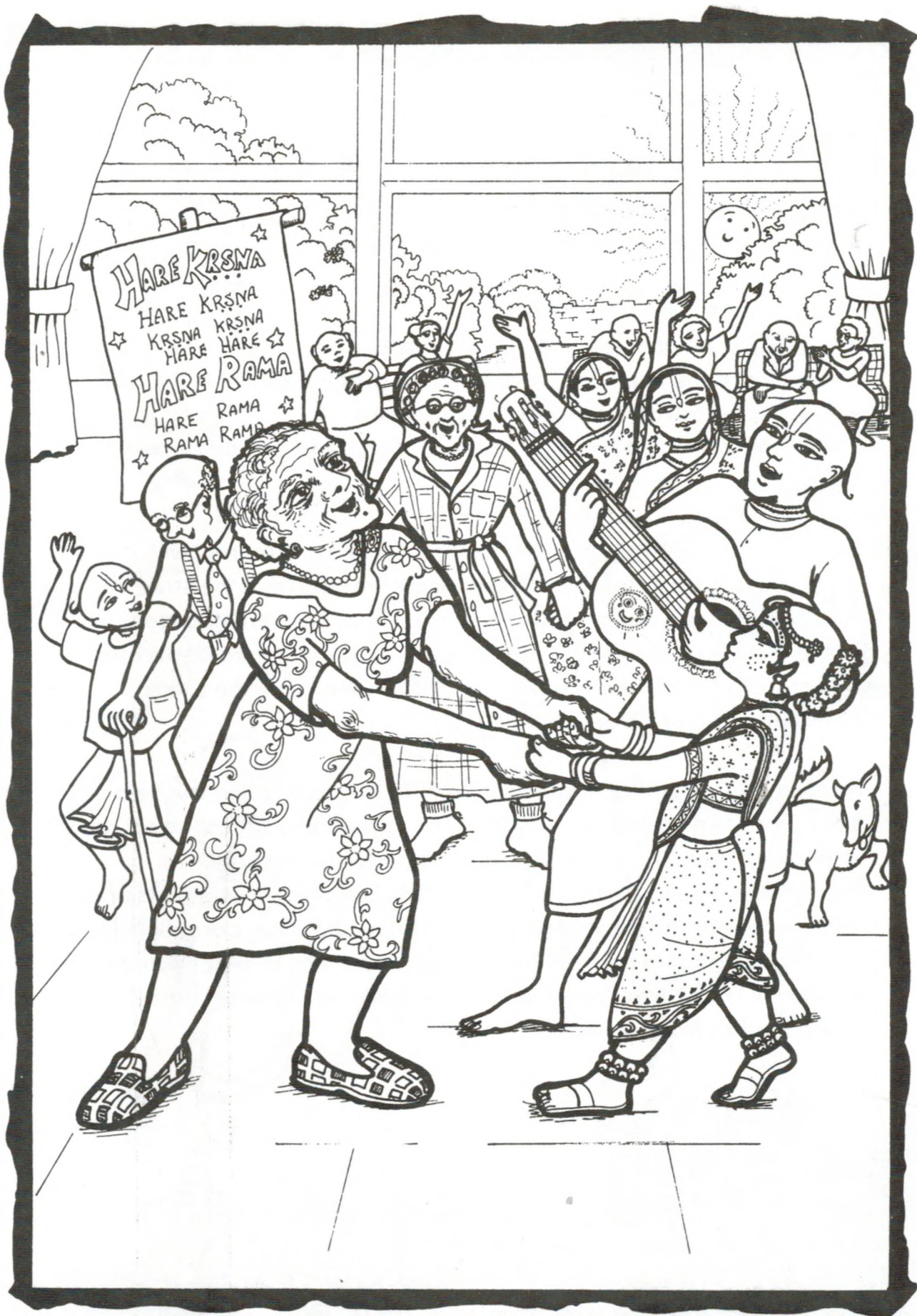
The people really loved it all.

They clapped and cheered: "Bravo! Bravo!"





*Krishna's dancers bring new breath
To old folks facing pain and death*



*Krishna chanting, young and old
Happy, awakening the dormant soul*

August 21st

We're getting close to Madrid and Rathayatra.
I wonder what else Krishna has arranged for us?

August 22nd MADRID

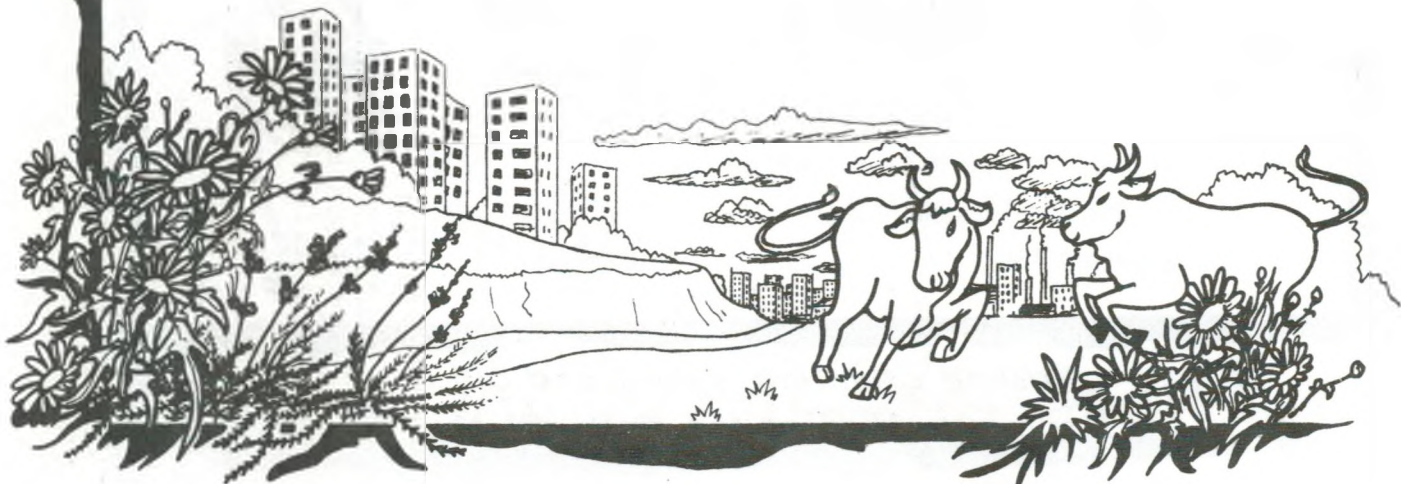
The Big City! We are sleeping at the temple.

The cart and the oxen are staying in a big green park within the city where the Rathayatra cart is being prepared.

I am feeling very sad because Padayatra has finished and I'm missing the lifestyle.

Madrid is a beautiful city, full of grand avenues lined with tall, majestic buildings. Some are topped with domes and there are ballustrades and balconies that overlook the street. Many of them are decorated with statues of angels and demigods while at the important road junctions there are water fountains decorated with statues of Neptune and water nymphs which give the city a beautiful sense of history and culture.

As soon as we got the chance we went to the park to see our beloved bulls. I met two whacky looking girls. They asked why I dressed so strangely!!! I tell you, wearing a sari is so cool in all this heat. Them—with shaved heads, dyed hair, studs and spikes... who looks crazy? They were really interested when I told them about reincarnation. They said they wanted to be free like the birds, but I said real freedom means for the soul to be free from the material body. So I showed them Srila Prabhupada's Bhagavad-gita.





August 22nd (continued)

Straight away they were attracted to the photograph of Srila Prabhupada.

"Srila Prabhupada left India on a cargo boat when he was seventy years old. He went all the way to America to teach the western world about Krishna consciousness. He translated the ancient Indian scriptures and explained them so we could understand how to love God. He comes in a whole line of self-realized spiritual masters and he teaches us how to chant Hare Krishna by example.

Then I showed them the Sanskrit verses and told them how the Bhagavad-gita was spoken by Lord Krishna, the father of all creation, 5,000 years ago. "The secrets and mysteries of life are all explained in these beautiful verses" I said, "and you can discover them too."

"You guys are really into music!" said one of the girls.

"Yeah, brilliant drums!" said the other, "I like the rhythms you guys are making. It reminds me of something from another world."

"Yes, it really is", I replied. "Srila Prabhupada tells us that Hare Krishna is a transcendental sound vibration that comes from the spiritual stratum."

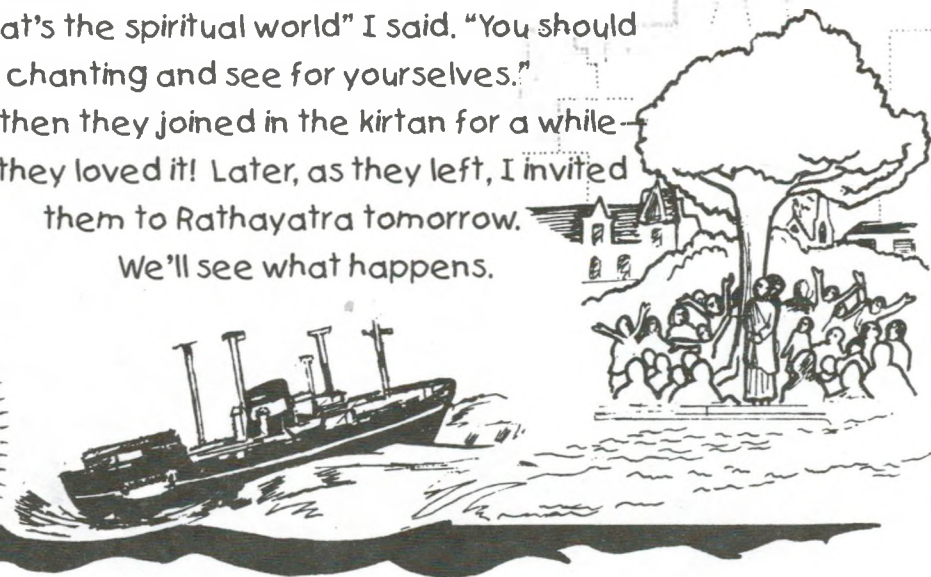
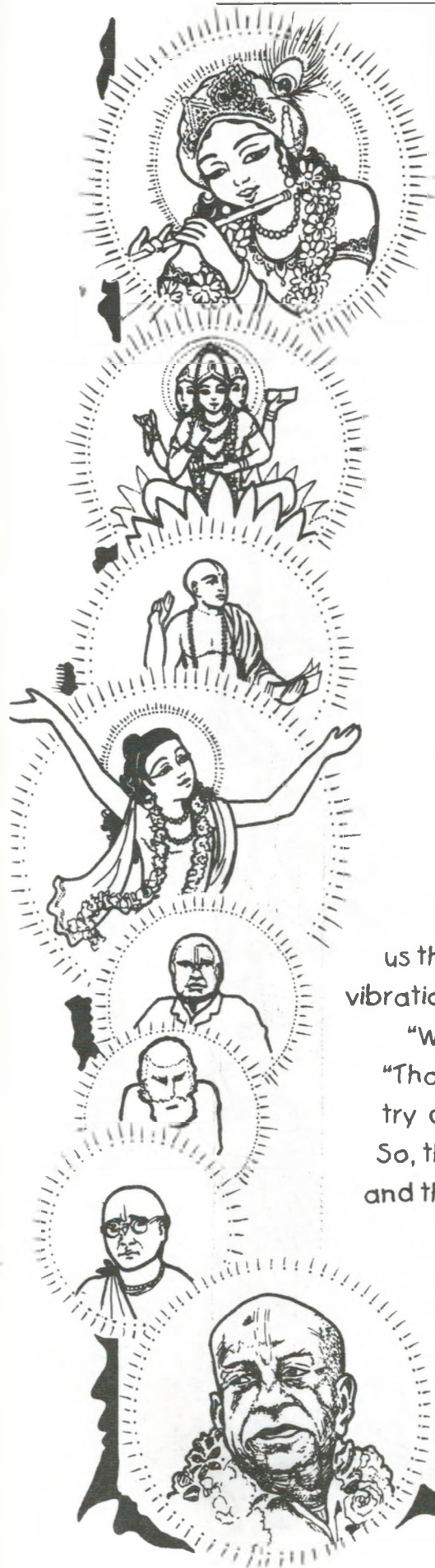
"Wow! what's a... a stratum?" they asked.

"That's the spiritual world" I said. "You should try chanting and see for yourselves."

So, then they joined in the kirtan for a while—and they loved it! Later, as they left, I invited

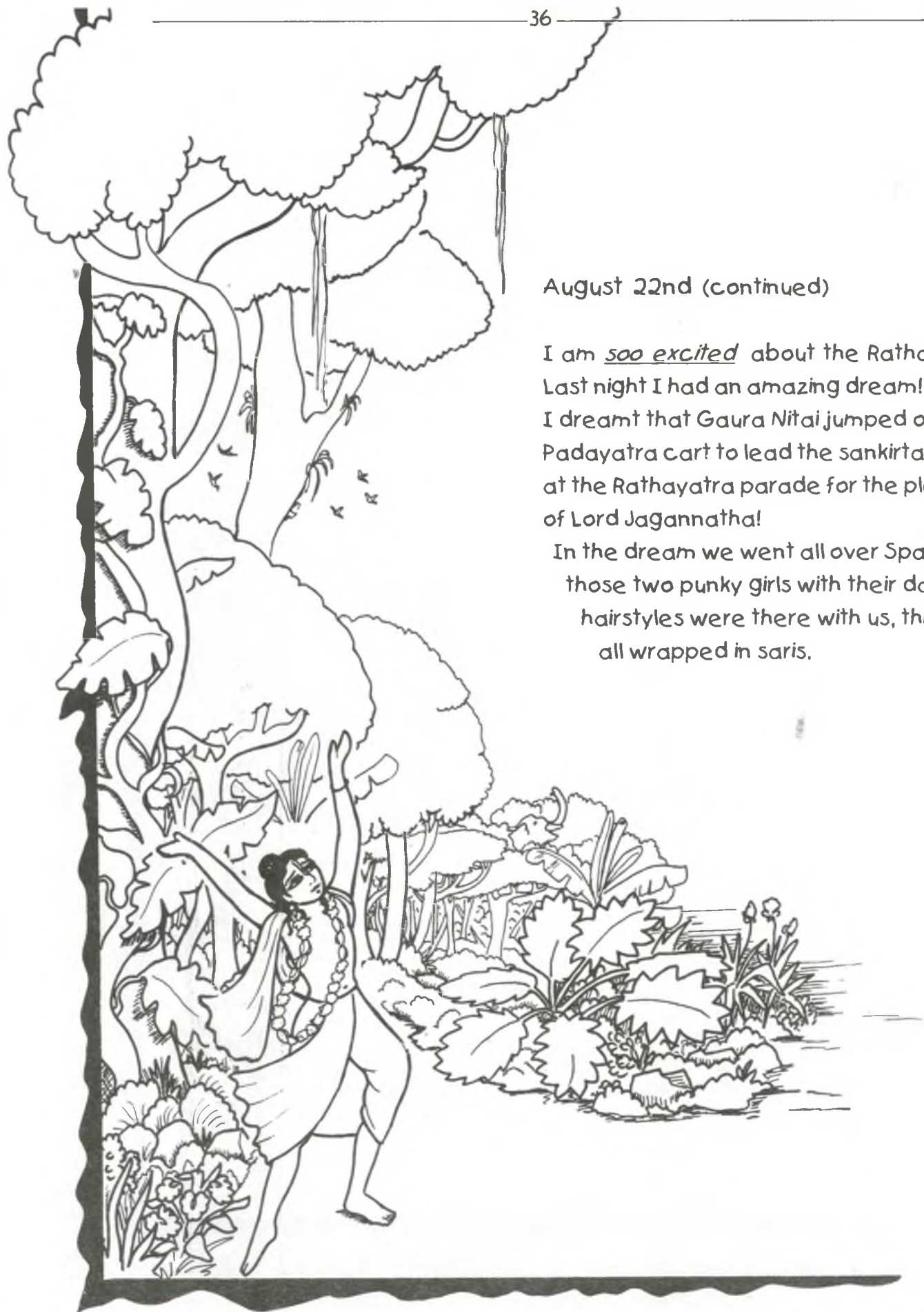
them to Rathayatra tomorrow.

We'll see what happens.





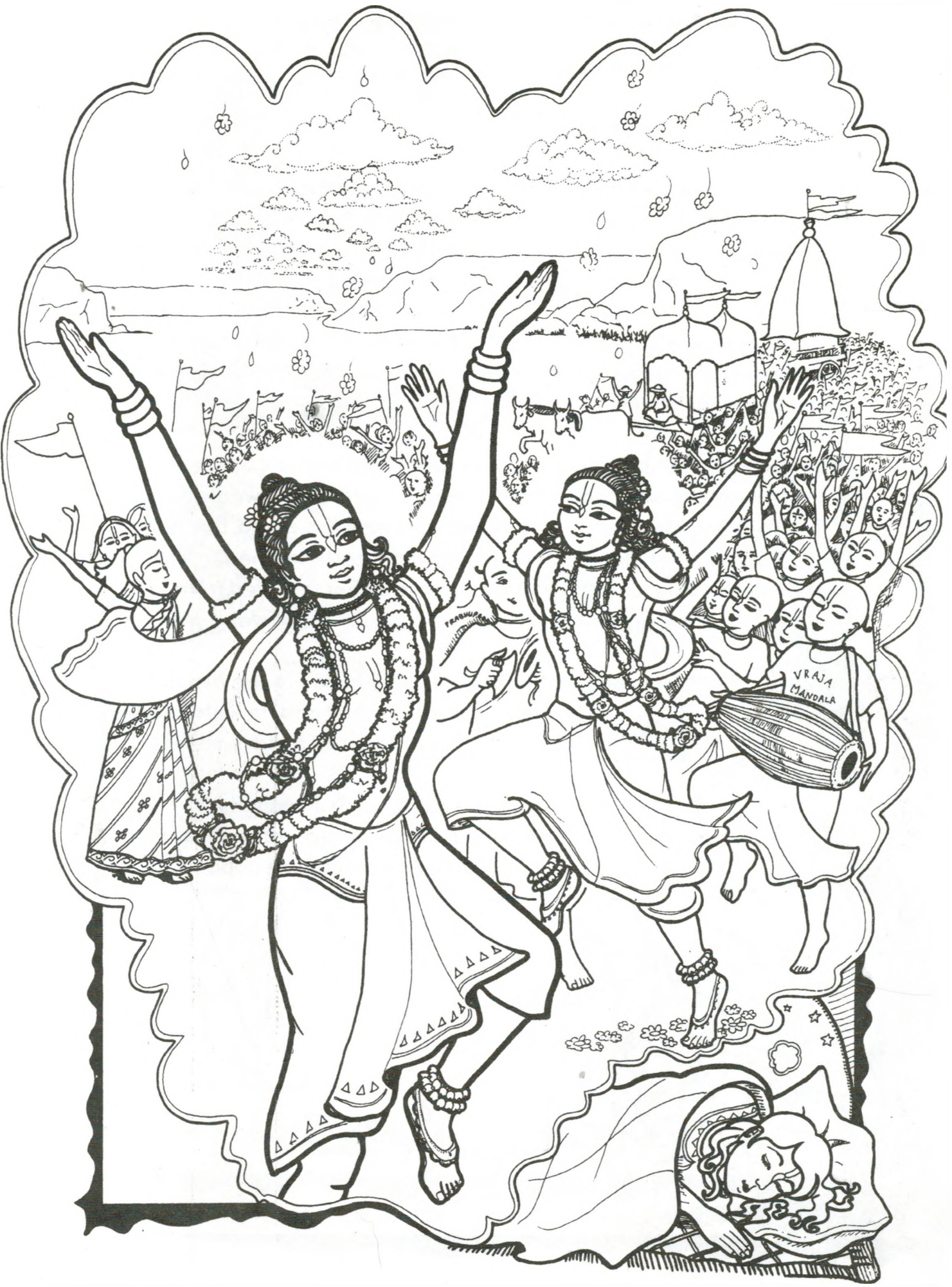
*Prabhupada's words are sure to waken
Conditioned souls, so long forsaken*



August 22nd (continued)

I am soo excited about the Rathayatra!
Last night I had an amazing dream!
I dreamt that Gaura Nitai jumped off the
Padayatra cart to lead the sankirtan party
at the Rathayatra parade for the pleasure
of Lord Jagannatha!

In the dream we went all over Spain and
those two punky girls with their day-glo
hairstyles were there with us, this time
all wrapped in saris.



August 22nd (continued)

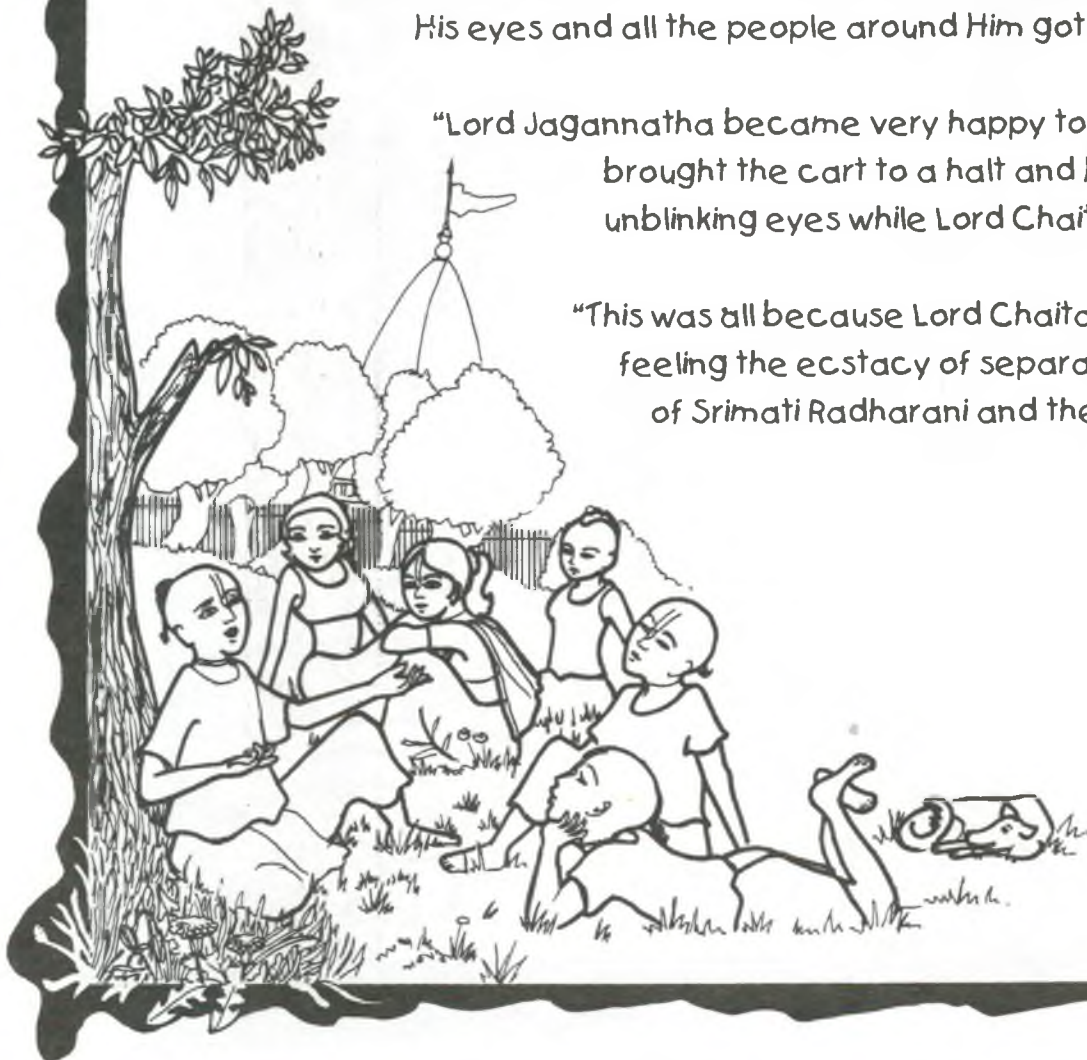
Devotees have been busy for days preparing the prasadam for the festival. This morning at the park we read from Srila Prabhupada's *Chaitanya Caritamrita*. Each one of us read in turn, about the internal reason for the Rathayatra festival. These are some of the notes I made:

"Lord Chaitanya's dancing in front of the Rathayatra cart could only be understood by His pure devotees. He danced in great jubilation and flooded all the people with waves of ecstatic love.

"When Lord Chaitanya danced His body showed blissful changes. Sometimes His hairs stood on end. Sometimes He cried, sweated, trembled and changed colour. He became helpless, proud, boisterous and humble. Wherever He stepped the whole earth seemed to tilt, and as He danced He jumped extremely high and tears squirted from His eyes and all the people around Him got wet.

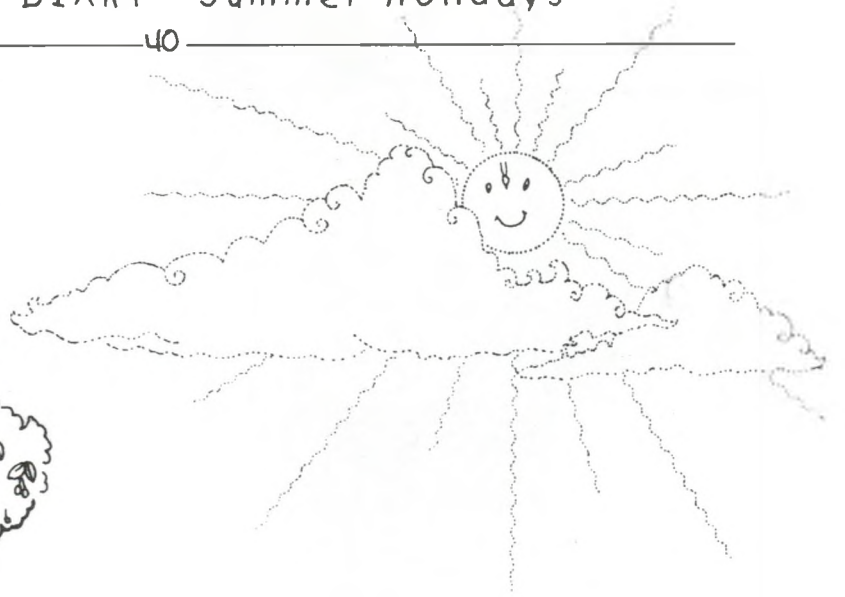
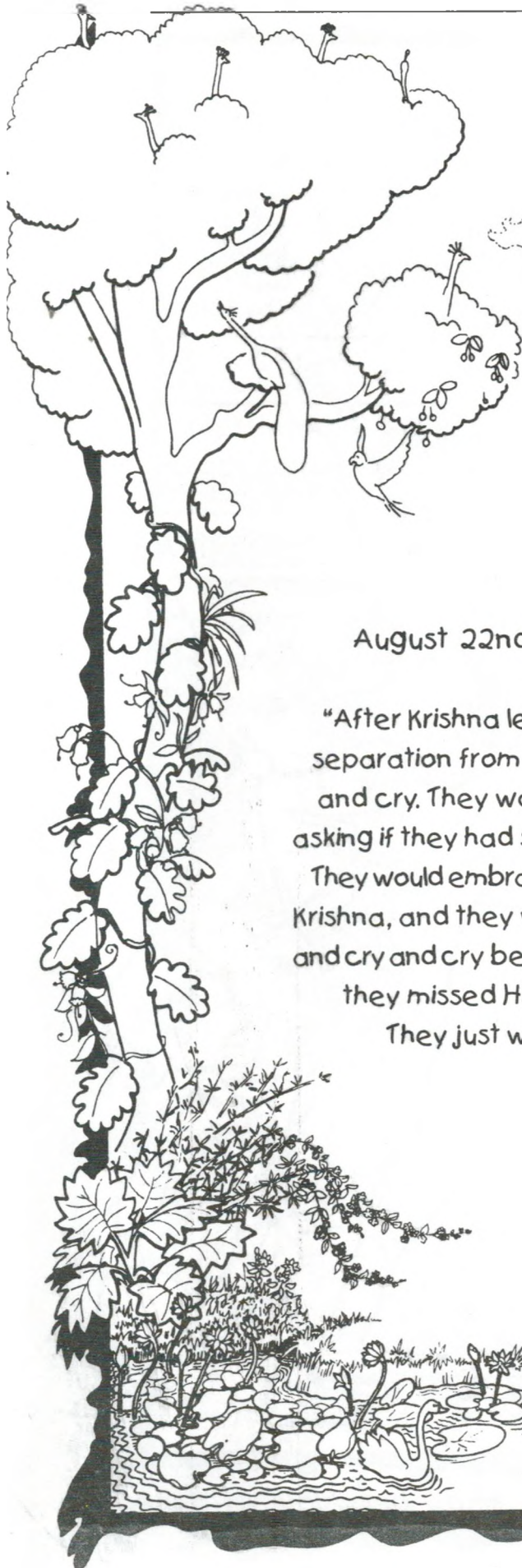
"Lord Jagannatha became very happy to see Him and brought the cart to a halt and He watched with unblinking eyes while Lord Chaitanya danced.

"This was all because Lord Chaitanya was feeling the ecstasy of separation in the mood of Srimati Radharani and the gopis..."





"Jagannath Swami! O Lord of the universe, kindly be visible unto me!"



August 22nd (continued)

"After Krishna left Vrindavan the gopis all felt such immense separation from Him that they would think constantly of Him and cry. They would talk to the malati flowers and tulasi, asking if they had seen Krishna.

They would embrace the dark Tamal trees, thinking them to be Krishna, and they would see His footprints in the dust and cry and cry because they loved Krishna and they missed Him so much.

They just wanted Him to come back...





August 22nd (continued)

So, when Krishna and Balarama and Subhadra travelled to Kuruksetra, the gopis met them there for the lunar eclipse. They said:

"Here in Kuruksetra You are dressed like a royal prince, accompanied by great warriors, elephants, horses and the rattling of chariots.

But in the flower gardens of Vrindavan, humming with bees and chirping birds, You appeared just like an ordinary cowherd boy, accompanied only by Your beautiful flute.

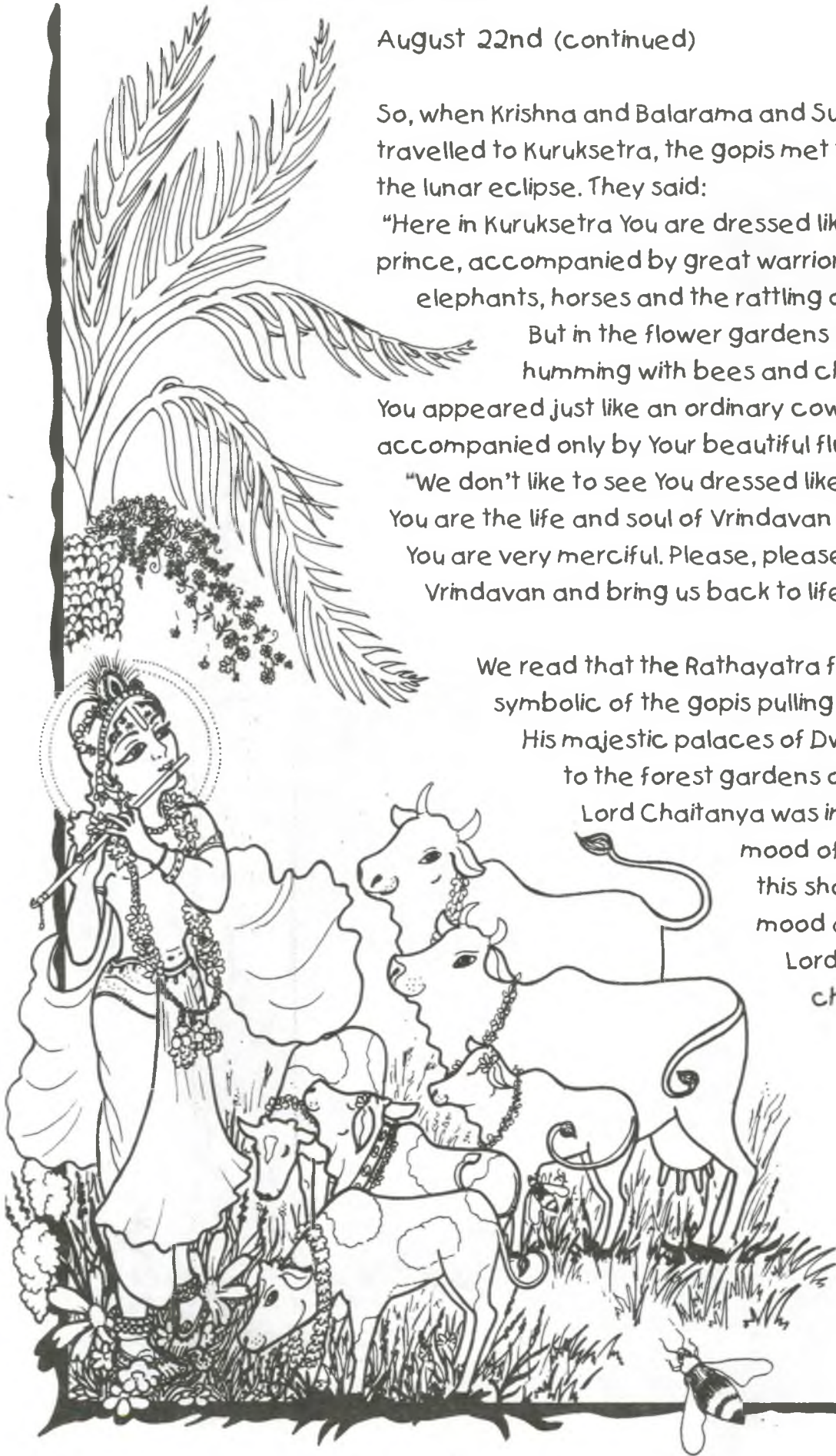
"We don't like to see You dressed like a prince.

You are the life and soul of Vrindavan dham.

You are very merciful. Please, please come back to Vrindavan and bring us back to life."

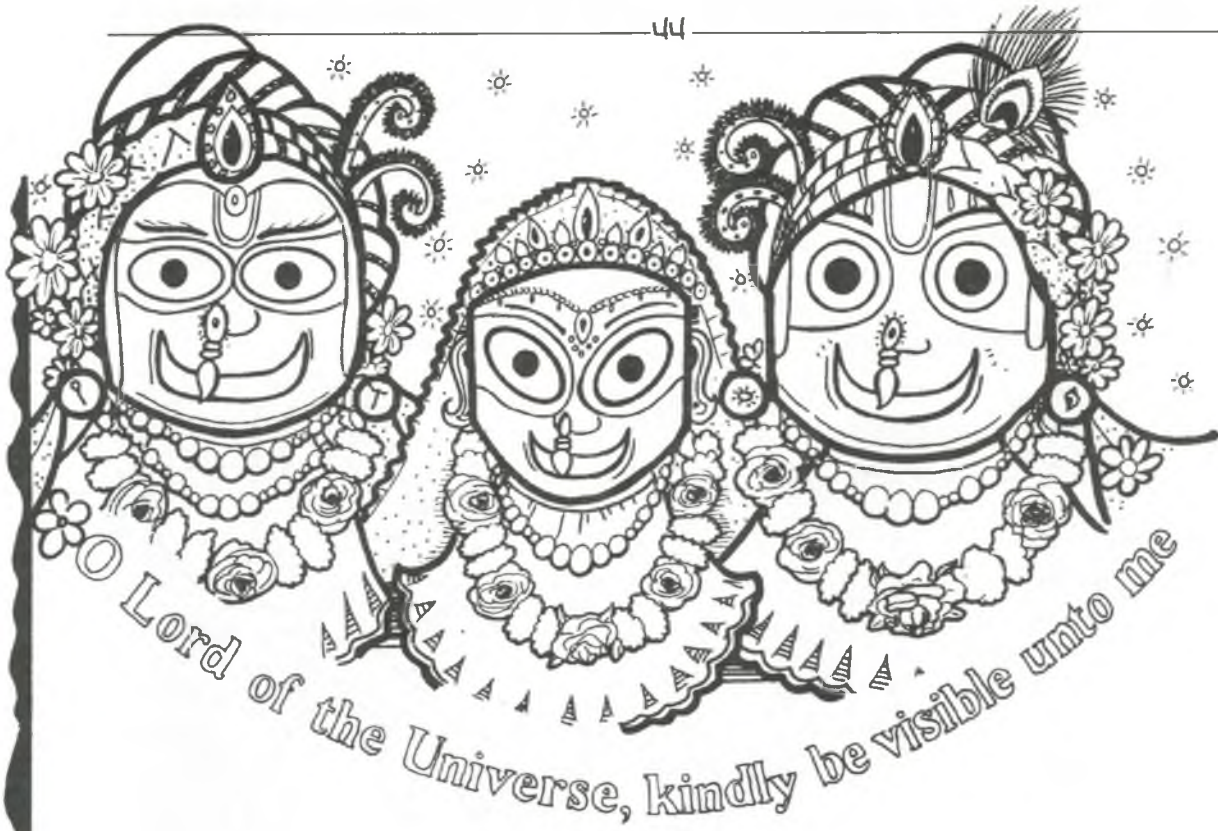
We read that the Rathayatra festival is symbolic of the gopis pulling the Lord from His majestic palaces of Dwaraka to the forest gardens of Vrindavana.

Lord Chaitanya was immersed in the mood of the gopis and this should also be our mood as we also pull Lord Jagannath's chariot."





*"We don't like to see You in princely dress—
Please return to Vrindavan and relieve our distress."*

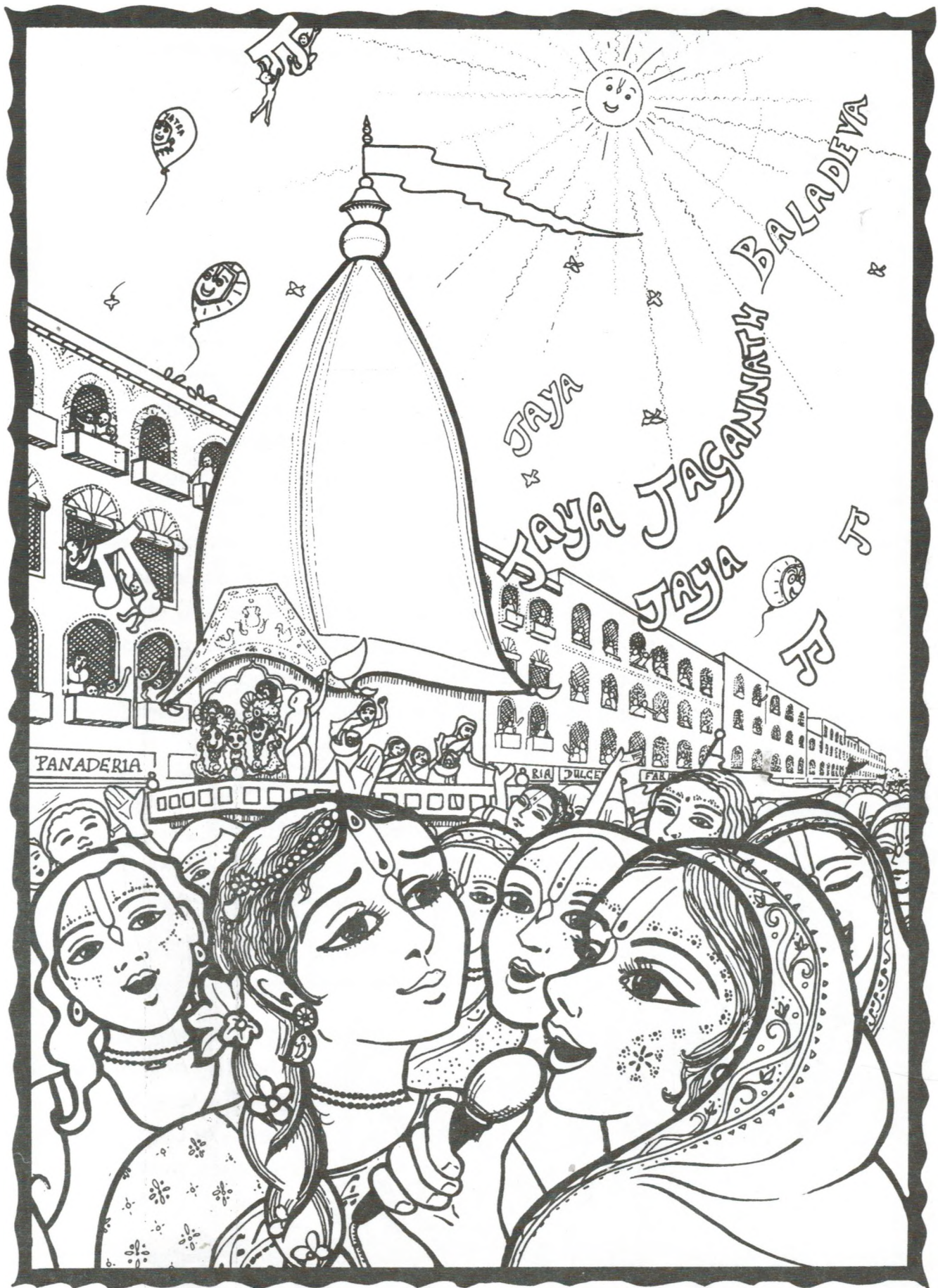


Lord Jagannath is so wonderful. I have had such an ecstatic day. I want it to last forever!

The streets were packed with people and it seemed that they had all gone there to see Lord Jagannath, Baladeva and Subhadra in Their brightly coloured chariot. It was enormous and decorated with flags and flower garlands and it swayed slightly as it moved slowly through the ocean of people. The yellow and red canopy looked beautiful against the deep blue Mediterranean sky.

We chanted as close to the chariot as we could get and it seemed that wherever we were, we could always see Lord Jagannath and He could always see us. On this day He gives unlimited blessings and showers of mercy that everyone gets when they see His Rathayatra festival.

HARI BOL!



*Kirtan, devotees, prasadam and cart—
And Jagannath's mercy for cleansing the heart!*

RATHAYATRA

August 22nd (continued)

☆ At the end of the procession we all went to the park where the kirtan just went on and on and on. I helped serve the delicious prasadam to all the people—and there were thousands of them!

In the evening I saw the two punk girls again, this time dancing and chanting in front of the stage. Gaura looked like he was in bliss, chanting and playing his mrdanga as if he'd received a new lease on life. I didn't think Madhava would make it all the way on Padayatra, but there he was with his friends and his dog, dancing to the last. Then we all joined hands in a huge circle and sang together what had become the adopted song for the Spanish Padayatra:

*"Wake up! Wake up sleeping souls
Maya's got you under her control
Chant the name of Lord Gauranga
Rise and shine from your deep slumber"****

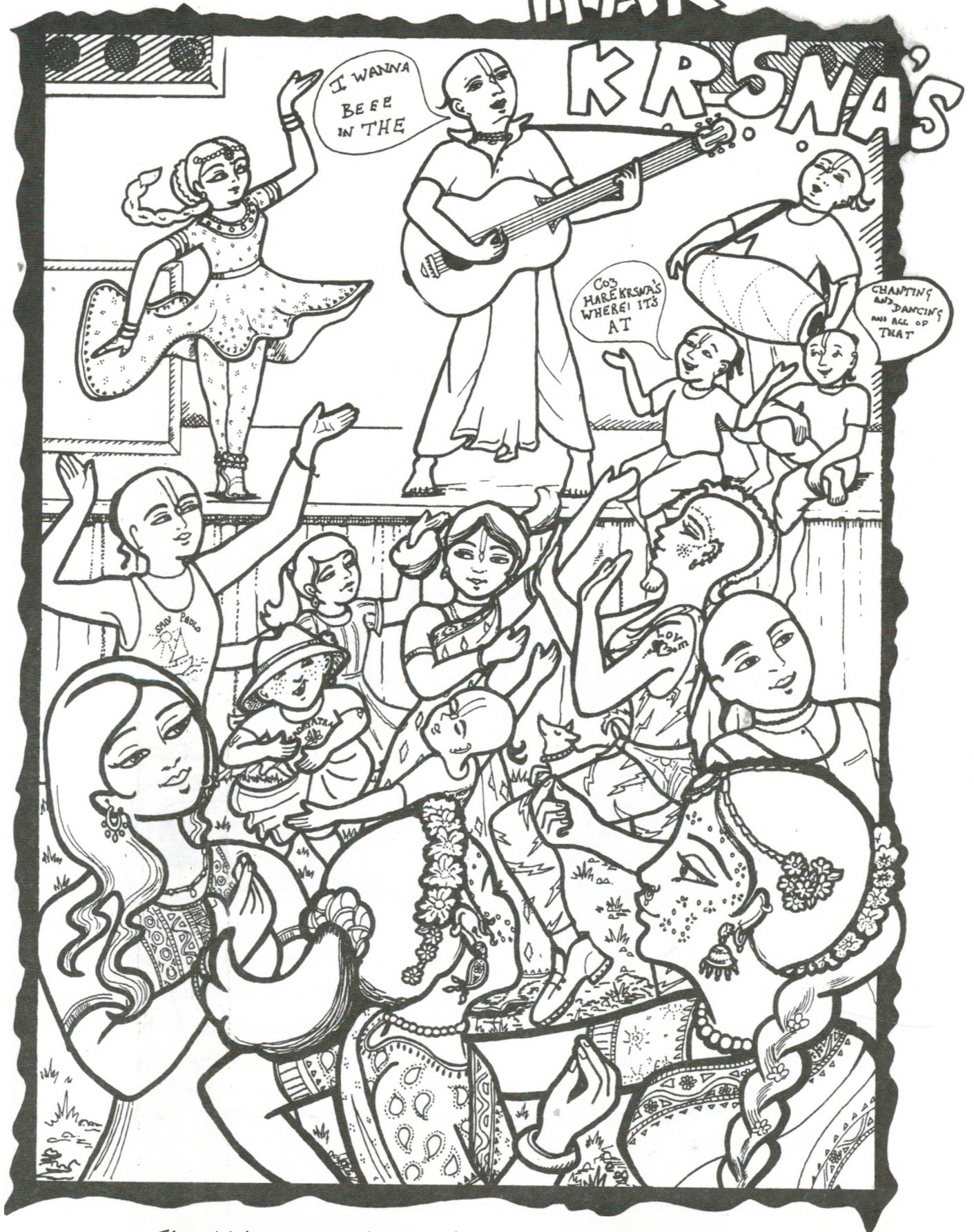
*HARE KRISHNA HARE KRISHNA KRISHNA KRISHNA HARE HARE
HARE RAMA HARE RAMA RAMA RAMA HARE HARE*

Whoever is attracted to the chanting of the Holy Name gets the special mercy of Lord Chaitanya—hippies, punks, dogs and all.

*** Thanks to Pranaballabha das for his poetic translation of Bhaktivinode Thakur's song: "Jiv Jago."

HARE

KRSNA'S



*The kirtan's ecstatic! The crowd is in bliss—
I could never have dreamed of a party like this!*

August 22nd (continued)

Tomorrow we fly back to England.
I can't wait to tell Mata and Pita all about
our adventures on Padayatra.

I wonder— maybe I could do some drawings
to keep the memories alive...

What do YOU think ?



"See you later!"

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“Radha-Krishna” bol, bol, bolo re sobai



*“Everyone chant, chant,
chant Radha-Krishna!”*

*Lord Chaitanya and Lord Nityananda
are dancing all over the land of
Nadia giving this teaching to all.*

*O brother, needlessly under the
control of maya you suffer and
are carried away by her waves,
sometimes floating and sometimes
sinking in this ocean of illusion.*

*If you have faith that the soul is
the eternal servant of Krishna,
then there will be no more misery.*

*And when you chant the holy
name of Krishna, your body will
shiver in ecstasy and your eyes will
shed tears in love of God.*

This is what I say.

*Chant “Radha-Krishna” in the
association of devotees.*

*This is the only request I beg,
Thakura Bhaktivinoda says: “When I
chant that holy name of the Lord, all
dangers go away.”*

from “Gitavali” by Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura



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