

A Soul's Journey

Nimāi Paṇḍita Dāsa

"Are you he or are you she?", oh c'mon, let it be,
don't you surmise, don't you guess, 'cause I'm not what you see. (1)

Now 'n' then I change my clothes, so you can't recognize,
we could've been friends or foes, but now I'm in disguise. (2)

Once, I lived for very long in eternal knowledge 'n' bliss,
until decided to leave, and explore this wretched abyss. (3)

I wished to be like Him or above, and imitate His nature,
not realizing that His love's far greater than His stature. (4)

Since the time I came here, 've been wandering about the universe,
captured by the beauty 'n' glare, forgetting my real purpose. (5)

When I looked around, was shocked that this isn't my home,
but gave me solace, gave me ground to know I'm not alone. (6)

Didn't waste time and took the helm of strife for subsistence,
comprehending not this realm is one of non-existence. (7)

Mustered all the gut in my struggle to win the rat race,
instead got kicked in the butt and fell flat on my face. (8)

Ambitious to go too fast was blinded like a bat,
not realizing first or last, will simply remain a rat. (9)

Got some success and was lost in now this is my haven,
all the time, at the cost of exploiting my brethren. (10)

In my quest for deeper 'n' higher and build the power to stay,
shackled myself faster 'n' tighter and threw the key away. (11)

Sometimes pigly, sometimes heavenly, sometimes in the stool,
paying for my anomaly, repeatedly made a fool. (12)

Alas, now I could see all contentions were in vain,
all they could reward me was excruciating pain. (13)

She who you love most becomes someone else's mistress,
happiness we welcome's just an absence of distress. (14)

All the time was anxious for that which wasn't mine,
hankering 'n' lamenting for what wasn't worth a dime. (15)

Life begins with questioning this misery and this sorrow,
"You're too dreary", my mind told me, "there's yet to come tomorrow." (16)

My mind got me enchanted, but tomorrow never came,
taking me for granted, by playing a crooked game. (17)

The whole macrocosm is an illusory deception,
but in my microcosm, wished I could be an exception. (18)

I sincerely prayed for the day when I'd solve life's conundrum,
until a brother crossed my way to remind me where I came from. (19)

Surely when we move, does providence move too,
He took hundred steps toward me, though I took merely two. (20)

I must prepare for death, so learned should serve, love, and give,
but what to speak of death to he who knows not how to live? (21)

Then I met a sage who said, "Son, take a deep breath,
youth is prep for old age, just as life is for death." (22)

"Give up this world like a dream, seek not this mirage,
all that delights here extreme, has but a false visage." (23)

Knowledge came, wisdom came, soon we got along,
later realization came, to me they always belong. (24)

Then I declared war against all of illusion,
deranged that I was, for I had nil ammunition. (25)

Beaten 'n' bruised, blue 'n' black, stood before my enemy,
formidable as a sand-sack, though wished I could flee. (26)

Now that I have His holy name, and austerity in arsenal,
I'd better put away my shame, and interest in the carnal. (27)

Alright, alright, I'm austere as far as I can be,
but why so austere as calling a damsel 'Mataji'? (28)

Thus I whine peevishly, unaware of the reason,
falling down shamefully, learning a bitter lesson. (29)

To your beads dimwit, why haven't you yet clung?
Thrust your fingers into it and roll them with your tongue. (30)

As our lives linger on, each awaits his knell,
behold His lotus face anon, it's tough to go to hell. (31)

Is it to steal, is it to rend, what's sin, can you fathom?
It's merely forgetting Him, my friend, all else is just the symptom. (32)

How steep the climb, how cold the clime, where's the difficulty?
It's just a matter of time, we'll spend with Him eternity. (33)

Been thinking what I'd say to Him about my parody,
at least I entertained Him wholly with my comedy. (34)

I ain't a poet, neither arty, nor a devotee,
in His majestic humility, He serves Himself thru me. (35)

I'm a human being, so gotta play the greatest role,
loving service unto Him, 'cause I'm a spirit soul. (36)