



50 YEARS SINCE SRILA PRABHUPADA'S
JALADUTA JOURNEY
1965-2015

The Vande Arts Team would like to offer this special drama script depicting Srila Prabhupada's epic voyage on the Jaladuta.

Devotees are welcome to use the script for their own celebrations of Srila Prabhupada's arrival in the USA and throughout ISKCON's 50 Anniversary Celebrations in 2016.

For the soundtrack and slideshow please contact DamodaraPandit das

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Swamiji at Sea

Written by

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Music by

Indradyumna Swami & Sri Pralad das

Soundtrack by

Ekendra das

Actors

Swamiji:

Narrator:

Captain:

Captain's Wife:

SumatiMorariji:

Krishna:

Book Distributer:

Das avatars:

This play is heavily musical (the main soundtrack theme is the beautiful “Prayers to the lotus feet of Lord Krishna” as recorded by Indradyumna Swami), with carefully choreographed scenes. A professional soundtrack has been recorded that provides background noise and the musical soundtrack (not the actual lines). Visual slide will be available to use as backdrops and for the final scene which display ISKCON’s major achievements. For more information email DamodaraPandit das yakdas@hotmail.com

Swamiji at sea

Introduction Narration:

Tonight’s drama is about the transcendental pastimes of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Srila Prabhupada. Friday the 13th is generally considered inauspicious, but Friday the 13th of August 1965 was a most auspicious day. It represented a turning point in the lives of this world’s misdirected civilization. It was the day A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami left the shores of India to bring the ancient science of Krishna Consciousness to the West.

After a lifetime of preparation, Bhaktivedanta Swami was ready to carry out the order of his spiritual master, to fulfill the prophesy of Caitanya Mahprabhu, ‘prthivite ache jatnagaradi gram sarvatraprachahoibe morn am’, the chanting of the holy name of Krishna would soon be heard in every town and village in the world.

This is the story of Srila Prabhupada’s amazing journey to America. It is the story of how he defied all odds to achieve the unachievable. It is the story of ‘Swamiji at Sea’..

Welcome.....

Blessings.....

SCENE 1- On the Street

(Hari Nama party enters. 'Hare Krsna'.....)

Book Distributor: Excuse me Sir, could I interest you in a look at one of our books?

Captain: Are you from India?

B.D: No I am from America.

Captain: So how have you taken up this vedic culture of India..this dancing and chanting ?

BD: This ancient culture was brought to America by our spiritual master, Srila Prabhupada. In fact, this book is all about him.

C: Let me see that volume! Is this? Yes it is. It's the Swami. Swami Bhaktivedanta. You know my boy he traveled aboard my ship the Jaladhuta. Yes, yes, it was in 1965. August and September. Let me see..

(reads book)

"The Jaladuta is a regular cargo ship of the Scindia Steam Navigation Company"..that was my company!.. Sri AbhayCaran Bhaktivedanta Swami, whose age was listed as 69, was taken on board bearing a complimentary ticket with food.." It says here.." The cabin was quite comfortable thanks to SrimatiSumatiMoraji for all these arrangements.

Captain's Wife: He approached SrimatiMoraji to get a ticket.

C: Yes, I remember it all as it was only yesterday...

SCENE 2 – The Request

(SumatiMorarji sits at a desk and Swami enters with his cane in hand.. SM stands to receive BVS and welcomes him...)

SumatiMorarji (SM): Maharaja, please come in.

Bhaktivedanta Swami (BVS): My dear lady, I wish to go to America to preach the message of Sri Sri Guru and Gauranga. Please grant me free passage on one of your ships.

SM: Swamiji, you are too old, why are you taking such responsibility?

BVS: No, it is alright. It is my Guru Maharaja's order. I have a sponsor in Pennsylvania, and I have dedicated my life to this purpose, so I am determined to go.

SM: But, you don't know about America! It is very different from India.

BVS: But Americans are world leaders. If they can take to KC it will be spread all over the world!

SM: Nevertheless, I think you should stay in Vrindavana. I think it wise that you do not go to that sinful place.

BVS: But it is my life's mission. And I am confident Lord Krsna will protect me. Wherever there is the chanting of Krsna's holy name, there is Vrindavana. Please, let me go.

SM: Well alright Swamiji. But I'll give you a round-trip ticket so you may return should there be any difficulty.

BVS: Hare Krishna.

SCENE 3 – Visit to Bhaktisiddhanta Maharaja’s Samadhi / Calcutta Port

Narration: Bhaktivedanta Swami arrived in Calcutta only a few days before the Jaladuta’s departure. Although he had lived much of his life in the city, he now had nowhere to stay. It was as he had written in his “Vrindavana-bhajan”: “I have my wife, sons, daughters, grandsons, everything, / But I have no money, so they are a fruitless glory.” Although in this city he had been so carefully nurtured as a child, those early days were also gone forever: “Where have my loving father and mother gone to now? / And where are all my elders, who were my own folk? / Who will give me news of them, tell me who? / All that is left of this family life is a list of names.”

(Enter BVS. Walks onstage and slowly approaches the portrait of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Maharaja at his samadi)

Narr: The day before his departure, Bhaktivedanta Swami traveled to nearby Mayapur to visit the samadhi of his spiritual master, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakur.

BVS: (after offering obeisances) You have ordered me to preach in the west and now after many years I am going. Please give me your blessings and pray to Krishna to protect me.

Narration (as BVS exits)

A local Bengali daily newspaper reported,

“Srimat Bhaktivedanta Swami, a resident of Vrindavana, has translated the Srimad Bhagavatam into English with word-for-word meaning and purports. This great work will soon be appreciated by people from far off America... hence he is departing from Calcutta for New York this Friday the 13th day of August 1965.”

(BVS exits and returns carrying a copy of Caitanya Caritamrta and a suitcase...)

Narration (cont.)

BVS took a taxi down to the Calcutta port. He was carrying a Bengali copy of Caitanya Caritamrta, which he intended to read during the crossing.

For thousands of years, krsna-bhakti had been known only in India, not outside, except in twisted, faithless reports by foreigners. And the only swamis to have reached America had been nondevotees, Mayavadiimpersonalists. But now Krsna was sending BVS as His emissary.

He was alone. A lone fighter. When he left, there was no one on the shore to bid him goodbye. No friends, no supporter, no disciple, nobody.

(Swami walks aboard the gangway to the ship, MV Jaladuta – suitcase in hand. BVS walks gangway towards audience and pauses in silence staring ahead soberly as narrator finishes exclaiming he is leaving on such a journey all alone....pause in silence...lights fade out)

SCENE 4: Captain and Wife Recall

C : Yes.. I remember this wonderful person walking onto my ship... he cut a striking figure..this swami.. do you remember him Devi?

C Wife : Yes Yes indeed, how can I forget.. He seemed to have super strength.. I said to him. “do you really think America is the best place to go Swamiji..” I was thinking that America hardly seemed ready for his message..it seemed such a difficult task for someone his age..

C : Yet he seemed so totally calm and serene, as if his work was already done

CW : And do you remember after some difficult travel we celebrated Janmastami with him..? .do you remember? ... he spoke so nicely about Lord Krishna. He really understood the importance and significance of observing Janmastami. And he chanted so sweetly...

C : Yes, yes ..and what about the feast?

(Enter BVS distributing Prasadam sweets.)

CW : Yes.. he cooked an entire feast all by himself and personally distributed it to the entire crew.. we enjoyed having the swami with us so much..

C: What did he cook Devi, do you remember

CW : ooh let me see.. there was yellow rice, samosa, puri, subji.. so many sweets.. everything was there

(Exit BVS)

C : It was so nice.. but the sea was taking its toll I think.. it was soon after that it seemed disaster was about to strike

CW : Yes.. and he was getting seasick I think I was concerned for him also

C : Look it says here.. in the book.. "He noted in his diary..rain, seasickness, dizziness, headache, no appetite, vomiting..."

CW : This was the most difficult time for him I think.. we didn't see him for three days. Does it says what happened?

C : Yes yes.. let me read it..

SCENE 5 : Storm and Crises at Sea – The Dream.

(Swami in the cabin on the bed)

Storm effects

Narration : The symptoms persisted, but it was more than seasickness. The pains in his chest made him think he would die at any moment. In two days he suffered two heart attacks. He tolerated the difficulty, meditating on the purpose of his mission, but he thought that if another were to come, he would certainly not survive.

(Swami sick in bed. Rough sea storm)

The next night Swamiji had a dream. Lord Krishna appeared to him surrounded by His many incarnations. Krsna was rowing a boat and spoke to Swami.

(Lord Krishna appears on stage in a boat surrounded by the das-avatars behind BVS who is in his bed)

Lord Krsna: My Dear AbhayCharan. Go on with your mission, I will protect you, do not fear.

(Playing the taped music, 'Prayers to the Lotus feet of Lord Krishna' by Indrudyumna Swami).

(Lord Krishna & the das-avatars stay on stage while music plays quite loudly until end of song. The das avatars come in dancing one at a time a take there stance behind the bed of Swamiji. Krishna comes after with Radha entering as the finale. After song finishes and the Lords exit there is a pause and then BVS sits up and mimes writing in his diary as)

Narration: After some time.. Prabhupada reported in his diary that his strength renewed little by little

“Today the ship is plying very smoothly. I feel today better. But I am feeling separation from Sri Vrindavan and my Lords Sri Govinda, Gopinath, RadhaDamodar. My only solace is Sri Chaitanya Charitamrita in which I am tasting the nectarine of Lord Chaitanya’a lila. I have left Bharatabhumi just to execute the order of Sri BhaktisiddhantaSaraswati, in pursuance of Lord Chaitanya’s order. I have no qualification, but have taken up the risk just to carry out the order of His Divine Grace. I depend fully on Their mercy, so far away from Vrindaban”.

Scene 6: Jaladhuta arrives in America

Captain: It was such a crisis, Devi ... do you remember you fortold of the Swami’s future success... he seemed to take your words seriously... he said you were an intelligent and learned lady...

CW: Yes .. I told him that if he should pass beyond this crisis, it would indicate the good will of Lord Krishna.

C: Oh look at this. How very nice. Let me read final poem he wrote just as he was about to disembark...

It is the “MARKINE BHAGAVATA DHARMA”

My dear Lord Krishna, You are so kind upon this useless soul, but I do not know why you have brought me here. Now you can do whatever you like with me.

But I guess you have some business here, otherwise why would you bring to this terrible place?

Most of the population here is covered by the material modes of ignorance and passion. Absorbed in material life, they think themselves very happy and satisfied, and therefore they have no taste for the transcendental message of Vasudeva. I do not know how they will be able to understand it.

But I know your causeless mercy can make everything possible because you are the most expert mystic.

.....

.....

O Lord, I am just like a puppet in your hands. So if you have brought me here to dance, then make me dance, make me dance, oh Lord, make me dance as you like.

I have no devotion, nor do I have any knowledge, but I have strong faith in the holy name of Krsna. I have been designated as Bhaktivedanta, and now if you like, you can fulfill the real purport of Bhaktivedanta.

Signed- the most unfortunate, insignificant beggar

A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami,

On board the ship Jaladuta, Commonwealth Pier,

Boston, Massachusetts, U.S.A.

Dated 18th of September, 1965

BD: Thank you captain.

Captain: Oh and please tell us of what happened to the Swamiji after her arrived...

BD: Well since his arrival the Swamiji (who is now known as His Divine Grace A C Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada made Hare Krishna a household name. He travelled all over the world for 12 years initiating many disciples. Those disciples in term served him nicely and helped with the publishing and distribution of over 60 volume of devotional literature he wrote. Srila Prabhupada opened 108 temples around the globe and also founded farming communities to teach simple living and high thinking examples.

But now as of August 13, 2015 – the 50 year Anniversary since departure of Jaladhuta on Kolkata dock, Srila Prabhupada's ISKCON can report there are:

CENTRES

602 ISKCON temples worldwide

65 farms / eco villages

54 educational institutes: including primary schools, secondary schools and tertiary Colleges

110 vegetarian Hare Krishna restaurants worldwide

DEVOTEES

75,000 devotees in ISKCON have received initiation (taken clerical vows)

7 million worshippers attend an ISKCON centre annually

3600 home study / worship (Bhakti Vriksa & Nama Hatta) groups meet regularly worldwide

BOOKS

516 million books have been published by the BBT and distributed worldwide

SANCTIFIED MEAL DISTRIBUTION

3 billion plates of sanctified vegetarian meals (prasadam) have been served worldwide

1.2 million plates of sanctified vegetarian meals (prasadam) are now served daily to Indian children as part of the "Midday Meal" or "Annamrita" by ISKCON Food Relief Foundation

FESTIVALS, CHANTING & PADAYATRA

1000 harinama chanting parties go chanting on the streets worldwide every week

6000 Vaisnava festivals held every year globally in ISKCON Centres celebrating festivals like Sri Krishna Janmastami, Rama Namani and Sri JaganathRathayatra

150 Padayata teams (walking temples, usually with bullock carts),

consisting of a total of 10,000 participants have walked 260 000 Kms

Worldwide visiting 52 000 towns & villages in 107 countries (since it began in 1976)

Captain: Oh so wonderful it sounds like a true spiritual revolution.

BD: Oh yes...and look here comes the sankirtana party would you please like to come join in?

Captain: Yes we would love to.

They all are drawn in and drift off with the ecstatic harinama party

(C & Wife clap as Harinama builds and exit)

Note: the final section is supplemented with wonderful slide projections illustrating the great achievements of Srila Prabhupada and ISKCON. The visuals help tell the awesome contribution of 50 years of ISKCON.