

Krishna Tied to the Mortar (Ukhal Leela)

From the Shri Krishna Ukhal collection



Before We Begin



Shri Vallabh

This story is inspired by the kirtans in Shri Krishna Ukhal from pushtikirtan.com. These kirtans express the divine experiences of Pushtimargiya poets. The pictures are based on their descriptions. This little book is for younger children who cannot yet read or understand the kirtans, so they may experience a little of their beauty and divinity.

This story is an adaptation inspired by the kirtans. We do not claim that it is an authentic account. Please forgive any mistakes.



In Gokul, little Krishna had eaten butter from his own home. Mother Yashoda had tied him to a wooden mortar, called an ukhal. For a little curd and butter, her precious boy was bound. Yet this was Hari himself, the Lord whom even great sages longed to see.



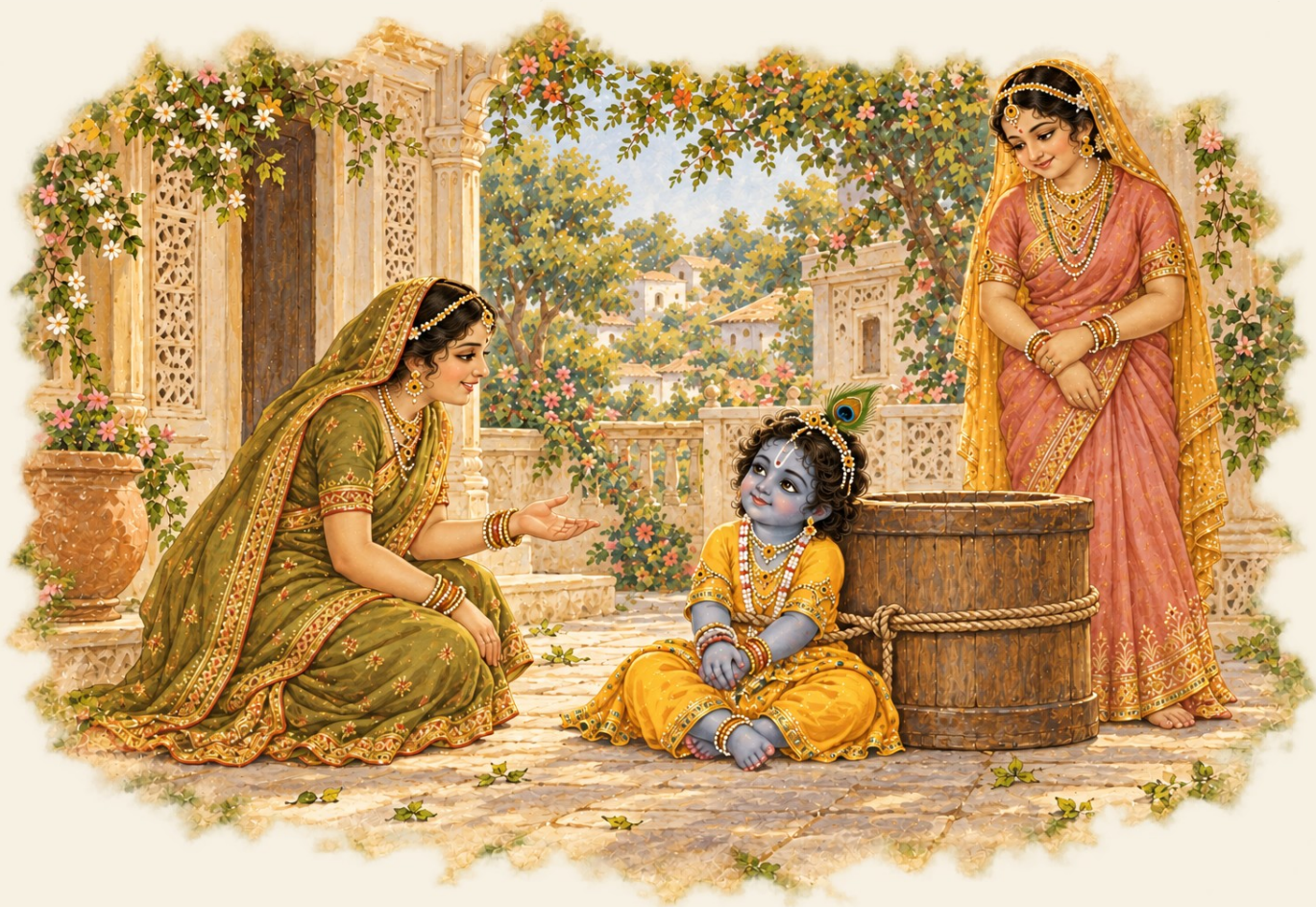
Krishna looked toward his mother again and again. Tears filled his lotus-like eyes and slipped down his cheeks. The little switch in her hand frightened him. His lovely face seemed to close like a lotus flower. Those who saw him could not bear to see their dear little Krishna so unhappy.



The women of Vraj pleaded with Yashoda. His arms were as soft as lotus stems, they said, and the rope was hurting him. He was her own dear son, the light of her family. What was a little butter beside this child? They asked her to look closely at his face.



Yashoda had household work to do, but Krishna was still outside in the courtyard. His tender face had grown faint with hunger. Even his brother Ram stayed quiet before their mother. The loving plea continued: he had been bound so long. Surely it was time to let her little boy go.



There was an offer to bring butter for him, and a plea for Yashoda to put down the little switch. Krishna's body pressed against the mortar. Words hardly came from his throat. Those who loved him urged him to be patient and stay upright, watching him with such tender care.



Then came words of comfort, full of love. Jewels, pearls, diamonds, even life itself seemed a small offering beside this precious child. Krishna heard the gentle words. The little butter thief spoke shyly. His mother had found a treasure in her own home, a treasure beyond anything anyone could give.



The Lord of all the world remained within the love of his own people. He was the Lord whom sages longed to see, yet he let himself be their little child. They knew him as Damodar, Krishna bound by love. He was the life of Vraj. Simply speaking his name brought happiness to those who loved him.

Kirtans Used

Shri Krishna Ukhal collection

pushtikirtan.com/occasion/019-shri-krishna-ukhal

Nigam Sakhi Dekhau

Nigam saakhi dekhau Gokul Hari

Poet: Surdas · Story pages: 1, 7

<https://pushtikirtan.com/kirtan/nigam-sakhi-dekhau-471>

Jasoda Terau Kathin

Jasodaa terau kathin hiyauree maaee

Poet: Surdas · Story pages: 1, 2, 6, 7

<https://pushtikirtan.com/kirtan/jasoda-terau-kathin-472>

Govind Barabar Mukh

Govind baarabaar mukh jovai

Poet: Paramananddas · Story pages: 1, 2, 3, 7

<https://pushtikirtan.com/kirtan/govind-barabar-mukh-473>

Kabake Bandhe Ukhal

Kabake baandhe ookhal Shyaam

Poet: Sur (signature) · Story pages: 4, 7

<https://pushtikirtan.com/kirtan/kabake-bandhe-ukhal-474>

Kirtans Used - continued

Chit Dai Chitai

Chit dai chitai tanuj mukh or

Poet: Surdas · Story pages: 2, 3, 6

<https://pushtikirtan.com/kirtan/chit-dai-chitai-475>

Kahau Tau Makhan

Kahau tau maakhan laaon dharate

Poet: Surdas · Story pages: 2, 5

<https://pushtikirtan.com/kirtan/kahau-tau-makhan-476>

Yashoda Mai Yah

Yashodaa maaee yah na boojihiye kaam

Poet: Surdas · Story pages: 3, 4, 7

<https://pushtikirtan.com/kirtan/yashoda-mai-yah-477>

Page numbers above refer to the numbered story pages (1-7).

Identifying first lines are given in checked transliteration.

The English narrative is an original adaptation of the source verses.