

Krishna and the Serpent

Kids Story



From the Shri Krishna's Lila of
Subduing Kaliya collection

A Little Book of Kirtan



This story is inspired by the kirtans in Shri Krishna's Lila of Subduing Kaliya 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 is a fictional story adaptation inspired by the kirtans. We do not claim that it is an authentic account. Please forgive any mistakes.

Tender little Krishna



This story begins with Kanhai, another loving name for Krishna. He appeared in a very tender little body. He went to the place where Kaliya, the serpent, lay asleep. There, the serpent's wife saw the child. The sight of such a little boy made her anxious.

A worried warning



The serpent's wife wanted Krishna to go away from danger. She asked whose child He was. Again and again, she warned Him about the sleeping serpent. To her, the child looked so small and tender. Her words were full of worry as she urged Him to leave.

Krishna's quiet smile



Krishna heard the serpent's wife speaking. He laughed and smiled within Himself. He told her that Kansa had sent Him to see Kaliya, and asked her to wake the serpent. She kept urging Him to run away. Yet the kirtan shows us Krishna's smile amid her anxious words.

The serpent's coils



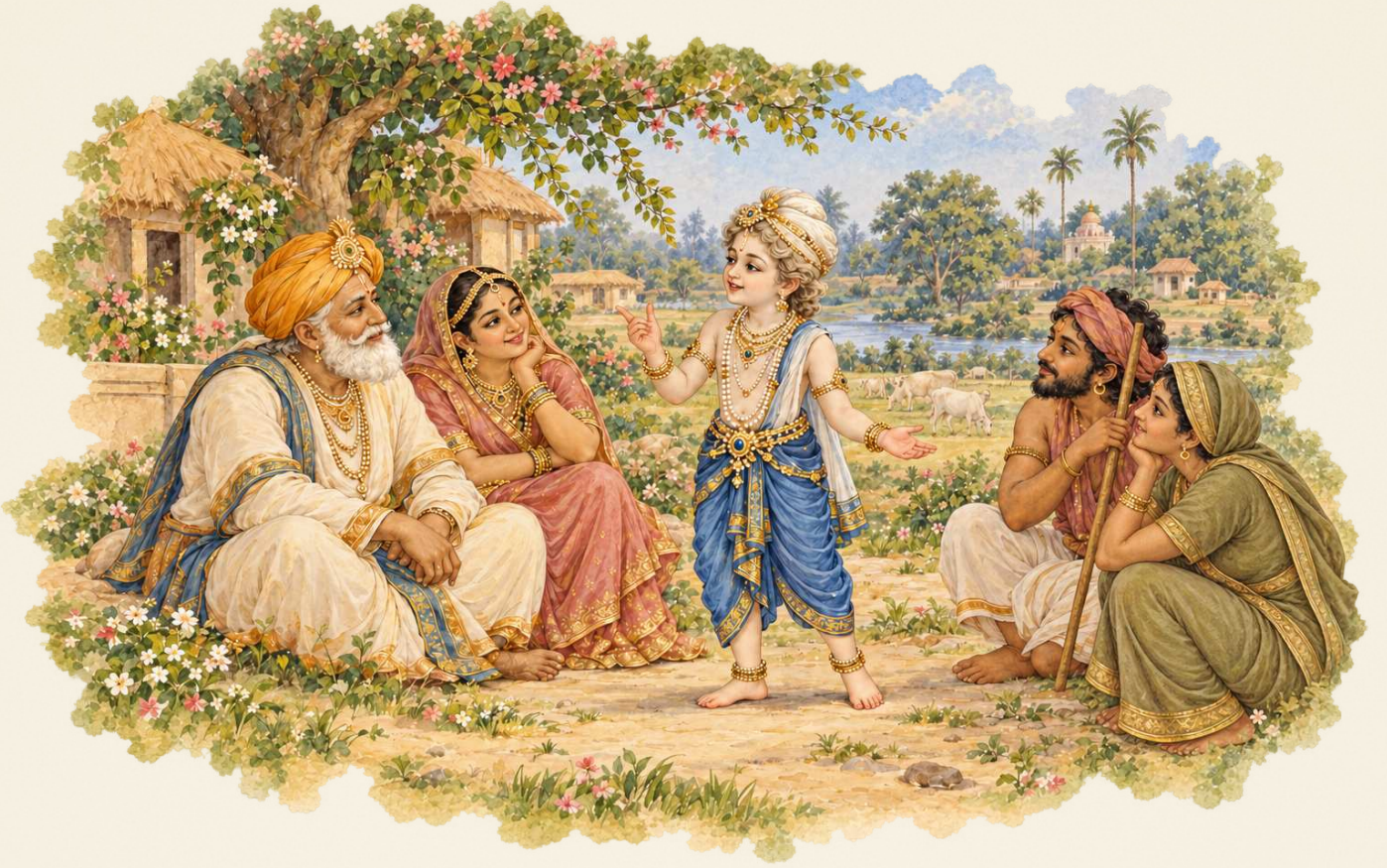
In the next kirtan, Kaliya had wrapped his coils around Krishna. The serpent spoke proudly to the cowherd child. His long body wound around Him, from His feet upward. It was a tense moment in the song. Little Krishna was held within the coils of the great serpent.

The Lord who knows



The poet calls Krishna the Lord who knows what is within. Kaliya's coils could not hide anything from Him. Krishna made His body grow larger. Then the proud serpent became troubled. The little form that had seemed so tender now revealed a power that Kaliya could not hold.

Balram brings word



The final kirtan turns our eyes toward Krishna's family and the people of Vraj. Balram spoke to Nanda and Yashoda, Krishna's father and mother. The cowherd women and men were there too. Balram told them that Shyam was coming, having subdued the serpent. Shyam is another name for Krishna.

A crown of peacock feathers



Now the song invites us to look closely at Krishna. A peacock crown rests upon His head. His eyes are large, and the ornaments at His ears sway. This is the same beloved Shyam whom Balram has spoken of. The poet lovingly notices His face and His beautiful adornment.

The wonderful dance



Yellow cloth wraps Krishna's waist. Dressed as the graceful dancer, He dances upon the serpent's hoods. The kirtan follows His movement from hood to hood. Kaliya, who had wound himself around Krishna, is now beneath His dancing feet. We see the child in His beautiful dancer's form.

Flowers from above



Above this wonderful sight, the gods play divine drums. Flowers shower down as Krishna is beheld below. The kirtan gives us music and blossoms together. Its last scene is filled with celebration. The serpent has been subdued, and the poet's gaze turns toward those who see beloved Krishna.

Happiness in Vraj



The people of Vraj saw Krishna. His mother and father saw Him too, and happiness came to them. The song ends with that happiness: beloved Shyam before their eyes. After the worried words and the serpent's coils, we leave this little book with the joy of those who behold Him.

Kirtans Used

Shri Krishna's Lila of Subduing Kaliya

[Read the original collection](#)

Ati Komal Tanu

The very tender form

Poet's signature: Sur · Story pages 1–3

[Read kirtan and original Braj text](#)

Urag Liyau Harikong

The serpent wrapped himself around Hari

Poet's signature: Surdas · Story pages 4–5

[Read kirtan and original Braj text](#)

Aavat Urag Nathye

Shyam comes, having subdued the serpent

Poet's signature: Sur Shyam · Story pages 6–10

[Read kirtan and original Braj text](#)

The English prose retells selected moments from these three songs. The original first lines are shown here in checked transliteration.