

## Yamuna – Getting letter from Janaki and meeting SP - Saranagati 2004 DVD

Yamuna continues: for all these years, it has been natural for us to speak about our father, Srila Prabhupada. Then Shyamasundara came up with this idea, and so we're going to give it a try. I pray to all of you, please forgive me my shortcomings. In my memory of Srila Prabhupada. It is an attempt to snip back to that day.

So my sister indeed sent me a letter that arrived during an amazing storm, in Portland Oregon, where trees are splitting in my front yard, and this mailman came around the corner in the storm, came up the front porch, bounded out and sat down and pulled out of his little mail pouch, a blue envelope, and I saw that it was Janaki's hand writing on the envelope. So the mailman said, "This looks like it's something big. You better open this now." So I did, and it was an invitation on very short notice, to come to New York to her wedding with the Indian swami. It was going to be an Indian wedding Swami said. So just within a few days, you now there are times in your life where you wrap up one phase of your life and you start another. And you know it. And I knew before I got on that plane, I was going to be changing gears by going to New York. So I arrived the morning before the wedding, and Mukunda said, he met me at the Bowery, and he said, "So, when we meet Swamiji, he is a very saintly man, we call him Swamiji, and you can fold your hands and say Hare Krsna." "I can do that."

So we went to this apartment that she is speaking of, just a building behind the storefront of 26 Second Avenue, which is the temple. And Srila Prabhupada, when I opened the door, there are shoes all inside the hallway, and I come into a little front room, and there is a row of windows, and coming in the windows, sunlight. It is between 11:30 and 12:30, and all around the sides of the room are men. Kind of like they looked typically hippies, just didn't really pay any attention to me, a little gruff, and Janaki whispered, "This is them." She told me about these men at the temple. She was the first woman of Srila Prabhupada's and there were no other women coming at that time.

So I said, "Hare Krsna Swamiji." The first thing he said to me, "Oh, where have you come from?" I said, "I have come from Oregon for the wedding." And he said, "Well how many other family members will be coming for the wedding?" I said, "I'm the only one." "Oh, generally from the woman's side of the family, many members come. That's alright, if you are the only one, can you help me cook tomorrow?" So I was just stunned. This was before lunch. I just kind of "hmmm, hmmm" like this and sat down. So this lunch turns out to be a lunch that Swamiji has cooked himself. And I find out that he has been cooking this lunch for many, many days, for all the devotees.

Now all the people that are there are men, and they have very hearty appetites. And the person who can eat the most chapattis is considered a really great soul. One of the men could eat twelve chapattis at a sitting. So Srila Prabhupada personally not only cooked the meal, but cooked 75 to 100 chapattis for twelve men. So I had never tasted anything Indian in my life, except my Mother's curry which she got out of a jar. Srila Prabhupada not only cooked, but then began to serve, and he had no shirt on, again, it was extremely hot, and I had a little

miniskirt on, and a little tank top like all the girls wear. I had no idea of dress decorum whatsoever. And so he starts to put the food on the plate, and I am thinking, "Oh, this looks interesting, a lot of brown and yellow, and some rice. I was also a macrobiotic at the time so I was a little leery about eating the lunch, but because Swami was serving it, I'm thinking, "Okay, I'll give this a try." But somehow or another, as he's going around the room every time he comes to my plate he wants to put a little more on and I think, "No thank you very much, I don't want any more." The devotees sitting around the room, they are kind of chuckling, laughing every time he does this, they are kind of watching me and laughing, about this putting more on my plate thing. Somehow we get through the lunch, he served the whole meal. Then he turns around to me and says, "And now for the specialty." And I looked over at him and said, "Swamiji, I'm really full, I can't eat another bite." And he said, "No, you are going to eat this." And I'm thinking, "Whatever it is, I don't want to eat this. I don't want this at all." So he goes over to the corner of the room and in a can with a snap off lid, he takes his beautiful hand, and his two fingers like this, with three fingers in the air, and he reaches in and picks up a brown ball, and he lifts it up