

Thinner Than a Crescent

Vidyapati

About the poet

Vidyapati is a great poet of Maithili. He is known as 'Maithil Kokil' (Cuckoo of Mithila). This poem is an English translation of a Maithili poem by him.

Main idea

- Radha loves Lord Krishna very deeply:
 - The pang of separation from Lord Krishna is unbearable for Radha.
 - Her health declines when she does not see him for some days.

Presentation/ style

- The poem is metaphoric:
 - The image of crescent (Amavashya se thik pahale ka chand) has been used to suggest Radha's declining health.
- The poem is in a report form:
 - Radha's friend reports Radha's condition to Krishna.
- The language is simple.

Radha's waning health

- Radha is deeply hurt, as she has not seen Krishna for several days.
- She weeps so much that her tears 'carve' a river.
- She does not give proper answer to any question.
- Radha's friends are worried for her condition:
 - She has grown thinner than the thinnest moon (Amavashya se thik pahale ka chand).

Conclusion

The image of 'crescent in the sky' suggests the urgency of the situation. Radha's condition is fast declining. If Krishna delays further, Radha may disappear, as the moon disappears in the sky.

Question

Now, on the basis of your understanding of this poem, try to answer the following questions:

1. Who has written the poem?
2. Describe Radha's condition, as reported by her friend.
3. Why is Radha's friend so worried?