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## HOW ERUCH BECAME BABA'S INTERPRETER

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### Eruch Jessawala

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9:16

**ERUCH:** You ask me as to how I became first the interpreter. I say that there is no first to it you see. The thing is that it was just a natural process. So I first met Baba in the year 1925. That means, He had just began His silence you see. The year when He started observing silence. And I have a faint memory you see of having seen Him for the first time with slates around Him. First time when I saw Him was near the Dhuni. And then subsequently I saw Him being surrounded with slates and slate pencil. You know those slates that we use in India. I don't know whether you have used it there. Now it's out of vogue. Even babies are made to write on paper or something like that or boards or something.

But we used to, in India the children used to use slates in their kindergarten. And Baba used to write on slates and converse. Writing the answers to the queries or questions put to Him by the visitors. So that is easy to read His writing. He had a very bold hand you see. And it was easy to read. So I am associated with reading these things you see from the time that He started writing on slates and then after that our family, my parents, got closer and closer to Baba and Baba blessed the house where we lived by His frequent visits. So as I grew up naturally I was so often in His proximity and then by the time He started visiting our house He started using the board. Famous board that He used. And sometimes if I am all alone there and there is nobody to interpret or read His board and if He had to give some instructions or anything for the day to my parents or the family, He would use the board. So, I

being a person on the spot. Although I was young I used to read His fingers and He would go slow with His fingers on the board. So I could decipher.

So that's how I had the practice. Gradually as years passed by I used to read whenever He used to visit the house. And then being very sharp you see myself I picked it up. And it was. And when I joined Baba in the year 1938 He started conversing with me on the board and I just followed it. That's all, there is nothing. And as I had lot of practice afterwards I could pick it up very fast. And Baba would be very fast with His fingers on the board. So I picked it up. It was just natural. I don't remember as to when I started it. But it was in the natural process.

And then when. And board reading was so frequent and such a constant affair you see that sometimes it used to fatigue my eyes and it was tiring, to read the board was tiring. It's no joke you see because we had to concentrate all the time you see on the moving finger that used to write. Without the written word you see. It used to spell out the words. The moving finger. And so often you see, Baba Himself would express how fed up He was with His silence and then we would also encourage Him to break His silence you see. When He was in that mood. And one day to our great surprise He called us and He said that today He has fixed the date to discard the use of the board. And well within myself I don't know about the feelings of others but I felt very happy about it. Because now that which was, that instrument, that gadget which was so tiring. The resultant

effect of it was so tiring that now that Baba is discarding it, well it will give relief to Baba and to the persons who interpreted the board you see.

But then I hadn't the foresight you see of what would happen afterwards. And then when He discarded the board on 7th of October 1954, the whole thing came to a standstill. There was no conversation, nothing of the sort you see. Everything came to a standstill. And we used to sit in presence of Baba and just gaze at Him and He used to gaze at us that's all. Sometimes there would be a smile passing by or something just gestures of helplessness on the part of the mandali you see. You know how the gestures are like this? What to do now? We would speak to Him and He would just remain gazing at us. That's all.

So then I who in the heart of my hearts felt that it would be nice now if Baba were to discard the board, felt or missed. Felt that I missed the board you see. And it would have been so nice if He had continued like that. So some weeks passed by and then He started preparing to go out on tours you see. And especially there was a time fixed for His going to Pandharpur. That famous place of pilgrimage over here. Where Gadge Maharaj had invited Him. And I was in a fix. Being near Baba naturally people would be surrounding Baba and I would have to say something and Baba might mean something and I would say something else you see that wouldn't be good and nice. So, I was the one who felt the pinch most at that time.

And I then told Baba about it. About my feelings and He says, He just nodded His head and again a week or two passed by. One day on His own He called me by His side and made me sit down and said. He started conversing with me you see with His gestures. And I could at once understand you see.

I told Baba about the difficulty of course I had told Him. So He just at the time did not pay any heed to it. But on His own, all of a sudden after a couple of weeks, He called me and started giving this special gestures for every alphabet. English alphabet you see.

And then He taught me all in silence about the alphabets that He would. The signs for each, every alphabet. And then the conversation again started, resumed. And the first time that publicly His gestures were used you see and interpreted was at Pandharpur. In the public.

What is it? Because of the sweetness with which He had said that you see. Something very important. Something very live. It was not just a tall talk or casual thing. It was so close you see. Therefore it has a lasting impression on my mind. I can even visualize the thing. He was sitting there in the crowd there. And the sweets nearby. And [inaudible][loud sound] throwing. Sometimes He would appear, He would make us feel that He is so close, so accessible. And then sometimes He would appear to be so far, far away from us. Inaccessible you see. Impossible to be, to have a hold of Him you see.

And sometimes He would make Himself so familiar that we forgot in His own presence who He is. And that would be very often.

**PILGRIM 1:** Very what?

**ERUCH:** Often. Often. We used to forget. Because of His closeness to us we used to forget who He is. He would make us forget. And those are the moments when we lost Him. And there were many such moments. Not many moments but many years. The moments got themselves multiplied into years you see.