
STORIES

GUSTADJI COMES TO SAI BABA, THEN UPASANI MAHARAJ

UPASANI SENDS GUSTADJI TO MEHER BABA

MANI: BAH BAH BLACK SHEEP

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Mandali Hall, Meherazad, India

September 1972

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ERUCH: You all have heard of Gustadji you know, who was with Baba for many years. And Baba gave him silence and he died in silence. Gustadji had some brothers too, older than him, some younger. So once I asked Gustadji as to how he came in contact with the Perfect Masters of the age and with Meher Baba. So that which I can now recollect I'll reproduce. He told me that In the beginning of course he was in the, he was employed by the excise department. During the time when the British ruled over India. There were distilleries you see, distilled hard liquor and all that and they, they used to store you see. The distilleries had to store all that they produced in the stores and it was not to be sold unless and until the inspector, excise inspector would permit them to sell this. So he was in charge of one of these stores you see.

So he worked there for some time with the distillery people you see. And then he didn't like the idea you see of fiddling with hard liquor so to say and so he left the place and came to Bombay. And he found a job as a clerk with one who was importing printed pictures from Germany. You know in India we used to have those litho prints. From foreign countries. Even the pictures of Ram and Krishna and Zoroaster and Jesus and others you see. They were not printed in India but they

were printed in Germany [Eruch laughs]. Yeah. And they were being imported into India and sold to the public by millions you see. So one of the importers was Gustadji's employer you see. And Gustadji was working there as a clerk.

And it so happened that while being employed there by him, he took a fancy to learn playing harmonium, Gustadji. So he had to attend some harmonium classes you see where the teacher taught him harmonium. There in that classroom he finds a picture you see of somebody who was quite a stranger to him. He sees that big picture there and he asks his teacher as to who he is. He says, "Well, he's Sai Baba." "Sai Baba? What's Sai Baba?" he asks. "Well, he's a master you see." "Where does he live?" He says, "Well he lives somewhere near Pune, a place called Shirdi." "Oh," he says, "Is he a Mohammedan or a Hindu?" Says, "One cannot know. Nobody's sure of his caste or his religion." "Nobody is sure of his religion? What does he say?" "He doesn't say anything about religion. He just speaks about love of God."

That was his first introduction to Sai Baba. [inaudible] That's how he contacted Sai Baba for the first time through that picture. But that impression remained lasting you see and the word Sai Baba all the time just

haunted him. And he had made plans so often to go to him but because of pre-occupation and because of many other things, maybe the time was not right, he couldn't go. All of a sudden one day his younger brother comes to him and says, "Gustad, Gustadji do you know, have you heard of Sai Baba?" He says, "Yes, yes I have heard of Sai Baba." "You would like to go to him?" Says, "Yes, I'm planning for quite a long time to go to him. Why do you ask me that?" He says, "Well I am going there. If you want I can accompany you. I can take you to him. I have been there once or twice." Said, "It will be nice. I want to go." So he took leave from his employer and straight away went to Sai Baba first.

Well he was in the presence of Sai Baba. No sooner Sai Baba saw him you see he put forth his hand. Sai Baba put out his hand and says, "Well, how much have you got in your pocket? Part with it." So Gustadji of course parted with some of his rupees and he says, "Well well give the rest. The balance? The balance is with you." Says, "But." Well Gustadji didn't know what to do. Because if he were to part with that balance how would he go back you see? Well it was the first meeting, he didn't know, he was awestruck. He never expected that the master would ask for money. He thought that master would ask for something like bananas or some sweets or something like that. And here is a master who asks not only for money but for every pie that is in his pocket. It was strange to him. Well he had to give and he gave all that he possessed. And then he stayed for some time with his brother you see. Just a few hours. And then his brother brought him back to Bombay.

After a while you see, a month or two, he got another urge to go there. On his own he went. But this time he was wary about it. He had his wallet with him but there he made divisions you see. So before he approached Sai Baba he gave that wallet to somebody and says that, "This is the money for my return fare. You keep it with you there." And then he approached Sai Baba. And then Sai Baba was, appeared to be happy to see him again and looked at him and says—again the same routine was followed. Sai Baba put forth his hand demanding the money from him. And that was his routine. Not that it was just because Gustadji was there or anybody who went there almost everybody, with everybody, almost with everybody.

Sai Baba used to wear a long gown. And the longest of the thing in the gown was, it was his pocket [general laughter]. Right from the hip it would just go down to his ankle almost [pilgrim laughs]. To the hem of the very long pocket. And everyday visitors would come and he would put forth his hand. And he would collect and put the thing in the pocket.

Before he retired he would just turn his pocket outside. What do you call it? Inside out. And there wouldn't be a pie there. What would he do with the money? Well he would just distribute to all those who were around him. All of them. That included anybody. If Gustadji were there also if he wished he would just throw some coins there. And that was his routine. Sai Baba didn't take a pie from that. On the contrary he had five houses according to Gustadji that were fixed. Every time and when it was lunch time for him to beg he would go out and stand in front of the five houses there and each one was deputed to give a raw onion, unpeeled and a fresh

bhakri, hot from the oven. You know the bhakris that you are given here sometimes? Jowar bhakri. So five bhakris and five onions would be brought by Sai Baba to his place. And he would share with the ones who were very close to him. And that was his diet.

But then there were others, very rich who would bring delicious dishes for him and they would just put before him for him to take and partake of. And all this would be put there. So Sai Baba noticed all this during his second visit when he was there. And what he noticed was that these dishes would be kept there and at the appointed time a curtain would be drawn, hiding the dishes and Sai Baba behind the curtain. But within five minutes there would be a clap and the curtain would be drawn aside and the dishes were then distributed to the people around. Sai Baba would just put his finger and lick from each dish you see. That would be a sort of an acceptance of the offering. That's how Sai Baba lived.

Then Gustadji noticed. All this is what Gustadji tells me about the curriculum there. Because it comes in his story. Then Gustadji noticed another thing. "You know what Sai Baba," he asked me, "Do you know what Sai Baba used for his bed?" I said, "No." "Well," He says, "There were people, the mill owners, they would come for certain boons and all that. And what they would bring. They would bring bolts of cloth. Plain white cloth like this. And they would be just heaped there. So on a heap of all the bolts, there he would just lie down for the night." And he says, "Do you know that he had two resting places? And both the resting places were close by. One was a temple and another was a mosque. So alternate nights he would be visiting the mosque and then the next

night would be the temple for his rest-room. And in both the places there would be these bolts there where he would lie down."

So he was happy with his visit to Sai Baba for the second time. With the money he kept with his friend there he went back home and he continued with his job. But somehow or other he was not happy with all this. The urge prompted him to go again and again, again and again. And then one day he goes there and he says, Sai Baba asks him, "Can you help me with 225 rupees?" So it so happened that Gustadji had with him 200 rupees all together. He continued with that system. Keeping the railway fare away from Sai Baba. So not counting the railway fare he did have 200 rupees with him to be offered to Sai Baba if he asked for more or anything like that. So he offered 200 rupees and he said that he had just 200 rupees. He says, "Then beg for 25 Rupees and bring." So Gustadji went round you see. First of all he had that money about 10 rupees or so for his railway fare. So he collected that from the person and then he begged for 15 rupees more and offered it to Sai Baba.

Sai Baba was very happy about it. Well he wouldn't say anything to Gustadji. Gustadji says that he was the most neglected person there. Most unwanted person by the crowd over there but he did. He had a fascination you see, some sort of attraction that attracted him towards Sai Baba. That drew him all the time closer and closer to Sai Baba. But Sai Baba remained completely indifferent towards Gustadji.

Then it so happened that the time had come and Gustadji was prompted from within that he should now no more return

to Bombay but to live permanently near Sai Baba. He now knew what was the requirement and all that. So he packed a trunk full of clothes and had a blanket and other things and then he went well prepared, with the money that he had.

So whenever he kept his trunk there outside. There were no built up things or anything. Sai Baba was. There were two things—either Sai Baba would be in the, outside the temple or there the mosque. Another thing that he witnessed there during his visits with Sai Baba that whenever Sai Baba wanted to go out for toilet you see, there would be a procession. A band would be played for him to go. He was led there for that with a band and all that. I don't know how a person feels at ease you see for a. He being taken to a toilet in a procession with a band. But here that was the custom and Gustadji was amazed to see that. And then Sai Baba would spend some time there, in the open in front of the people there but people would leave him from a distance. They would just keep there and be seated. And chat amongst themselves and all that. And when somebody spotted Sai Baba they were ready to again return. Then again the band would play [Eruch imitates the sound of a horn] You know that one peculiar type of a horn that is used for welcome and for some auspicious occasions. And that horn would sound the beginning of his return journey. And then the other drums would be played and cymbals would be played and people would start singing bhajans and dancing and in a procession he would be brought back to the place.

Then after a while and all that then that would be time for Sai Baba. After a little discourse and all that. Then Sai Baba

would go for begging. Sometimes he would pass around chillum of tobacco. That would go around with the people. He would share with the others also. And that's how the day would be passed. There would be aarti sung of Sai Baba and so forth.

So one day now Gustadji decides to go there to live permanently with Sai Baba. He goes, he has his trunk, he has his clothes, he has all the requirements with him there. He places them outside there and goes to Sai Baba for the first darshan now. And what does he find when he returns? No trace of all that. Absolutely all the things that he had on his head you see, the cap, the coat, the shirt, the pajama under it. Sadra he used to wear. You know Zoroastrians have to wear that sadra. That thin thing that Baba always wore you see. But not right down to the ankles. Usually Zoroastrians wear right up to the waist.

So the cap he said, the coat he had, the shirt, the sadra, the pajama underneath and a trouser over it. Pair of trousers and his slippers. That was his belonging now. All the money, the trunk and everything was lost, pilfered. Well, he said, "Now that I am determined to stay near Sai Baba, will take it as a boon that I haven't to just guard these things. All the time my attention would be drawn towards my belongings instead of my being with Sai Baba." So he took it as an auspicious sign to start a different world you see. A different life now near Sai Baba. So he remained with that. Now what about his food? Nobody offered him food there. He remained like that. Anytime there would be some, what do you call, distribution through Sai Baba. A piece of sweet or a banana thrown or something like that. That was his meal. Where to get water? There was no water

nearby. So he had to go at a distance of about two furlongs. There was a spring there. So he would go when he would feel thirsty and just with his hands sip water [clock chimes]. Suck water out of it, or lapped if you want to say.

Then he would be back near Sai Baba, and his duty. Sai Baba treated him with complete indifference, complete indifference. All that he would do would be partake in all the things that would happen. And just remain sometimes sitting, reclined to a post or standing. Days passed by and Gustadji used to get thinner and thinner and frailer and frailer without food and all that. So one day when he must have fasted for many, many days, weeks. Fasted in this sense, just a morsel may have been thrown here and there you see. Like somebody throws to a dog. So then one day when he was feeling absolutely weak and exhausted. He couldn't even. It was so difficult for him to go to the spring to lap water. So Sai Baba turns, without turning towards him. He says, "You people are really callous people you see. Don't you know that I am starving for so many days? And you have no regard. You come here with all due love and reverence and respect and don't you know the object of reverence and love and respect is being starved like this?"

Then he would look at Gustadji you see for some time. "And you come here you see trying to ask me for a boon and all that and you have no regard for my starvation you see." And again he would look at Gustadji. People knew that this man has come and nobody has offered him. No sooner the session was over Gustadji was just drowned so to say with a downpour of invitations you see. And he did not know how to approach them and what to do?

And he was dragged some here and then he was dragged by somebody else you see. And that's how he fell sick. He never had fallen sick. Because people forced food through, down his throat. And he could not. He had eaten so much you see that he couldn't even breathe that day. And he would say that he wouldn't want to eat or anything but he said, "No. Sai Baba was very upset about it and we are here you see and we have to." And he fell ill and nobody took care of him. He started shitting like anything you see, diarrhea and vomiting and he ran temperature and all that. For many days he just remained like that. Just taking Sai Baba's name there. When he recovered then again they had forgotten about it all you see. And again he started starving [Eruch laughs].

So likewise he passed his days over there but then later on there were people who came to know that he needs some help so he was given you see. There were regular houses where he was invited once a week or twice a week, like that. And that's how he divided his meals among the different houses. Then it so happened he says that when it was time. Haan, then there was another Chotta Baba near Sai Baba he says. One Bada Baba was there. There were two Baba's you see, Chotta Baba and Bada Baba. Bada means big Baba and Chotta means small Baba. And they had their own ways of living near Sai Baba. They would command, they would order things and I was treated like a slave there you see. Sometimes, and these both were being affected spiritually. And they would do and command and order anything. And I being a frail person sometimes, Gustadji said that, "They would order me to lift a beam you see and bring it over here. And how could I do, I would just try to attempt that." And so forth.

So there was another. He had other masters also besides Sai Baba. Means these vague masters you see. Alright. Then there came a day.

PILGRIM 1: [inaudible]

ERUCH: No, that was not spiritual master. What I say is that there were other masters to be obeyed. Not the spiritual master of course. Sai Baba was the only one. But then there were these stray people who would order and command. A day came in 1918 when Sai Baba was feeling feverish and ran high temperature. And the one who looked after him, Sai Baba's. Gustadji witnessed this. Just he reclined towards the person who attended to him and then on his lap he put his head and that was the last of Sai Baba. And that's how Sai Baba dropped his body. And then, in the meantime he would be seeing Upasani Maharaj too, Gustadji. Because Upasani Maharaj was being trained so to say for the post now that he would have had to hold now after Sai Baba. And Sai Baba was. And Upasani Maharaj was housed in a small dilapidated temple there. Where nobody would want to go because Upasani Maharaj was in a jalali mood at the time.

You know jalali means fiery mood. He would fire people you see. Throw stones at them, abuse them and run after them and all that. Even if somebody were to go with some food also he wouldn't want to accept that you see, because he was in that mood. And what happened was that. So when he went there, Gustadji used to go sometimes and just peep and he would find Upasani Maharaj quietly sitting there and then come away.

One day it so happened that he, when he wanted to approach Upasani Maharaj there, just from a distance. What happened? He smells, he gets a stink you see of human shit all around. And what he finds is that Upasani Maharaj had plastered all human shit there so that nobody could enter. Even jump that distance and enter there. People would go and offer food. He didn't like that you see. Because that is the mood when you don't want anything. All what you long for is Him, Him and nothing matters. And all these are. There is no distraction left now you see but it's disturbance. You see there are two things, disturbances and distractions. A stage reaches when distractions no more distract. But distractions become disturbances you see. So all this was a disturbance you see. Or intrusion you may call it. And therefore he didn't want them. Now how to avoid these people? In spite of his running after them, hitting them, throwing stones they would come. The only thing to avoid them was to spread human shit you see [Eruch laughs]. Nobody would want to jump over that. And a big area was covered there. And he was so intrigued, Gustadji when he told me about this.

Then after Sai Baba dropped his body, he was drawn before that you see for some time and some once or twice Sai Baba had also given hints that, "Why don't you go there sometimes?" So that's why Gustadji would go there and peep and come back. Just to keep his word you see. Because he was so frightened of Maharaj. He didn't know. After a week of staying in Shirdi, after Sai Baba dropped the body, he felt that it was no use continuing there. The hint was already given. So he went and sat outside the temple there. Where Upasani Maharaj was. So he continued there,

sitting there. So Upasani Maharaj was by that time almost ready. He also would come out you see and then he would follow him. And then he would drive him out. So again he would follow him and so forth. So that's how he got in contact of Upasani Maharaj.

And he was there at the time you see, staying with Upasani Maharaj. In the meantime of course.

PILGRIM 2: How did Gustadji hear of Baba? Did he hear just before he [crosstalk].

ERUCH: No. No then what happened was while he was with Upasani Maharaj, Baba would go there. Baba was there, going and coming and going and coming and then Baba stayed there for about 6 months there. And after that Upasani Maharaj handed over Gustadji to Baba.

PILGRIM 1: When Upasani first went to Sai Baba he was very young, wasn't he?

ERUCH: Yes, yes of course.

PILGRIM 1: Teenager or something like that.

ERUCH: Yeah, yeah. Not that teenager. He had married twice or something like that you see. And he was not teenager. No he was quite old.

PILGRIM 1: I don't know how old he was.

ERUCH: No, no. He was of a good age.

MANI: Gustadji was there when Baba first met Sai Baba in [inaudible]. And Sai Baba said, "Parvardigar."

ERUCH: Well I don't remember that.

MANI: [Inaudible]

ERUCH: Hmm. Might be.

PILGRIM 3: Sai Baba said what?

PILGRIM 1: Parvardigar.

ERUCH: Mani says that, Mani remembers that Gustadji was there at the time when Baba for the first time visited Sai Baba, before Sai Baba dropped the body. And when Baba visited Sai Baba and when Baba prostrated before Sai Baba, Sai Baba all of a sudden shouted out, "Parvardigar," you see. And Gustadji bore witness to it and said that he was there present at the time.

MANI: [Inaudible]

ERUCH: Then what happened naturally, Gustadji was with Upasani Maharaj and Baba would be there and Baba was there for nearly 6 months there. One day when it was time for Baba to leave Upasani Maharaj so there was. You know the story there now. It's mentioned there I think in *The Reminiscences* or somewhere in *Listen Humanity*. You can pick it up from there. Otherwise it will become more confusing. So at the time not only Gustadji but there were some others also who were told by Upasani Maharaj in presence of the crowd. All the people who were staying there. That he had given charge to Meherwan. That He holds the key now. And that they should adhere to Him and follow Him through thick and thin.

So one of them was Gustadji also who came with Baba. So that's the story of Gustadji [crosstalk].

MANI: [Inaudible] Meherwan.

ERUCH: Yeah. Gustadji was told not to leave Meherwan. [gap]

ERUCH: I was driving the car, Baba was sitting by my side and we could not drive fast you see and get out of the town. And Baba asked me, "What's the matter? Why is the crowd, where is the crowd going?" You see. So I just slowed down the car and asked the people, "What's the matter? Anything wrong in the town or anything?" He says, "No we are going for the [foreign] urs of a certain saintly person, a master," you see. "Where is that?" He says, "On the outskirts of the town." And then naturally we had to follow the crowd and go through the crowd and just make a lot of use of our horn you see [general laughter] and all that. Honking and all that. And then when we approached you see the outskirts, all of sudden I find Baba sitting by my side you see just shaking like jelly fish are all the seat you see. And I just turned my head and find Baba having a very hearty laugh. But because He was observing silence I couldn't hear Him laugh but I could feel the shaking going on you see [general laughter].

So I looked at Him and then I just said, "Is there anything wrong Baba?" I said. So Baba said just. He pointed out you see at the Mausoleum, that big shrine there. He says, "Can you see the man there with that particular type of a cap in that colour?" I said, "Yes." "So that makes me laugh." I said, "What's that in that?" So He says, "This whole shrine is dedicated to this one's soul you see. When he was in his past incarnations. And now he himself comes here to bow down to his own tomb

you see [inaudible]. So that makes me laugh," He says [pilgrims laughing].

So our story, what we were just now discussing.

MANI: I want to sing a song about Baba. "Bah Bah black sheep have you any wool? Yes sir, yes sir, 3 bags full. One for my master, one for my dame, One for the little boy that lives down the lane."

MANI: And this is what a Baba lover who now has two children. This is a song she sang to Baba when she was about 4 or 5 years old. She was brought up the hill in Meherabad when we were. And that's Gaimai's mother brought the little child. The child is now.

PILGRIM 6: Gaimai's mother?

MANI: Eruch's mother, Gaimai. So when she came up the hill to see Baba and all the family were there. And this little girl, that is Eruch's cousin was there and she sang. Baba said, "Sing a song, sing a song for Me." And Gaimai said, "Go on, go on. Sing a song, go on. Baba said sing a song." So the little girl sang this song. [Mani imitates the child singing] "Ba ba black sheep have you any wool." And Baba said, "It's very good," and He caressed her chin and patted her and then the moment Baba turned, Gaimai, that's Eruch's mother, says to the little girl, "Oh why didn't you sing a Baba song? Oh why didn't you sing a Baba song? I told you to sing a Baba song." And the child looked at her so hurt and said, "But I did. I sang Baba's song. I said Ba-Ba black sheep have you." Oh by that time when we heard it we were so amused, it was so funny.

You know that heaven and hell is divided by a wall. And that's natural. So there was this wall between heaven and hell and after many, many, many, many years the wall fell down. A portion of the wall crumbled and fell down. So from hell Lucifer sends a note to heaven. Says, "There's a bit of the wall fallen down. Kindly repair it at once." Gabriel writes back and says, "Well, he doesn't see why he should repair it. The wall has fallen down, alright. It was for Lucifer to repair it." And Lucifer then, for a few days he was silent but then he writes back and he says, "Another reminder to you. Please have that wall repaired." Again after another few days he writes back and he said that he had written to him before to say that it was not incumbent on him to repair the wall. Lucifer should repair the wall as it is he who saw it and is so worried, concerned over it. Let Lucifer repair the wall.

Few days silence. Lucifer sends another note and says, "This is the last reminder we're sending you. You may take it as a notice and if you don't repair the wall by such and such a time we'll sue you for it and take the matter to court." Very promptly Gabriel replies and says, "It's alright. We'll repair the wall because we have no lawyers on this side of the wall." [pilgrims and Mani laughing].

You mean you want to test it?

PILGRIM 7: Test it.

MANI: Yeah. Well we're sitting here in Mandali Hall.

I thought of this little incident that happened not long after Baba dropped His body. We were, after the Darshan we had come back to Meherazad and we were

trying to function practically and carry on as knowing what Baba would want us to do, how he would want us to carry on. But, and Baba's presence was very much felt but at the same time there was a great pain in the heart. And I remember this thing. One evening it was just about dusk time and visibility was very poor. Sun had set and I suddenly remembered I had something to show Eruch. Some papers that he had asked for. It was quite darkish and I came over from the women's side and up to at the back of Eruch's room where he was washing his hands. And I stood there and I said, "Eruch this letter."

He got up and he went further. Just outside the mast mango tree that is at the back of his room. And he said, "Come here. Come and watch." So I went out and he said, "What do you see?" I said, "I can't see anything." "What do you hear?" I said, "I hear the sheep. They are baaing." One was saying baaa the other was saying beeh and baa, beh. A lot of sheep. You see the sheep, they were in our field at the back. Just adjoining the mast mango tree on the west side of Eruch's room. There's the field and some part of the field. And what they do here is, the villagers when they take out their goats and sheep for grazing. What they do is they ask permission to park their sheep in your field for the night. And you allow it because their droppings are very good as manure for the field. So then you allow them to chop some branches off your tree, thorny tree. Like our Babul tree which is thorny. And then they make a circular ring of it, enclosure. They put all their sheep in it.

So I saw that that must be it because we could hear the sheep. And I said, "Yes I hear the sheep." And he said, "What do you see?" I said, "Now that I've got my

eyes have gotten adjusted to the light or to the darkness rather, I can see just shapes." That they were there you know because they are white and black and all the sheep. "Nothing else?" I said, "No. No they are just crying out, bahing." "Look to the left." I said [inaudible]. And then suddenly I saw darker than the darkness there was a quiet, just a shape. A silent someone. Just a shape of someone blacker than the blackness of the evening. Some distance away from the sheep. And then I suddenly realised it was the shepherd. And because it was at night time and at night time it's cool and to protect himself from the wind, the shepherd covers himself with a black, what we call kamli. Like the kamli that made Baba's coat. The material out of which Baba's coat was made. Kamli means hand spun, hand woven from the black sheep. It's a very crude, rough blanket which is very cheap. So that, inexpensive. We had that in the New Life when we went, each one of us.

So there he was covered with that black kamli and not visible but he was facing the sheep. And he said, "The sheep are crying out and they think they're alone. They think they're in this enclosure and they think that they are by themselves. But there's the shepherd. His eyes and his concentration, his whole thought is on the safety of his sheep and he's watching them. Very silently so that he's not even visible." And do you know seeing that, while Eruch said that, it was such a great comfort, such a great. It was like a message from Baba Himself. It was as if you could see that yes, Baba's always here. We cannot see him now. Just as I could not see the shepherd. But He's very much there and we'd cry out, we'd think we are by ourselves but we're not. We can't see Him but He sees us. Has His nazar as He

said, His eyes on us and He's facing us and looking after us. He is very much with us.

And we're sitting here in the Mandali Hall at Meherazad and there's the chair, Baba's chair before us. Baba used to sit in the chair and the mandali would be sitting there before Him. This side and this side or in front. And this also where the singing programmes have been held, qawwali. The qawwali is the singing where gazals are sung. Gazals are very often composed by poets. Great poets who have also had experience of the path or have been on the path or even have been perfect like Hafiz for instance you see.

So in these songs, in these true lovers of God. These songs are composed to the Beloved, for the Beloved. And in that, in the lines the lover praises the Beloved, complains to the Beloved, berates the Beloved. Very intimately but very agonisingly or very profoundly or very lovingly and all that goes on you see. So right here, one singing programme was when Begum Akhtar, the lady whose voice Baba liked so much. She was sitting here, she came here just to sing to Baba. And there was this song and as she was singing to Baba. She had composed a song about Baba. She sang that and then she began to sing the regular gazals of some of these great poets. And as she was singing this song tears were going down her cheeks. And Baba smiling lovingly, nodding, nodding, nodding to the tune, the words. And he gave His kerchief and told Eruch to give to Begum Akhtar and he gave. She wiped her eyes with that.

But I remember there was this one verse, this line in it and she was singing. In which the lover says to the Beloved, "Who will listen to my complaints? Who will answer my

call? Who will see to my need?" You know, in love, in agony of love. "Who's there who will listen to me? Who will take heed of me? Of what I say." And this is the tradition of the song. And Baba while she was saying that, Baba said the way He gestured, "I, I am there, I am the One who listens." Making the gestures in reply while she was saying, "Who would take heed of what I say?" Baba said, "I, I will listen, I will take heed. I will grant, I will do." So beautifully the way Baba did it. You know, that the lover need not complain. I am there, I am the One who listens to all and to the cry of the heart. I am the One who answers. I am there. I am here. I listen [Mani laughs].