
Stories and 1956 Accident

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59:38

ERUCH: "Come," I said, "Here He is there in the car waiting for you." He ran to Baba and it was a sight to see you see how these two, the lover and the Beloved met. They embraced, they kissed each other. And then he took Baba inside his house and there he just sat down and put his head on His lap and he wept and wept through joy.

Through utter joy. And after some time you see, half an hour or so, pleasant exchanges of words you see, Baba said it was time for Him to leave. And he had completely forgotten you see everything. He didn't even give a thought to giving tea to Baba or morning. It was morning time. It was time for breakfast or something. Anybody is received in the house you see is given, offered tea. And when Baba comes it's the custom that one has to offer something. He had completely forgotten everything. He had lost his senses so to say in presence of Baba.

So then he led Baba back to the car in obedience to Baba saying that He wanted to leave. And then when Baba sat in the car he got back his senses feeling that now Baba is to leave. And that was a sight you see. Oh it was most touching, heart rending feeling that we had about his separation and he begged of Baba to just wait in the car till such time he would bring tea and all that. He says. "There is nothing more wanting." Baba was completely full with his love. That He was served very well. That He was happy to see him. That His heart and appetite were all appeased so to say. Baba says that because of his love. And then He left. And after a short while Dr. Daulat Singh also dropped

his body and he died. So that's the story of Dr. Daulat Singh who led New Life conditions away from Baba.

He was very fortunate. Not that he continued to live that life, New Life. That's nothing you see that's just an 'obedience' to us. But he was most fortunate because he was remembered when he left the companions there. He continued to be remembered and he still continues to be remembered for his great love and sacrifice that. In the cause of Baba, yeah.

Telling stories. And even during His childhood days He would tell us that He would go to a certain place you see where there would be a storyteller who'd be telling stories. And there would be somebody coming to His house, an elderly person telling and that he was also fond of telling stories and Baba was very fond of hearings stories. So He would look forward to that time when he would come, the man, that friend of His father would come to the house and tell stories. He would sit there for long hours just hearing the stories.

He was fond of hearing good stories. And even during His seclusion, after He finished His work you see, daily work, He would sometimes tell us to give a good story. Tell Him a good story so we used to find out or we used to keep ready some stories for Him to hear. But there were occasions when He would tell us some stories too you see. Because Baba you know, with Baba it was always give and take. We gave Him whatever we could

give Him you see. And He would give us whatever He wanted us to have.

So He was a good companion, a great friend and everything you see. So He would also regale us with His stories and one of the stories that He told us was this - That there was in Iran a very famous jeweler. You know in olden days these people you see there were famous people who would go from place to place selling gems. Diamonds and pearls and rubies and other things to the royalties. And go from one country to other you see and they would deal only in selling of gems. So that type of a jeweler.

And there used to be a season for that person to go out. Now every year for many years this man would go out to sell his gems, in the same country and he was considered to be a very famous jeweler. In the same country there was a very famous thug you know. You know who thugs are? The con men. And now of course these con men, here you see the modern con men they don't deal with your throats you see. They deal with your sentiments and feelings and your innocence. But those were the days when the con men not only you see took you in confidence but suppose if you didn't care to get yourselves into their confidence they would strangle you, you see, kill you. So those were the people who were called thugs you see. And are known as thugs here in India.

Well the thug you see had watched this jeweler for many years and he thought that the time had come now to earn something from this jeweler. Now jeweler being a jeweler, he had his merchandise with him but that didn't mean that he was carrying a caravan load of merchandise with him. Those gems are carried in small packets. And he's not going to carry a load of it or bail of merchandise. There was no need for a camel or an ass or anything. The jeweler always thought, always travelled all alone on foot. He didn't care for any animals or

anything. So when he set out on this tour you see for that season, he was met by a certain person who saluted him and says, "Good morning to you sir." He says, "Good morning." Says, "May I accompany you on your tour wherever you are going because I am going in the same direction that you have taken now?" He says, "You are welcome," the jeweler said. The other man said that well, he was very fortunate to have a good company in him and they walked. And they walked and thug being after all thug is thug you see. He can talk a lot. So in his talks he found out where his, where he wanted to go you see and where his halts were and all that and somehow or other he contrived in his talks in a way that, "What a coincidence," he said that he has to go all the distance you see with him. It means that he will be a companion for many, many months.

So the jeweler you see says, well he's very happy to have a company, he doesn't mind it. So they both went out. Every night both of them would halt at the same inn. Eat food, share food, talk and sleep. And next morning they would start and then he would enter a certain city you see and he, the jeweler would go to his customers there and sell some gems and come back and all that. Everything was there. As usual. The thug would go out in the town and do things you know. You know what he would do. You don't know? Well he would cheat somebody you see and get something. That's what he would do you see. And both joined you see and then they rested in the town, in the inn.

Every night this thug you see would be after the packet. The diamond packets from the jeweler. He would try to search in vain you see and try to find out where he kept his gems you see. That packet of gems. Days passed by, weeks passed by but he couldn't lay his hand on the packet of gems. Sometimes he wondered whether he was the real person. Whether he was the real jeweler you see. Or whether he was a

fake and the real jeweler has gone far away from them.

Well it so happened that months passed by. He dared one night even to just probe under the pillow of the jeweler you see. Try to find out whether the packet was there or shoved anywhere here, there. Nothing, nothing. The jeweler used to sleep soundly you see. Without any cares or anything of the sort. A day came when they had to part. The jeweler said, "I have finished my journey and this is the end of my journey now. And I will just stay here for some days you see and it's a big town and city." And the thief said, the thug said that it was also now time for him to part, but before he parted the thug actually prostrated before the jeweler and says, "Sire, you are my guru from today and I am determined not to harm you. I don't know whether you are aware who I am?" So the jeweler said, "Well you are my companion for so many months." So he says, "No. I had some ulterior motive behind this. I am the greatest thug of Persia. I knew that you are the greatest of the jewelers you see. Are you not sir?" He wanted to ascertain. He says, "Yes I am the same one." Says, "Being myself the greatest thug, I tried my best to get that packet of gems from you. Every night I tried to search your belongings. Every night I did that. You slept well, you had no cares whatsoever and at the same time you carried the burden with you all the while. So I have failed in all my tricks you see. I have failed and now I surrender to you because you are my guru, you must show me where you used to keep the packet. You must tell me so that I may learn something from you."

And he said, "My brother, why didn't you ask me before? I would have told you because I would have confided in you this. It's so simple." He says, "What makes you feel so carefree in the night when with all that treasure that you own?" He says, "It's simple. The packet would always be in

your satchel. And you wouldn't care. I knew that, that you wouldn't want to care you see to search your satchel. And I would just put it there deep down your satchel you see and go to sleep." Said, "Did you know sir that I would be searching you?" He says, "Well I knew that, I was aware that it's no good depending on anybody you see, I knew that. But I slept carefree. I just, I didn't, I was not made conscious that you were searching me all night or anything of the sort. But I slept carefree. Why? Because I knew that you wouldn't care to search your own satchel. Had you cared for it you would have found it. But you went out in search you see all around me. All the places you see that you think of."

This was the story told to us by Baba and Baba said, "This is how man possessing the treasure in his own satchel you see, goes out from place to place. Wanders, tries to find out you see whether the treasure is here or there and spends all his lifetime trying to find it out. But if he were to search in his own heart, it shines there. It is there, it is his. He possesses it and yet he tries to find out elsewhere." That is the story that He told us.

You seem to be very fond of Gustadji you see.

PILGRIM 1: [inaudible]

ERUCH: Yeah. You want to hear Gustadji's stories right. So apart from the ones that we narrated the other day about his visit to Taj Mahal and his travelling with Baba you see in the railway compartment there where he got himself behind the luggage. Got himself locked in a lavatory. There is another story. I don't know whether you all are aware of it or not. Gustadji was very very fond of mangoes. Besides being fond of cheese you see. Cheese stood number 1 you see in his likes. Then came mangoes. Fresh, ripe mangoes. He loved, he loved them very much. And sometimes when

Baba would tour you see to places where mangoes were to be found in abundance or where we stayed you see in some Baba lover's house where there were mango trees and fruits were ripe, especially during the summer months. Well that was something, something very, very, it was a sort of a windfall for Gustadji I should say. To have mango trees laden with mangoes in the house. But sometimes there will be a dearth of mangoes during the mango season because Baba wouldn't go to any place at that time. And naturally the mandali would be given the mangoes from the parcels that were received you see.

So, to the lot of mandali there would be one or two or three mangoes during a season so to say. It so happened once that we were somewhere here. You know the place we went, Aurangabad? The other day. So there if I remember right. It might be somewhere nearby Aurangabad or near Hyderabad or Secunderabad, I forget now but it's there. That somebody had brought mangoes to Baba and Baba distributed a mango to each of the mandali you see. Good size mango. Gustadji being very fond of it and as it is usual with the Indians you see, anything that is offered on the plate you see and of which you are very fond of, the person, an Indian would eat that particular thing last. I don't know whether it's the same practice in the West or not. But normally here in India what we find is now suppose so many things are served on a platter and you take things you see. You take your things. But if you have a particular liking for a certain dish what you would do is eat the rest of the thing and then keep that particular dish to taste it last you see. Likewise the whole day was spent in Gustadji's thought of eating the mango undisturbed in the night. When there would be nobody around him.

Gustadji always liked to do such things you see. Out of the way, unusual. It so happened that, that very day in the morning Dr. Deshmukh, you have heard of

Dr. Deshmukh? From Nagpur had arrived. A vacation time, being summer months. So he was permitted to stay near Baba on the tour there. Being hot and summer, Dr. Deshmukh wanted to go and sleep on the terrace right on the top of the house you see, there was a terrace.

So, mandali dispersed for the night. Each one slept at his own place. You see the spot that Baba had fixed. But this man who had come as a visitor, Dr. Deshmukh he selected his place on the terrace there to sleep. Now it so happened that in the dead of the night Gustadji thought of the mango. And after having washed the mango, made it clean, then he squatted on the steps of the house you see there and sat down, settled himself comfortably, undisturbed from any atmosphere or any companions or anything and he started you see to relish the mango. Just then it so happened it started drizzling you see. So as it started drizzling, of course Gustadji was there on the steps. He didn't care for this because he was covered, but it disturbed Dr. Deshmukh who was on the terrace. He was sleeping there with his bedding roll spread out. So he thought that it might pour down so there won't be time for him to get down. So what he rolled up his bedding roll and then he got a second thought that if he were to carry that huge bedding roll down the stairs it would take a lot of time because the stairs to the terrace were from outside the building. And he might get wet.

So just then he thought of having rolled the bedding roll, he thought of just throwing it. Dropping it down from the terrace you see so that he could then run down the steps, pick it up and the sleep. Little knowing that the spot that he had selected to drop the bedding roll was the place where Gustadji was relishing his mango you see. So in the dead of the night what Gustadji finds was, while he's feeling completely at home and settled and quiet with his mango and he has sucked you see

twice or thrice and he's relishing it and his happiness is at its zenith you see. All of a sudden from the darkness comes the thunderbolt you see. Of something huge just falling in front of him. And the next morning he describes to us his feelings you see. He said he became a tennis ball. A golf ball he says. The fright made him jump so high that he almost touched the ceiling you see [general laughter]. And he did not know what's the matter. He thought that there was some witchcraft here in the house. All of a sudden what has dropped? And what he finds, a bedding roll. Who's is it? From where has it come? He completely forgot about Dr. Deshmukh's visit.

Then comes Dr. Deshmukh at the site you see. He says, "Hello Gustadji. What are you doing?" Gustadji having observed silence naturally he can't say anything, can't express his feelings, for this man's rudeness you see. To have dropped the bedding from the top. So the next day there's a court-martial so to say. He calls the mandali you see and tells Baba this whole story before Baba and Baba enjoyed it very much. He says, Gustadji says, "But this is criminal on the part of Dr. Deshmukh to have dropped such a heavy thing you see. Suppose if it had fallen right on my neck I would have been a dead person this morning."

So Baba had to tell Dr. Deshmukh, warn him that he shouldn't do such things next time and [general laughter] but at the same time we all enjoyed this story very much. Whereas Gustadji could not enjoy his mango that night.

You know Baba's silence, that silence was a constant help you see to Baba during His ministry. Because Baba could be very free in His expressions, with His people who were around Him, because people who were around Him knew His gestures. Whereas the rest of the people who

surrounded Him, say in the public streets or on station platforms or at the shrines or in big fairs you see, where he was lost in the crowd you see, and so forth.

So one day, it so happened, that His silence, became so telling to the crowd who were around Him. So the story is based on that.

After long, long travel, Baba wanted to contact a certain mast in a very small town. A township—it was not even a town. You may call it a little bigger than a village. And being a place which was not large enough to have a big station or anything, it was just a sort of flag station, as we call it. I don't know whether you have such flag stations in the States, where the trains stops at the whim and will of the guard or the Station Master when they put a red flag you see, when there are passengers or parcels to be carried from the station. Otherwise the train just moves on, without stopping. So there are flag stations.

Now it so happened that we got down. Because of the mast there, we had to get down. We had to intimate the guard saying that we want to get down at the station. So we got down at the station and with all our luggage and Baba in our midst. We made, we selected a portion of the platform there you see, at the remote corner, and we made our abode there so to say, for the night. It was evening time, so we were there. No sooner we got down, we made enquiries whether the mast was there or not. He being a very famous person, we were told that he had gone to some other village. He was not there in the village. So we waited there patiently. That place is also famous for a shrine of a Saint. So, and people used to get down at that place you see. Passengers would get down at the place to pay their homage and then return by the next train. So these people who were there on the platform, when we came to know that the mast was outside,

had gone out, we waited there for the mast to return and then go and contact him. So what we did during that time was to sit on our own luggage you see. There was no bench or anything there, that flag station. Nothing was there. So we just kept seated there, Baba in our midst and we were seated. And naturally when we are by ourselves, we start our conversation and people could find out from Baba's gestures that Baba was unable to speak. So these people who were, 2 or 3 people who were just loitering there and gazing and watching at the show there — that is us, they came to know that Baba couldn't speak. Was not speaking. That means was not speaking. He was observing — they didn't know that He was observing silence or anything of the sort.

So, well, seeing them, six more people surrounded us. Seeing six more, there were others surrounding us. And one or two even dared to say to us you see, come too close to me and say that, "Look here, now is the time that you should go, otherwise the shrine shuts. Now is a very good time, good hour, you go there, and we assure that whatever you ask you will be given, the boon will be there, he's so great." I said, "What are you talking about? What do you want me to do? Where, go where?" He says, "Don't you know that? We know, we know why you have come, don't try to hide from us, we know! What a handsome personality, such a flower in this creation." They started now admiring Baba's beauty and say, "But in spite of it all, Baba has not been — this man is not blessed with speech and we assure, that if you were to go and ask, His speech will be restored." But we said that, "But we don't want to go." He says, "Don't hesitate, in this spiritual, what do you call, it's not a begging. There's nothing shameful about it. Why don't you go and ask, and you'll get, I'm sure you'll get the speech. He can't speak, it's your duty to go and ask, plead to give him speech."

So, the crowd then pressed us and forced us to go, you see. We didn't want to go. But then naturally we knew, when Baba kept quiet and He enjoyed the whole thing and we had to face this pigeon you see. This man and that woman and another old man comes and another man comes, pressing us to go and go and go. And we can't, you see, when we go out for such things, it's taken as an insult if we don't go to a shrine and pay our respects there. They don't like the idea. So we had to accept the fact that all right we'll go there. Knowing fully well why we would want to go, we just would go there to pay our respects, that's all. So we took Baba with us and all that. Says, "Look here, don't forget, go and ask, there's no shame in asking for anything and I'm sure, we are sure you'll get the boon."

So we went there just to pacify the crowd you see. And just paid our respects there and came out. But there were people who were much worried about Baba's speech you see. They wanted Baba to speak. Baba being so handsome, He has been blessed with all the great qualities you see, and just one little thing is missing and that is speech. So that's how we were pestered that day, by the crowd to go there and ask for a boon that Baba's speech be restored.

Well life with Baba you see, is not a bed of roses. We also had to encounter many thorns. Thorns, big thorns, small thorns you see. And then, but that didn't matter in the least. Our life with Baba was so — we were so engrossed with our life with Baba, that we had no time you see, to feel that we were treading on thorns or that we were treading on rose petals. But, sometimes, sometimes, very rare occasions when we did, not we, but our bodies did feel the stress and strain of that continuous life of exertion with Baba. We didn't know from where did Baba derive His energy. He being the master of energy Himself or energy personified, well He could cope up with all that. But our bodies couldn't cope

up you see. We were very strong people around Him. And in spite of our strength and stamina, sometimes rarely, we did feel the strain. We told Baba also about it. Baba would give us time to rest but that would all the more you see, be harmful to our body. Because rest was not sufficient for us. It was not something which would just revive our energies. It would be very short lived. And that would be something very annoying to the body as well as to the mind you see. So in the long run we found that, such sort rests, rest periods were on the contrary detrimental to our health, rather than giving us relaxation and reviving our energy.

He would ask us to go to sleep you see, for an hour or so in the afternoon, after many, many days or weeks of travel. But then, being Baba, by our side, in His presence you see. Because the body would be tired. No sooner we just lie down, we'd begin to snore loudly. Completely forgetting Baba's presence or anything of the sort. But then Baba would wake us up within half an hour or three quarters of an hour, and that would be terrible you see to our body. It's a great disturbance. And I don't know whether you all have felt it or not, but this is a fact that body recoils you see. You know, it's like, have you seen an engine stalling you see car? And shaking the whole car you see? Something happens you see. The engine wants the car to move. It would be easy on the engine you see if the car is in motion. But when the car is stopped you see, and there is a stalling and the car starts rattling so to say, and jerking like that. So likewise, when the body is absolutely tired and some opportunity is given to rest, and it takes rest. But during the course of its resting, if somebody disturbs the rest, then such a thing happens to the body. Actually you feel the vibrations within the body you see. You feel the body shaking like that, all the time. Not tremors, not that type, but there is something within. The engine within somehow or the other you see, creates

such a situation there. And it's very — very harmful to the body. So it was thought best that we shouldn't take rest. So we never, never thought of taking rest in the afternoon. No siesta or anything of the sort. It's impossible. Well it used to spoil the whole day you see.

So, well we continued our little life like that with Baba. In the nights we used to get some rest. But at nights also we used to do some work. We had to keep watch near Baba you see. There were shifts. Three hour shifts, depending upon the person. Sometimes four hour shifts. If there are a good number of persons, then two hours shifts were there too. So, that was something. We could have some time to sleep then.

But for me, it so happened that I would be the last person to leave Baba. Because I had to see to Baba till the last moment you see, when He Himself would tell me to go and retire. So I will have to be the last to leave Baba. In the meantime, Mandali could get more hours of rest and relaxation. And I had to be the first person to contact Baba in the morning, early hours of the morning. Why? Because I had to see, I had to wake Him up so to say. And from that moment I had to continue to be with Him till the last moment, when He asked me to retire in the night. So it was too much of a strain on my body, after some years of service to Him. So well, the body of course couldn't stand that for some time and then the mind started playing its own trick. And sometimes the mind would prompt me, "What the hell am I doing over here? Why should I do all this here?"

First of all I used to take pride you see, in trying to serve Him, and then — till the end of course I used to take pride, but then there were periods when the mind would sometimes play havoc you see. It says, "Of what use? You're wasting this energy and strength and stamina. What use would it

be?" But that, with Baba's grace and His help you see, inward help, I could overcome all these things you see. I didn't care for it. It's just passing flashes would come like that. Nothing more. But I remember on one occasion, I was caught. And my mind overpowered me, and that was the last, first and the last occasion and I think I had told you once before. And, that I was fed up you see. Because no sooner I used to complete one chore, Baba would be ready with another one. Anything. Whether I had travelled hundreds of miles or whether I had travelled ten miles, there would be something ready, no sooner I used to meet Baba and see Him. Whatever it be. I didn't mind all that.

But one day, my mind said, of what use my returning to Baba after finishing a work that He had given? So I slept. With a purpose I slept. Determined not to go back because going back meant nothing and more work you see, and more work, and more work. And there's no end to this work you see. And as if all this was not proper and good you see, what I still remember that there was no bed. Nothing of the sort you see. So once I remember, a place called Jabalpur you see. Lot of mosquitoes there. No mosquito nets or anything of the sort. We had to just be where — we were so tired, the bodies were so tired that no sooner we go, we lie relaxed on the ground, finished, we are gone. We are no more on this earth so to say. But I remember one thing, to top it all, this Mohammad was once with us you see, and he would choose you see, to sit right there where I would want to go to sleep you see. And if I were to change my place, he'd come back and sit there you see. And he would continue to sit there, by my side there. And then he would murmur and murmur. I didn't know, because I was oblivious to all these things, I used to go to sleep, no doubt about it. Then you'd wonder as to who would wake me up. It's the person who was on the night watch

naturally. The man who sits there. So therefore we had nothing to fear on that score.

But one day, I went purposely to sleep you see. Right on the street. On the road — highway. There was a culvert there and I went to sleep. I said, "It's no use my going back to Baba." If I were to go back to Baba, what would happen, he would give me more work. And I went to sleep. So then when I returned home, Baba questioned me as to why was I late. So I said, "Well Baba, this work was this and then this and that." And He actually counted the hours that I took you see and all that. And then, He made me vomit out what I felt you see. And I said, "This was the thing." So He just pinched my ear and twisted it and said, "Never again should I ever harvest such feelings or thoughts and never I should do such a thing." And I think that was the last. But then I, quite often I had to speak out to Baba that body was getting very tired. Specially just before the accident I told Baba about it. You know the last accident that — I was so tired that I had to one day, I remember that 15 days prior to the accident, I told Baba about it in Satara. That I am now getting so tired. This body's getting so tired that it's impossible to drive the car now safely. I did say these words you see. He says. "Why do you worry about it? It's not for you to think over this." I said, "But Baba I remember — Baba I have the responsibility, I feel that your body is traveling with my body you see, so I must be very careful about it and I plead and I beg of you now to just relieve me of this duty." But Baba says, "Well, nothing, you continue with it." So I had to do it. But I had that premonition within me. And it was a fact, it was a fact.

But that day when the accident took place, I was feeling as fresh as anything. There was no fatigue or nothing of the sort. Nothing of the sort, because that was a day of great relaxation, and when I was

preoccupied and everything there, and the journey was safe and when the day was — nothing of but to relax. Baba went from Satara to Pune to see a cricket match, and from there we returned home, that's all. There was no work. Nothing to do with mast hunting or poor hunting or do this or do that, nothing. Complete relaxation. But in the midst of all this naturally with intense activity, there was no accident. But when I relaxed, there was this accident. That's how we — I met with that accident, in Satara.

PILGRIM 1: What happened?

ERUCH: What happened what?

PILGRIM 1: In the accident I mean, you were driving I mean?

ERUCH: So there was nothing. Nothing happened. Nobody to this day knows about it. What happened you see? And the judgment that has been given by the court is — it's the hand of God. [general laughter]

Nobody knows because we were all involved in the accident. I [inaudible] and Baba of course was there. The first thing that I found out when I got out of my unconscious state. I was out, thrown out of the car you see, so I just — my hand was on — left hand was on the steering you see. I must have spilled out, so to say. Out of the car, front door. And when I got up, I just saw Baba who was by my side, sitting there. He was seated there, and the first thing that I saw was that, He showed me His tongue, and it was bleeding. Then I came to realize what had happened. "What's this Baba?" I asked. On the contrary I asked Him. "So what is it, what has happened Baba?" He showed me His tongue. I said, "It's bleeding Baba, where did you get the cut from?" I completely lost that it was an accident, no memory at all. So then Baba says, "Paining. This is also paining." Then I got up immediately

you see, and then I took charge of the whole situation. And then, I went on the roadside there and then stopped the car that was coming and made Baba sit. Vishnu was the least hurt, who had seen all this. But he has also no memory he says. He died of course. Not in the accident, but after many years. But when we asked him, I said, "Vishnu, you were all alive you see, you were, nothing happened to you. You were seeing." He says, "I tell you honestly, I don't know what has happened."

We were chatting, talking, everything was there. We were going so slow. We just— a ride, a pleasant ride you see. Baba tells me that we have to go slow because there's no hurry to go. So we are going— otherwise Baba sometimes used to ask me to speed like anything. Nothing happened during those days and this just. We don't know what happened. Don't know. And the car turned in the direction of Pune instead of Satara, [Eruch laughs] when I saw it. We don't know. Nothing happened. Nothing had happened to anything or some — there was no oil. People thought that there must have been oil and the car must have skidded. But if it skidded, the memory must be there isn't it that it skidded? Suppose if I lose the memory, what has happened to Vishnu? Pendu was thrown out. Nilu was thrown, Dr. Neelkanth was thrown out. Myself thrown out. Baba was in the car and Vishnu was in the car. Nobody knew that. I did not know that I was hurt too you see, severely. But I had to take the whole situation in my hand, to see that Baba went back home safe. I didn't —

PILGRIM 1: What did you do?

ERUCH: But what must be Baba's pain? Because I didn't realize what had happened to Baba you see. That Baba had busted His hip joint, I never realized that. Nobody realized anything. I didn't even realize that Nilu is dead or that Pendu's pelvis is cracked or anything, nothing of

the sort. That I had cracked my some five ribs and all bruises inside and all that. Nothing happened, nothing was there. Everything was all right, we thought. And then I stopped the car, I told — Baba walked you see, taking support of my shoulder. I got Him out of the culvert you see, and then to the highway again. From the car, with all that broken hip mind you. How He must have walked, I don't know. And then made Him sit inside the car, and the car was over full. I begged of the passengers to just make room for Vishnu to sit. So Baba was made to sit in the front. How He must have been pressed you see on the wound there, I don't know. With all that did, Baba went there, back to the place where the women live. Baba's room there. And Vishnu took the family, the car, and the owner of the car to their place. The women were surprised. I don't know what has happened there.

And here, Baba's car and belongings are there so I stopped another truck that was going in the opposite direction and said, "Take us back to Satara, we have met with an accident." So I helped, so the driver helped me to lift the bodies of Pendu and Nilu. I just took out the seat, rear seat you see. Made pillows for them and put the bodies in the truck like that. And then I went down and jumped and up and again and brought all the luggage and put there and all that and locked the car and everything was there and locked the dicky and all. Everything safe. Baba's hat was there and Baba's scarf and everything I collected you see, and I jumped inside the car and — on the truck there. And then I don't know. I just black out. Then I find myself in the hospital.

PILGRIM 1: What, did you faint?

ERUCH: Yes, I must have fainted again.

PILGRIM 1: Pendu was unconscious at this time wasn't he? Pendu?

ERUCH: Pendu and Nilu, both were unconscious. Then I came to know that Nilu was dead already. Liver had busted you see. He was thrown out. Nilu was the one you see who told Baba that he would like to see Chou En Lai in Pune. We just remained. He went out of the car [Eruch laughs], and he did go out of the orbit. You know Chou En Lai was visiting. We went to Pune that day. It was a terrible thing you see. We didn't know why Baba wanted us to fast that day. Baba told us to keep quiet over the things. He said, "Don't allow anybody to know. I want you all to fast that day and not to smoke, not even to drink water. And see that you don't allow this little information to leak out to women or to the Mandali." So we kept the information to ourselves. We didn't take water. We didn't take tea in the morning, we didn't smoke or anything of the sort. And we started and He says, "This will last for 24 hours, and don't take it." So I said, we said all right, what's there in that? We have been doing this for so many times.

That day it so happened that, naturally when we were in Pune, before the match started while we entered Pune. No, no I'm sorry. After the match had ended and all that and Baba returned you see. So on route, the traffic was just put to a halt. Why? Because Chou En Lai was to visit the National Defence Academy you see there. In Pune, there is a big National Defense Academy there and he was taken you see there, for inspection or something like that. Those were the days when India and China were bhai-bhai, brother-brother, yeah. The stab in the back was not there you see at the time. But it happened soon after this. Just his return there and it's happened. So, we stopped our car, Baba was in the car and all of us, who cared for anybody you see going there? Any dignitary, who cared when Baba was with us. But Dr. Nilu gets a whim you see. He says, "Baba, I would like to go down you see, and see Chou En Lai." Baba says, "What is there in his face, what's there is

that?" He says, " No, I want to go and see." He says, "All right, go and see him".

So he was the only person who went out, and then he came back and we started. The traffic was resumed, and then we left the place you see for Satara. We left Pune City for Satara. We could go for it. And then just few miles away from Satara you see, we met with the accident. The place where we had played cricket match with Baba. Just there, a place called Utdara.

PILGRIM 1: When the car was in the culvert, you had to lift Pendu and Nilu ?

ERUCH: Yes, yeah.

PILGRIM 1: Out, I mean did the drivers help you? I mean how did you manage this with broken ribs and everything ?

ERUCH: That's what I am wondering myself you see. How must I have managed all this you see. From where did I get all that strength, and to lift the bodies up the truck—there you know. Truck, how high?

PILGRIM 1: You did it all by yourself?

ERUCH: No, with the help of the driver. Yeah. But I was the one who'd— why would any stranger help me like that? But he had to give me a helping hand so to say. But from where did I get the strength to lift such huge bodies you see and put them there? I was strong, no doubt about it at the time. But that doesn't mean that I was strong enough after the accident to lift the bodies like that.

And in the midst of all this, naturally the doctor wanted to have us some tablets or pills you see. So we didn't take, because we couldn't take it. So in the midst of all this Baba remembers this, and sends a message to us, that now everything is over. You can start taking water or anything or eat anything that is given. It was in the late evening, at about 8 o'clock.

PILGRIM 1: When did you see the other Mandali and Baba again? Did you see Baba again for some days or what?

ERUCH: No, no we were separated then. I think I must have seen Him — I was due in discharge after 20-30, month, over a month.

PILGRIM 2: For a month you didn't see Baba?

ERUCH: No. Baba was in — was taken care of by Dr. Donkin and Dr. Goher and other doctors you see. And we were, myself and Pendu were in Satara hospital, which is no good. Even the pups are kept in better rooms you see when they're treated there. It's a rural hospital, dirty as anything you see and horrible, horrible place. And my uncle and my father and all wanted me to be removed to Pune you see for treatment. They brought the ambulance and everything. Removed me and Pendu to Pune. But that doctor didn't want us to be removed. He says, "It's on your own responsibility, the case is serious. While they travel they'll go, collapse." Because I think I must have exerted a lot. Because that's why, so I was put in — my body, I remember my body was being shoved inside the ambulance and the Doctor came at the spot. The in-charge says, "It's on your own responsibility, you take the bodies from here." So we were again told again the same hovel there.

Another thing that Baba told me. "Don't go to Pune". You know while I was taking Baba to that car, from that site of accident, He told me to "Bring all — that we should all go back to Satara, not to Pune." So, so that was the direction that Baba gave me last.

It was considered to be a day of eclipse that day you see. And Indians are so superstitious you see, they never travel on that day. The eclipse of the sun. And Meherjee had come you see, with us that

day from Satara. Meherjee stayed overnight with us. So when we started in the morning, to pick up Baba from another place. I got the car out of the gate and no sooner I got the car out of the gate, outside the gate we met a Parsi priest you see, crossing us. So what Meherjee says, "Oh hell with him. You know Eruch, what's the sign. This means sure death you see." I said, "Whose?" He says, "It's a bad sign. To see a Parsi priest crossing us." I said, "It's a sign, Parsi priest means what, so auspicious you see. You are yourself a priest." So that's why I say you see, it's a sign of sure death. [general muted laughter].

And we laughed and it was just taken in good humor and all that, but we did return with a dead body that day. Meherjee was dropped in Pune, and his place was taken by Vishnu, who was in Pune, you follow.

PILGRIM 1: But wasn't there a great difference in Baba's health before and after the accident? In terms of His activities?

ERUCH: Of course, of course, definitely. After the 1956 accident you see, activities were much curbed. Physical activities, His going about and moving about. But apart from all this we had thought, that from the reports that we received from Dr. Watson Jones you see, he was considered to be a world famous orthopedic surgeon. The reports that we received from him— that this man will never be able to walk again. When the x-rays were shown to him you see, he just threw the x-rays on the table, he says, "This is a case which is irreparable. Nothing can be done." And we were very much dismayed to hear this. And specially it affected me a lot because, I considered myself to be the one, the culprit so to say, the instrument, whatever you call it. So for many, many years I was much affected. I was all the time with Baba, so mentally I was much affected. And since then my health also deteriorated. I am not what I was or I used

to be apart from age or anything. That spirit and everything is all gone.

So, but then, Baba always comforted us with the words that— and he just scoffed and laughed at the, what do you call, the prognosis given by these specialists. The world specialist you see. And it did so happen. One day he was sitting at Guruprasad in His chair and all of a sudden, He got up and started walking. That's all. [Eruch laughs] That's the only miracle that we have seen with His body. Yeah. And He walked, and He walked, and He walked, and He walked.

And not only did He walk, but He climbed the staircases too. To pay house, for the house visits you see. To pay visits to His lover's homes. There is a picture where we are holding an umbrella over His head and Baba is slogging His way up the staircases, very steep staircase. In Pune, you know Milan studio photograph?

PILGRIM 2: Is it an outside staircase?

ERUCH: Yes outside.

PILGRIM 2: White?

ERUCH: Yeah, yeah. Seen that? That's after the accident. That's the Milan Studio. He goes to that. There are busted hip joint, and where Dr. Watson Jones just threw the things, he says, "It's impossible for a man to walk in his lifetime now."

What do you call this you see? These spasms that the leg would get you see. It would be like, have you seen fish out of water, how it just does that? So these spasms would go like that you see and just lift the whole leg up. The strain on the nerves you see, and the ligaments would be such — terrible. Nights after nights we would just hold Baba's leg, you see like this, and keep it down. Specially it would happen after exertion. When He would give darshan and sit there for hours

together you see. And then exert himself, or walk about or move about. The we had to hold Him, His leg for hours on end in the night you see. Just hold on, keep it like that.

PILGRIM 1: How many years did that go on? That holding?

ERUCH: [sighs] I don't know. Say '64 to '64, '65. '64-'65.

And the funny thing is that when He would be active, nothing would happen. When He would rest, in bed, the spasms would come. So, naturally we were there as night watch, or, it would be night watch, so we'd just keep our hand on it. Hold it like that. And we would feel you see, there would be a terrible wave running through the leg you see. We would feel, when we put the hand here, we could feel there's something running out you see. Some — I don't know what you call it? Electrical potential or something. I don't know what it is. And no sooner that would be there, then there would be this spasm coming, you see. So at that time you'd press his leg harder you see, that's all.

But we were told, advised by the doctor not to press it too hard also. Because the hip joint might again, because it was, it had become so amorphous you see, the hip joint. So we had to be very careful otherwise, it would just be away, out of the joint itself you see. Whatever little joint that was artificially formed by Baba, Himself.