
THEIR LIVES WITH BABA

Eruch Jessawala, Mani S. Irani

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45:32

MANI: My mother said, "If heaven is full of Mohammedans I certainly [pilgrims laughing] [inaudible][crosstalk]

ERUCH: Yeah [inaudible]?

PILGRIM: This is a bit of an anticlimax so I apologize but some of the [tape gap].

MANI: My father would call me Maani with an accent put in it, Maani. And Elizabeth was the only one who would call me Maani. Exactly like my father would. But it's not Mani. But it doesn't matter. I mean in India I am and I can be called Mani, I can be called Maani, I can be called Maany. As long as I'm not called Mooney [pilgrims laugh] [crosstalk].

Why I was called Manija now that you've asked the question was in the evening my parents would sit and read the Shahnama, which is the history of Persia. My father taught my mother Persian.

PILGRIM #1: Sha-na-ma.

MANI: It's a big Persian book [crosstalk].

ERUCH: It's a compilation of the deeds of the Emperors of Persia.

MANI: Yeah, it's a history.

ERUCH: Shah-Nama

MANI: Of Persia you see. All the kings and the Emperors and each one. So when my mother was pregnant with me that evening they were sitting and reading about the story of Bijan and Manijeh. A love story in which she was very faithful I'm happy to say [general laughter]. And the king of Persia. She was the daughter of the king of Persia. This Manijeh princess. So they were reading about her when she had to be rushed to the hospital with labour pain and I was born. I was also born, it happened that it was a new moon day. So we had Parsi neighbours who insisted that my mother call me Chandan, which is a name in, Zoroastrian name which means the moon because I was born on the new moon. And my mother didn't like it. She said it was old fashioned [pilgrims laugh] and this and that.

So we don't see horoscopes and find out how your name should begin with. Iranis don't. Parsis do, which is a Hindu way. So then they said why not Manijeh because they were reading about her while.

PILGRIM #2: And Baba was right there when you were born right? Wasn't He?

MANI: Yes He. I'm told. I don't remember [general laughter].

PILGRIM #2: So He must have okayed the name.

MANI: I'm told that Baba was the first to have heard. The nurse came out and said, "It's a

girl." And you know [general laughter] when you're born you're washed and cleaned before anybody picks them up. Especially in the Zoroastrian community. It's a fetish, a fad, it's a tradition, custom, call it what you like. But Baba when He came in He just picked me up and cuddled me and kissed me and my mother was shouting from the bed, "Merog put her down, put her down for heaven sake Merog she hasn't been washed yet. What are you doing? Put her down." That I hear years later. I don't know.

PILGRIM #3: [inaudible].

MANI: Manijeh

PILGRIM #3: Manijeh [crosstalk]

MANI: Manijeh. And when I told you about how my parents were reading the Shahnama every evening. I still remember the stand. The carved sandalwood stand that they have like in the Arabic or Persian countries. It folds like this and then you put your book on it and they would sit. But how my father came to know Persian? Oh it just intrigued me when I was little. Because my father not only knew scholarly Persian but the same standard of Arabic he knew and he knew Hebrew. I know about the Arabic because there were some people who were translating the, some book or something. They came to my father for help to decipher the meaning or connotation of certain words and phrases.

So one day when I was sitting next to my father and I was looking up at him. And you see the difference in our age was tremendous. He was like my grandfather really. So I had to look up like this and I liked doing that because I could see through the roof of his mouth. I could see through his mouth and I'd always see his tongue moving. The tip of his tongue like a little bell I used to call it.

Uttering God's name. Yezdan, Yezdan, Yezdan. Constantly, no matter what happens, what is there. So I asked him. I said. I didn't ask him in English this is the equivalent of what I asked him. I'll say it in English. I said, "How come? How come Bobo you know?" I used to call him Bobo. All of us did. Bobo in Irani dialect is father, memo is mother. So I said, "How come Bobo you know Persian, you know Arabic, you know Hebrew?"

The way I knew he knew Hebrew was that there was an old lady, a Hebrew lady who used to come, who was a friend of the family. Very beautiful and she had bangles all around. I used to just watch you know, very, even her age didn't make any difference. And she and my father would discuss by the hour [foreign] and go on and on and on. And my mother worked. She would go and do some work and come back and sure then the lady was still at it you know. So I knew that he could talk so well. So I asked him. I said, "How come that you know all these languages when you never went to school? You just gave up everything and started out in search of God? Then when did you have? You weren't educated so how do you know all this?"

And my father looked down and said, "Child, I knew it all in a second. In a moment it came to me. When I was a young boy it came to me in a moment." Ah came to him in a moment. That was accepted as a child of 5 or 6. It's only when you're grown up that you have doubts. One weighs, one analyses. This was the complete truth. That was accepted. Years later one of the few questions I asked Baba was about this. Because I knew my father never lied. Absolutely opposite of [inaudible] [pilgrims laugh].

So I asked Baba and I said, "Baba how you know Bobo said this that he knew all these

languages and all this." Because he knew them well, he knew them as a scholar. "And he said he knew it in a moment Baba. How?" And Baba looked and said, "So why not? So what?" You know it's nothing extraordinary, nothing so surprising. So Baba said, "It is given. It happens to rare ones but when it happens it can only take a moment. Because it isn't anything you acquire." My expression said we studied years and years and years to get this language, to learn Marathi and how in a moment? So Baba said, "It is all there. It is not something you acquire in a moment but it's there. And how long does it take to remove a veil?" And I said, "How long does it take to remove a curtain like that?" I said, "One second." He said, "Exactly. It's all there but there's a curtain on it. And to the rare ones who have. Who give it up for God, he didn't get anything because it was inside the cup. So you just remove the curtain and it's there."

PILGRIM #1: So you're saying that he wasn't so veiled then?

MANI: He wasn't?

PILGRIM #1: So veiled? That's what you're saying that.

PILGRIM #2: That your father wasn't so veiled? Only because you know obviously such a thing you know says that you know his consciousness wasn't just limited to the gross conscious world.

MANI: No, no this is about the curtain over the knowledge. The knowledge of languages. I mean this is just something like the knowledge of language he did not gain by acquiring it or going through it. It was already there. So that's the curtains removed. So the knowledge was already there.

PILGRIM 1: Right the knowledge is already there with all of us. I'm saying. What I'm saying is the effect is you're saying is that he wasn't fully gross conscious.

MANI: I don't know.

PILGRIM 2: No she didn't say that. That has nothing to do with gross consciousness.

MANI: I don't know that.

PILGRIM #1: Languages is gross conscious.

MANI: Yes.

PILGRIM #4: Mani didn't drive at this conversation because he did not go to school but in search for God. So [inaudible]

MANI: You see when you have given up to or for Him so completely, totally. He gives. It is His turn now to come after you and give it. And to me what was more important about my father or my mother was ever since a child I would watch them and see the two angles that you can see a thing with, from. Two angles. The same thing. The thing that would happen. I would see my mother looking at it from a material point of view, a practical point of view. And then I would see that my father explaining from quite a different angle. Like I would be playing with something. I was very little then. They didn't even know I knew Irani. And they would talk. And my mother would say, "Look Sherog. This happened today and that one did this and you know their group did that and I [inaudible]. But whatever it was that she said sounded very logical. Very clear. And I would absorb it and I would say to myself, "That's right. It's absolutely right. It's a very clear, logical pitch."

My father would let her say whatever she wanted to say. And then he would pip in and say, "No Shireen. It was like this and like this." And it was an absolute opposite angle. And I would say, "Yes. This is right. This is it. This is the right thing." And yet they both seemed right. You see but all the time it would be this angle and my father would tread from that angle [clock chimes] but it would always calm mother. It's as though she didn't understand [inaudible] it would always calm her. And I would say yes. A balance. Because there was so much difference. The difference between them was more than that. There was a tremendous difference in age and totally different temperaments. Here was the material and here was the spiritual and yet it was a very good marriage. They always talked, she always told him, he always explained. Although she had to be more practical than she might have been had my father been less unpractical.[pilgrims laugh][inaudible]

Because there were the children to be raised. There was a business, a toddy shop. And if she had left it just to him, goodness knows what would have happen. So she had to keep a control even though she was at home. All the employees at one time. I know because she would say you know she said, "43 servants working on a business day. And you had to go and do that to yourself." Things like that [crosstalk].

All those 43 would come home to receive their pay. Mother wouldn't trust father to do that. And like this little incident I've told a number of times. For instance sometimes he had to stay over at the toddy shop at night. So my mother would give a nice blanket to him. For Sherog to have it because he was going to stay over to sleep at the toddy shop. Invariably when he came home again the next day or the day after there was no blanket. And always I would hear a snatch of the

conversation like, "But Shireen he was so poor. Had you seen him Shireen you would have given it. "Oh no, no it's alright Sherog [inaudible] soup is ready and this and that." Or he would say is, "But Shireen he was so cold. If I did not give him this blanket he would have died." "Yeah I know, I know Sherog." But I didn't know the extent of it till one day when I heard my mother flare up. And then she burst up. She said, "Oh Sherog", She said, "Had I kept all those blankets I had given you all this time I could have started a blanket business myself and raised my children." So you see she had to be [inaudible].

And I heard from someone. A taxi driver whom I met in more recent years, who was little when he saw Baba at the toddy shop in Poona, Kasba Peth. And my brother Behram told me, "Go talk to that taxi driver." He had come in that taxi. He had seen Baba as Meherwan. So I, of course I went up to him. And what did he remember? He says, "I was a little boy and I would stand before the toddy shop where Meherwanji, (meaning Baba), would sit behind a cash box." And He said, "At a certain time I would see all these fakirs gather." The Sufi mendicants gathered all in front of the toddy shop. "And Meherwanji would open the cash box, put His hand in it and take big fistfuls of those silver coins and fling them out. And all the fakirs would run after and pick them up and come back for more. And so that's where the cash from the cash box went [pilgrims laughing]. So my poor mother with a dervish for a husband and Baba for a son [pilgrims laughing]. If she didn't do anything on her own [inaudible].

PILGRIM #5: There's a good story of. I don't want to give it away but it has to do with about when your mother was trying to deal with the legal situation and trying to.

MANI: That's a long story.

PILGRIM #5: No, no, no. It's just the short part of the. How when she was explaining to your father and trying to get him to give some feedback and how.

MANI: Oh yes, that's when my father had to go to court. I won't give you that whole story but that incident. So father had, because he signed away his whole business and everything to a boy whom he had befriended to work with him. As just about a partner in the toddy business. So not knowing what he was signing away but trusting the boy completely who deceived him in short. So my father signed away the whole thing. All stock, lock, barrel, shop, business, everything. So there again it was my mother who had to deal with the lawyers and you know she couldn't read English though she was very intelligent and all that but she didn't know the English language. She wouldn't let my father sign or herself sign anything until she showed those papers and documents to a helpful friend, a learned friend. So next it is time for my father to go to the witness box. So the lawyer would come to my mother and say, "Please Shireen mai will you tell your husband not to take the side of the opponent while he is in the witness box [pilgrims laughing]. If he cannot say anything bad about him, will you please ask him to keep quiet." Otherwise my father would say, "But you know I feel sorry for him. After all it was not his fault. I should have asked what was written before I signed it. And after all it is my signature. And you know how much he will have to suffer and" [inaudible].

So just before he would step out to go to the court in a horse carriage, tonga. You've seen a tonga? One-horse carriage. So there I still remember this sight from our alley this tonga would be going out. And my father would be sitting at the back and mother giving last

minute instructions. You know following the tonga a few steps. And she had dressed Sherog, that's my father, in starched immaculate white clothes and everything you know. So she would say, "And Sherog," she'd say, "Remember don't take snuff. Now don't make the shirt you know dirty with this, remember." "Yes Shireen, yes Shireen." All the time that little tip of the tongue moving, Yezdan, Yezdan the name of God. And then she would say, "And don't take the side of that rascal. Don't side him. If you can't say anything bad about him keep your mouth shut, Sherog." "Yes Shireen." "And don't do this Sherog." "No Shireen, yes Shireen, no." And as the carriage would go out of the alley and out. And my mother would turn and go and do her housework you know.

And of course the time came. This went on and my father would go in the witness stand still saying God's name and taking the side of the opponent if he was asked anything but he loved Shireen and Shireen had told him. "Keep your mouth shut" So he didn't say much at times. But I still recall that the day when I came home. Whenever I used to come home I used to find mother was away in those days. But she would leave the food all warm on the fire. She would leave my plate in its place. She would put everything all ready and then she would go. Sometimes she would be back in time sometimes she wouldn't. And I would hear these things going on. But one day when I came home there was absolute silence. And I knew without anyone telling me anything that we had lost the case. Absolutely and completely lost. And there was no explosion. I don't know what my father had said to my mother or what but there was no explosion. We knew it was done.

And my mother said, "Well Sherog we have lost everything. Not just lost the case, we have

lost everything." And my father would say things like, "But what is there to lose Shireen? We have won long ago. There is no question of losing. [Inaudible]. We have won. There's nothing to lose. But look at him for instance. That boy. Now I feel for him. How much he will have to pay back." "Oh no I can't see. I'm not going to be there to see what he [inaudible]. I want to see it now." And then my mother witnessed the big trade flourishing. The people who had deceived and won, so called won over the case were flourishing. They were building you know more buildings and the top story to their home and they were getting richer and they were getting more horse carriages and just flourishing which broke my mother all the time because they were in the same town, the same locality, the same place. And she would say, "Ah, you know Sheroog they're making so much money. You know because these things would be going on. And they flourished. But what my father did was. What he did was wrote a note. He wrote a little note and sent it to this young man. And he said, "I'm old. I have not much time left in this world. You are young. You have a life before you. I want you to know that I have forgiven you. But I do not even owe you my forgiveness. There is nothing owing. Now it for you to ask forgiveness of God."

That note was sent. Never replied. They were too busy in their imagined prosperity and all. Anyway father died in the year. Sometime after that I came to Baba. Baba said that Jal and the others should look after mother. Years went by and mother would come sometimes to you know be with Baba. That's when I would see her. She died. Then there was the time when we went to Guruprasad. For the first time Baba was giving darshan in Guruprasad. Not in the hall as was usually done later. But on the veranda. On that spacious marble veranda that was so

beautiful. Baba sat on the chair and the driveway was full of His lovers. Streams of lovers coming in all the time. And the veranda was filled with them. And each one would come up to the chair and bow down to Him and have their moment with Baba. Baba would give them a pat, a little prasad whatever. We were inside. We women were inside the house. This is on the veranda which is outside. The big, these beautiful big doors, glass doors we would look through every now and then and see what Baba is [inaudible]. There were more coming, again we'd go in. Another one would come [inaudible].

At one point. At one point when I came to the door to look I saw a lady climbing those marble steps towards Baba. Very much Irani lady. Old. Extraordinary familiarity about her. As if I had seen her somewhere. Who is she? But I couldn't place her. It nagged me but I couldn't. She came over to Baba. She just stood there and looked at Him. Just like that. And then she went down. And instead of putting her head on Baba's feet she started sobbing, pouring out her heart to Him. And to see that old woman cry I was more and more intrigued. Then Baba took, put both His hands on her head and pushed her head on His knees and stayed and let her cry. And after a while when the crying seemed over and she looked up and Baba said, "What is it? What? What is the matter?" And she said, "Baba he won't die. He can't die. He's just hanging onto life. For your forgiveness. He has sent me to you. That I must have forgiveness of Baba."

Then it struck me. I said, "My God. It's that young man's wife." And she was so beautiful at that time and handsome. So vital. Vitality was her main attraction. And here she was barely just climb the steps came to Baba. And they did not believe Baba. They were the ones who were of the opposition. And I could not believe the words she was saying. And she

said that, "There's nothing to keep his body alive together except his will. He says I will not die till I have forgiveness from God. So Baba," she said, "You have got to forgive him."

And Baba [inaudible] I could see from the tilt of His head because he was looking way out. For a time and then He looked back at her as if He'd decided. He said, "Alright. I forgive." And it seemed. That gesture always affected me very much when Baba said, "I forgive." It seemed like the entire, the oceans had come over the beach and cleaned the whole beach so that not a scratch was left. Clear, absolutely clear when Baba would do this, "I forgive." It seemed to reach beyond the person. Beyond an entire ocean. And that was enough. She just got up, again looked at Baba like that again with no emotion in her face. She just looked at Him for a while, turned back and walked away. I never saw her again. I never heard of her. My only wish was if mother was here now to hear this [pilgrim laughing].

That is how God deals with the situations, the feelings. That is how He reaches out. Never fails. You only have to wait to receive. Ask. And he was a smart fellow. My father always said, "This young man is very smart," and I acceded to that. I said, "Yes. You have to be very smart to even wait to be given forgiveness before he could die."

ERUCH: And he died.

MANI: Huh?

ERUCH: And he died, the man.

MANI: Oh yes. And after she went home from Baba, in a day she died.

ERUCH: He died.

MANI: He died. I'm sorry. After she took home the message to her husband that Baba, God has forgiven you, it was within 48 hours that he died. Knowing that he was forgiven [inaudible]. Is it not a [inaudible] because Baba doesn't come to Pune just any time or all the time. He knew that he would only come in the summer. So he hung on. That's the way she'd expressed it. He was just hanging on till Baba would come and forgive. So it wasn't smart? [crosstalk]

PILGRIM #6: How did you all hear that Mani?

MANI: Huh?

PILGRIM #6: Did someone bring a message from up where she was?

PILGRIM #7: How did you find out that he died?

ERUCH: Because in our community it so happens when a person, Zoroastrian dies, all community is informed.

MANI: Oh everyone hears about it. My sister-in-law knew it. You know there are not so many Zoroastrians in Pune. You know about who's born and who dies and all that.

ERUCH: They make it a point to circulate the news.

MANI: Yes they circulate it. So that you can attend a funeral. All the other Zoroastrians can. So my sister-in-law, my brother Behram, Gaimai's family. They would all know you see.

PILGRIM #6: So did they go to the funeral? [general laughter]

MANI: I don't know. As she turned her back and walked away down those steps it was as if more than a person had left. As if the whole

incident had left with her. Washed away. Never bothered anyone after that. It just didn't even come to my mind again till I was telling the story.

PILGRIM #6: The most beautiful part I feel was how your father had sent him that note saying he had forgiven him and that now it for him to ask God for forgiveness.

MANI: My father made it clear that he did not owe him anything. Not even forgiveness. But that he needed forgiveness and it was only for him to ask God for. From him he had given it.

I heard the father was later neglected by the family. After they grew all the rubbish from the money that he had gotten. Ill-gotten or whatever, begotten from my father. [crosstalk] He was very happy about it all but then later [crosstalk][inaudible]

But he was a dervish till the very end. I've always heard when Baba said, "Be in the world but not of it." I've seen a living example of my father.

PILGRIM #7: Is there any story of what happened [inaudible] what Baba said or were you there? Or What happened?

ERUCH: Which one? Story about what?

PILGRIM #7: When her father dropped the body? What Baba would have said at that time?

MANI: That Eruch knows. I'd like to hear that. Eruch please tell us. Oh my father dropped his body. I wanted to know about my mother. But my father. I was. All I know that he was in Bombay. That he had gone to Bombay and he was in hospital. He insisted on going to the hospital and insisted on going to Bombay. And I realised [crosstalk]

ERUCH: I think Baba was out of India.

MANI: Baba was out of India and he didn't want that the family should be you know put through that trouble. So no amount of persuading him made him agree to. He said, "No no I want to, I want to. You must take me." So then we took him to Bombay. Mother you know got a taxi. Those days it was rare to engage a taxi to take him all the way there. So he was in the hospital and then. So mother had to come back here. Again we went back and mother said, "This is ridiculous. I'm going to bring him back." So at last in the hospital then he agreed or at least seemed to. Didn't protest too much. So she came back to get a taxi to go bring him. That's when he died. So mother wasn't near his bed. Near him when.

ERUCH: Nobody had seen him. All the brothers.

MANI: No brothers were here because they were with Baba.

ERUCH: They were with Baba. Nobody was there.

MANI: That's when my mother would complain. Four sons I have, four and not one with me [pilgrims laughing]. A refrain I heard many a time.

PILGRIM #7: What did Baba comment about that?

MANI: I don't know.

PILGRIM #7: Did he say anything to that?

MANI: Do you know?

ERUCH: I don't know. Must have been reported in the books or somewhere. I don't know.

PILGRIM #7: He definitely died with Baba's name [inaudible] name of God anyway?

ERUCH: We don't know. I heard from mother that Baba wanted Behram to be left behind and Shireenmai was very adamant that Baba should take Behram to the West. So she said that, "You are taking all others why can't you take your own brother?" And that was the reason there was nobody left. Though mother regretted that, Shireenmai. That's what my mother told me.

PILGRIM #6: So what trip was it? '31 trip? [inaudible][crosstalk]

MANI: Must be '31 because I came to Baba in '32.

ERUCH: That means first trip.[pilgrims chatting]

MANI: Because I wasn't there. I didn't go to [inaudible]. Only Baba went with Eruch so I always wanted to know.

ERUCH: No the simple thing is that first of all mother, Baba's mother, developed a friendship with my mother just before her death. So I mean she stayed up, my mother with me included.

We were at Meherabad with Baba. Our whole family was here. So she had come some days ago to Meherabad [inaudible]. So she must have told Baba about it. We don't know anything. The talk between the son and the mother. So later on I learned about it. So she was adamant that my mother be sent to Poona to give her company. Because she was fond of my mother.

MANI: But Baba encouraged it too. Even before that Baba was always [crosstalk].

ERUCH: Yeah that was there on the tours. On the tours and all that it was there. But [inaudible]. She was fond of her to a degree where she was insistent that she should be now shifted to Poona. So Baba sent us as I told you all that we. Baba of course contrived in such a way that He incited my father who had retired and he was a person who would want to mix with his community, Zoroastrians. And Poona was the place where there were many Zoroastrians there. And my father whenever he would say something He'll say, "Yes good idea." So he worked his way like that way. But He prepared the grounds. So eventually it so happened when mother insisted that my mother should be there in Poona. So He naturally told my father that it's a good idea now. I think that you'll be very happy and feel settled. He was getting old my father. So in Poona there are many Zoroastrians and he will be able to mix with them, be there and so forth.

My father liked the idea. Poona was having a good climate and all that at that time, not now. It was a beautiful city. So father was very optimistic about going to Poona and all that. Baba had never broached this topic to us. Means my mother and Meherwan and my sisters. They were very young. You have seen my mother's picture with Baba. How at that time, yeah.

So then one day gradually you see Baba broaches the topic to my mother and says that, "You know I want you for a very special purpose want you to go to Poona." He said, "Go for fifteen days only" And of course I was the interpreter. So I had to read the board. That's how I had come to know. "So I have special work. And go there to Poona and be there. And I will call you back in 15 days time. After 15 days are over. So. "And do one thing. But you have to carry all your

luggages." [pilgrims laughing]. Because my father was told.

PILGRIM #9: Told to do what?

ERUCH: Carry all the luggage. All belongings had to be carried. Means clothes that were there. No other belongings. We didn't have any possessions or anything but a trunk of clothes and a bedding roll. So carry all that with you for 15 days. We said, "All that trunk?" He said, "Yes carry that trunk." [Crosstalk]

"So but do one thing, don't unpack. You can carry that but don't unpack." So we said, "Alright." Because when Baba would say anything to my mother she would accept it, literally. She is very guileless so to say. So and then naturally Baba told me you all also have to go. But where to go? Had already found a house. This Bindra house where we are now. Baba had already informed His younger brother Behram to be in search of a house. Because this was the topic between my father and Baba's brother and Baba and all that. So Behram had in the meantime found the place and he had sent a telegram also. That the place is ready, send the family.

So then He told us that you'll go and contact Behram and he will take care. So we went there. So of course I, my father, mother, sisters were there. I was sent there to settle them for 15 days. Then what happened was that days were passing by, in the meantime there came a funeral there. Somebody was there who had died in the meantime. In the meantime what had happened was Baba's mother was very happy to have the whole family there. She was satisfied and contented with that. Mother would go and visit the house and so forth.

So some funeral was there and it so happened that my father wanted to go. You know

Zoroastrians have to wear particular type of clothes for the funeral. They have to have that headgear and coat and all that. [crosstalk]. Then what happened is that my father got very furious in trying to tell that why aren't we unpacking. All these days have passed, a week has passed by and we are not unpacking anything of the sort. [inaudible] A lot of time. What is there to unpack? We couldn't say that because Baba told us not to tell our father that we are not to unpack. Mother just said, "Not much is there."

In the meantime of course we unpacked and all that. I left the place.

PILGRIM #10: Oh you did unpack?

ERUCH: Yeah. Means for father. Unpacked his trunk and gave him his dress and he went to the funeral. We didn't go. We were not supposed to go. We all are not concerned with funerals or weddings or anything. In the meantime Baba called me back. Baba was at Panchgani, Mahabaleshwar at that time. So I could go there. Joined Baba there after having settled the family here. And they used to sleep on the trunks only. Open the bedding roll and sleep there. No furniture nothing. Nothing was there.

In the meantime what had happened we came to know that mother has fallen ill. My mother used to go very frequently there and then she was attending. We would receive letters, immediate letters you know. There was a lot of exchange of correspondence. And then one day we come to know, that there's a telegram saying that mother had passed away. Baba's mother. It was in the night we received the telegram. So Baba told me to go in search of a taxi because He wanted to go immediately to His mother. So I went out. We had a lot of contacts at Mahabaleshwar because we used to visit Mahabaleshwar. So I

immediately arranged a taxi although it was very scarce at the time the taxi [inaudible]. And roads were not open. Nobody would want to come. Because these roads. Those who have been to Mahabaleshwar they know how the roads are. Now the roads are better. Now, although with all the zig-zags and all that sort of. So no driver was supposed to drive. But eventually I [inaudible][clock chimes]. Because of emergency and we want to go. So we left the place. I think Pilamai was with us.

MANI: Pilamai, Baba and yourself. Just three of you.

PILGRIM #10: Pilamai?

ERUCH: Yeah. Pilamai the one, the lady who was saying. The lady who told us about Baba.

PILGRIM #10: Is that Padri's mother?

ERUCH: No that is Pilamai is.

MANI: She said Pilamasi.

ERUCH: Pilamasi means Goher's father's sister.

MANI: The pioneer Baba lover in Karachi, Zoroastrian, Pilamai. She was with Baba [inaudible].

ERUCH: The whole community was against but she was the only one there in whole of Karachi.

MANI: She's the only one Baba took along with Him apart from Eruch. Baba, Eruch and Pilamai got in the taxi for Shireenmai's.

ERUCH: So we reached early in the morning. And of course we went straight to the house and mother was there.

MANI: You went straight to the house?

ERUCH: Yes. We went straight to the house. Mother was there, Baba sat there looked at mother and all that. Passed His hands over her, that's all. And then they. Baba told them to conduct whatever it is. [foreign][crosstalk] No. I don't remember.

MANI: You don't remember. You told me that.

ERUCH: We stopped the car where the lane begins. You know that. And we went inside. And Baba.

MANI: Yeah. You had told me that we stopped the car before going in the lane because the car doesn't go in the lane. It was at the end of the long lane. You see there are two lanes leading on to my alley. To Dastur Meher Road and one to that other street.

ERUCH: Bootee street.

MANI: Bootee street. So by that long. At the end of that long lane the car had stopped. And [crosstalk]

ERUCH: You know why? Because it was not the long lane. We went by the long lane because at that time that long lane was open for traffic. We could get the car that way.

MANI: That's right.

ERUCH: And this way it was stopped as you know [crosstalk]

MANI: Then the car. Baba topped the car and Baba told them, "Look away. Don't look at me." So Eruch and Pilamai stood looking away. What Baba was working nobody knows.

PILGRIM #10: Just outside the car?

MANI: Yes. And then [Mani claps] He clapped so they looked back and went inside.

ERUCH: And then we went together inside the house and Baba met. Went by mother's bedside and all that. Mother was lying there. Then Baba just did this and all that. [crosstalk] Fondled her. Means fondled her face. Baba fondled her face with His hands. Looked at her. It was a great warmth, it was great warmth.

MANI: So He did see her [foreign].

ERUCH: Did see her. No He saw her I was there yeah. And then of course Baba left the place and went to Bindra House. Those who were there at the time they attended the last rites.

MANI: So then Eruch's mother told me that when they went back to the house and my sister-in-law was very busy seeing to the many little details that had to be attended to when preparing for a funeral. But Gaimai, that is Eruch's mother, and her sister Gulamasi. Eruch's mother and aunt were standing by Shireenmai's bedside while my sister-in-law was doing things. And Gaimai told us afterwards that she suddenly saw through my mother's nostrils little golden hands come out.

PILGRIM #11: Hands?

MANI: And they just came out. Little golden hands they kept coming out like butterflies. And on and on and on so many. And then there was one of pair big hands like the usual size hand, all gold. And the big hand with all the little, little, little hands hovered over mother like this round in circles. And then went a little higher up still hovering down in circles. A lot like butterflies you know. And on and on and on till it just went. And she said there was such a beautiful atmosphere,

feeling. She just stood there dazed. And my sister-in-law hadn't seen it because she had gone out you know to get some more material and tell the priest.

PILGRIM #10: Which is at [inaudible].

ERUCH: Yeah. But I don't know anything about this because soon after that we left for Mahabaleshwar again.

MANI: The reason why I asked you to say this, someone had said that Baba did not go to Mahabaleshwar?

ERUCH: No. He went. I remember that. He went to the house, He fondled mother's face. He passed His hands over her.

MANI: Was there. Is that part. That story is true that was there a sigh from mother after Baba touched her?

ERUCH: I don't recall.

MANI: I think that Gaimai said.

ERUCH: I don't recall.

MANI: That although her eyes were closed.

ERUCH: Yeah. Everything was fine. Very good. There was quite peace prevailing.

MANI: When Baba passed His hands over mother's face there was a sigh. As if that was really the moment of her leaving.