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## FUNNY INCIDENT IN ROME

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**Eruch Jessawala**

Mandali Hall, Meherazad, India

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9:34

**ERUCH:** You ask me for some funny incidents taking place. Having taken place during Baba's tour to the West. That which I remember is the thing that happened at the Rome airport. I forget whether it was in the first trip that is 1956 or the last one in 1958. Also In 1956 Donkin was not there?

**MANDALI AUDIENCE:** '56 Nilu was there.

**ERUCH:** Oh I see. Don was not there at the time? Even with Nilu?

**MANDALI AUDIENCE:** No. Only [inaudible]

**ERUCH:** Oh I see. Then it must be '58 then. Definitely because Don is the one who plays the part now. So what happened is just before we arrived at airport you see, Rome airport Baba expressed His wish calling Donkin to Him saying that, "Look Don." All what He wanted you see at the airport in Rome was some place to retire where there is no crowd, no noise. Just a couple of hours. Because there was that halt for about 3 or 4 hours there you see. 3 hours halt was there. So well Don told Baba that it could be easily fixed. And he went and told the crew you see. So, message was [inaudible]. Wireless message and Don started his activity there. We got down at the Rome airport. There was the wheelchair ready for Baba. And well the person came who made Baba sit there at the wheelchair and he just went away from us. I had to follow, run behind Baba you see. And he took us round you see, here and there. It was impossible to get into the airport so to say. He took us I don't know

which places you see that he took us. Such a long tour you see of the whole airport. And then eventually we came in contact with our people you see, Don and Nariman, Adi. Was it Nariman or Meherjee at the time?

**MANDALI AUDIENCE:** Nariman.

**ERUCH:** Nariman. Don, Nariman and Adi. They were there and we were there. Well then somehow or other you see we were at a place where there was a restaurant. And Baba said that we should take either tea or coffee or have some sort of cold drinks. But while we were at the table Baba said that He wanted to piddle. And I said, "Now where would be the toilet rooms and all and take Baba." Baba had just arrived you see after a long tour. With all the shaking there and a painful hip joint and all that. I looked around and there I saw 4 booths you see, telephone booths. At the place. So all of a sudden I got an idea, 'What harm is there if Baba's wheelchair is shoved in front of the booth you see just stands up and piddles there.' And I always used to carry a glass for Baba, handy. Something in which that He should piddle you see. That's the usual thing we used to do on tours and all that.

So Baba was taken there you see and Baba said, "Well, how will it be? Is it in order?" I said, "Baba it's my responsibility. Nothing happens." And I stood there you see as if chatting and Baba is trying to phone or something like that and everything was in perfect order. Nothing was wrong you see. So Baba piddled there in the glass and felt at ease. And then I brought Baba back to

the table which was very nearby and then I cleaned the glass you see. I disposed of the urine and cleaned the glass and then again joined the company. In the meantime Donkin was busy trying to fix a retiring room you see for Baba. When he fixed the retiring room he came to Baba and said everything was ready and we had to go down somewhere. So, there was an escort he had brought and so he led us down. We told him that we had the wheelchair. He says, "Never mind." So he guided us and we got down to a veranda-like place you see, at the airport.

And we waited there and waited and Baba said, "Well, time is flying and there is no. Where is the retiring room?" Says, "Baba I have made arrangements." "But where is it? Where is the retiring room? Why are we brought to the veranda for retiring room? It's not a retiring room was there, already there. The lounge is there, everything is there. I wanted a quiet place. And we are made to stand here." In the meantime what we hear is bells you see from a fire engine or something coming you see. Rushing towards us. And we find you see we get the sight of the ambulance coming you see. And Baba says, "Why all this? For us?" Don does not himself know about these things you see what transpired. Don simply expressed his wish that a retiring room be arranged for Baba where there is not noise because He is not feeling well, He's ill.

So the doctors took him seriously and literally you see. And they sent an ambulance and two boys you see, sturdy persons, Italians come there and they speak in Italian and we say something and before we could say something you see in our broken Italian or English or anything. Don knew Italian. And I said, "Sir, what are you doing? What are you doing?" And they just made Baba sit there on the stretcher. They took out the stretcher from the ambulance, made Him sit there and then they just. One person put his hand on

His, Baba's chest and He was made to lie flat on this stretcher and the two. I said, "What are you doing?" He says, "Si, si, si, si, si, si." All that we could hear, I could follow was si, si, si and me si, me si, me si and something like. I said, "Me see, me see." And they said, "No, si, si, si." [general laughter]

And before I could do anything you see Baba was shoved inside the ambulance you see. The stretcher was put in. I jumped inside and they rang the bell and they left. Had I not jumped inside you see Baba would have been taken all alone. Don didn't come with us, nothing. I took the bold step to jump inside you see. So then we were there. Baba says, "What's all this? Time is flying. Where is the retiring room? Where have we come? Will we be able to go back in the plane?" He just signalled like that, "What is this? Is Don crazy or what?" So I said, "Baba I have no idea. Foggiest idea of where we are being taken and why all this to us. You just wanted some place in some room there. There are plenty of rooms there at the airport. Without even informing the authorities we could have rested anywhere." We didn't know.

So after a ten minute drive you see we came to an old bombarded hospital in Rome you see. Somewhere outskirts. And no sooner the ambulance arrived there, everything was arranged for Baba. No doubt about it. Don had made clear arrangements you see. But he did not know what arrangements were made. He had just given instructions to certain person who does all, make all these arrangements. But he was not told what arrangements were made.

So what arrangement was made was a ward was. A room in a ward was kept ready for Baba. Doctor was ready. Nurse, two nurses were kept ready thinking that Baba was serious in health you see. That He wanted some rest. Why, because He

was ill. So no sooner Baba was again put on the stretcher. He was taken inside and rolled onto the bed you see. Baba could walk the distance you see. But He was rolled onto the. From the stretcher onto the bed and blanket was put over Him and says, "Si, si, si, si, si, si." And everything. Something like that I don't know they murmured there and I stood there and Baba looked at me and I looked at Baba. And comes in the doctor you see and two nurses. And doctor comes and opens the thing. Said, "Doctor there's nothing wrong. All what He wants is to be left alone." Says, "Si, si, si, si, si," Doctor also said, "It's alright, it's alright, it's alright" he said.

And then he examined His chest and pulse and the nurses you see. The sister took what do you call the blood pressure. And all sorts of things. And open your mouth and your tongue and the eyelids were examined and all that. Everything alright. I said, "Doctor please tell all the sisters." He could understand little English. "Please tell them to leave the patient all alone. All what He wants is just complete rest.

No disturbance." "Si, si, si, si." And then we were there.

Of course no sooner the doctors left and all I shut the door, locked the door from inside you see so that nobody can come in. And then Baba could go to the toilet and wash His face and feel fresh and clean and then He was made to sit there and He sat and relaxed on the chair and then again it was time so Baba Himself went to bed, put the blanket on and remained as a patient there. And no sooner He did that the doctor knocked at the door and he came in, "How are you ? Alright?" I said, "Alright." And then I asked him, "Doctor, when will the ambulance come?" He says, "Si, si don't worry, it will be alright. It will be." And then the ambulance came and we were again brought there you see. And that's how hardly we could have half an hour time of relaxation with us you see. That's the funny incident that took place at Rome.