

## KG-114A

**Mani Irani**

**Bili Eaton**

**Rano Gayley**

Mandali Hall, Meherazad, India

December 9, 1979

44:39

### **Content**

[We're coming into a stream of thought here, and I haven't found the tape that precedes this one, yet, but it sounds as though every Baba lover was permitted to send Baba a birthday greeting. Bili apparently didn't understand that it was permitted, and didn't send one, which prompted a message from Baba chastened her for forgetting His birthday. Bili had been operating under the assumption that since all correspondence with Him was forbidden except in case of emergency, that she was not allowed to send a birthday message.

Bili: "...so I decided to call Margaret [Craske] 'cause that's what I do when I'm in a dilemma. I read the letter to Margaret and said, what am I going to do? He said 'the greatest emergency' whereas I believed that I wasn't supposed to do it no matter what. So Margaret thought. She's very good with things like this, and after a while she said, 'Say, "Didn't think birthday was emergency. Happy birthday anyway."'"

Mani laughs out loud.

Bili, talking to the audience: "Mani was great. I used to write to Baba, question after question, I must have pestered Baba to death with all these questions, and finally when Baba went into seclusion I couldn't do it, so I wrote to you {turning to Mani, who replies, Yes...} and somehow Eruch always managed to get hold of these letters, I don't know if you [Mani] gave them to him... Even so, Eruch might ask Baba about the very topics in my letters and I did get answers to many of them. One of them was about the Circle, remember? If there was something that nagged at you, spiritually, Baba always managed to give you the answer, no matter what. Provided you obeyed Him. You must obey."

Mani interjects: "I was very green then Bili, I thought every letter had to be answered completely, point by point, apart from yours I used to get some crazy letters with some odd questions and I would take time from a hectic schedule here to write down answers, and now I realize that I needn't have picked every point. Also Filis taught me how to write shorter letters, and not answer every question."

Bili responds: "But they were helpful. In the beginning I would ask a question, and I would show it to Filis and say, 'Look what I got from Mani.' And Filis would say, 'Oh, can I have a copy...' and then Beryl and the Shaws and the Winterfelds and the Longs in Miami... I typed ten copies each time in circulating the letters to others. And they would write to me

asking their own questions, and I would write to you [Mani] and it became an international conversation.

Mani says, "In a way it was the precursor to the Family Letters, because when Baba wanted it, we were ready."

Bili says, "It prepared Baba's coming to the West in '56 [Mani agrees]. Energy [Marion Florsheim] was arranging all these flights and so we'd write back and forth about the details. Those were the days. I had a honeymoon with Baba in 1956. I thought I was the only one -- that He was paying attention only to me. He gave me so much attention, He was so wonderful to me. I ran into Him so many times when He was alone. Margaret says it's unusual for Him to be alone. I bumped into Him in the hall of the hotel with nobody with Him. I finally said, 'Baba I must have some good karma running into you all the time!' But then I found out that Tex Hightower was having a honeymoon with Him, and I don't know how many people felt that they were the only ones on the face of the Earth as far as Baba was concerned! Isn't that a miracle?"

Mani: "Yes, in India in the darshan times, each one would go away thinking that Baba had given him or her something special. That's why I always say that Baba is not for all, he's for each."

Bili: "Yes, that's right and He really loved you. You know it is difficult for me to comprehend or understand the love that God has for us. I'm a real skeptic. To this day, I don't believe anything unless I have seen it myself. Can't help it -- it's the way I am. But Baba really makes you know that He loves you. I was going through a really bad time in 1958. I saw Baba again and He knew I was suffering. Baba had us in the Lagoon Cabin one day. I was sitting to His right, and everyone was sitting around in a circle, and there was a picture of Baba that I detested, a drawing hanging on the wall, and I felt like crying. I was in a state of tears all the time -- not the joyous tears that I had with Baba but unhappiness tears. I didn't want to leave Baba's presence, but I thought that if I looked at the awful picture I wouldn't cry because I was so mad at it, and I did look at the picture, and it worked and I stopped wanting to cry.

All of a sudden I felt Baba's eyes draw me, and I looked into the eyes and the love He gave me at that moment... I can't tell you the love that came in that glance. It's almost sacrilegious to try to tell you what the love was like. It just came out, it poured over me, such compassion and love, and it was so strong that if I had been standing up I would have fallen over. I sat there and I could hardly hold it, like a wave that's too big in the sea that knocks you over. From that day, I know that God really loves us. It's not just me -- He loved everybody. You can't understand it unless you have experienced it. I had to experience it. I needed it, I guess. Not just because I was unhappy, but because I had to understand that God does love that way. What we think is love really isn't love. I don't know what it is. It's not love. I don't know how to tell you, but I only have to see His eyes. If I see His eyes, it can carry me through terrible times. I don't know how to tell you about it, it's too beautiful for words."

Mani: "That's why He says, 'Keep me with you.' He is with you, He assures us that 'I am with all my lovers.' But at the same time He says, 'Keep me with you.' Keep yourself with Him, really."

Bili: "'I am within. Take me with you.' If you will listen to a story of mine, silly story really, but I thought later, 'This is God. He has so much on His mind, so much to do, and He's accommodating this drivel from me! [laughter] I remember the day I sat on the porch and I had told Baba, 'I have something to tell you. He said, 'I can't see you now.' So gently, but He said, 'I'll see you later.' The gestures made with His head and His hands were so gentle. He did see me that afternoon, and I told Him this silly story. He sent Eruch away to listen to my story. I thought He was thinking I would be embarrassed to tell this story and I said, 'Oh no, Eruch can stay.' But He sent Eruch away anyway. He put His ear forward toward me, and I looked at the ear and I almost forgot the story because I wanted to kiss the ear so badly. [extended laughter] I'm rather conservative so I don't like to give out too much emotion if I can help it! Finally I told the story, and He said in response, 'Don't worry, the mind tricks us all the time. I am within. Take me with you.' The whole thing, which had seemed like a big thing, immediately it was nothing."

"Now, I didn't want to go to centers, I didn't exactly want to come to India, [and some other things] but when I went up to bow down at the tomb, He said to me, 'What's all the fuss about, Bili? I'm everywhere.' The next time I went to the tomb, it was all joy. He took a load off me. I don't know what was so heavy all these 17 years, but it's gone now, this weight I was carrying around, whatever it was. That's enough of hearing me."

Mani: "It's good to hear stories of someone who had been around Baba so much. Where's Rano?"

"Baba would use such simple examples so that we would understand. He would bring down the ocean or the moon into a little reflection so that we would understand it on our level, whether it was a professor or a child, or someone who likes games, Baba was right there with you. He reaches out to each one. When He tells us in our way, it is so easy to understand. For instance, someone was bothered about having thoughts. They didn't want to have the thoughts, but they just came and bothered them, and they didn't know what to do about it. It didn't involve their own emotions. What were they to do? Baba said, 'Don't worry. It's like driftwood on the river. Let it flow away. Don't catch it. But, take my name. My name is like the mosquito net [Mani, interjects into the quote 'that you sleep inside here in India at Viloo's or wheweverver.'] The mosquitos are the thoughts. Let them buzz, and they will go around you. You can't get rid of them, but they won't come near you, bite you. My name is the net.' "

"That's something you can really understand and can do. When He brings it down to the picture that you can understand. I've said it so many times, but some of you haven't heard it. We never asked Baba for explanations, there wasn't room for questions. When you are living with Baba as His household, Baba is so complete, there is nothing else that is needed. That's why we never read Baba books, we never asked questions, Baba was just there and that was it. But still, when lovers would come to see Him, they would

sometimes come up with questions and often it would be on topics that are beyond the mind -- God Realization, and other [esoteric topics] which He has given us in words to some extent. Because of our wanting to know, not because it is necessary to come to God to read all this or to know all this. Some people seek to know. Baba has said the most illiterate person can realize God, and therefore this is not a channel or an avenue or a means for coming to God.

"But because it is a need within a person, some person, to want to know, Baba gives it out. He has given it in God Speaks, in Discourses, he has given it more now than at any other time when He has come as God-Man. But He says, 'You want me to give you through the mind a thing that mind can not touch.' He said, 'It's like when a child comes to an adult and says "Tell me about marriage." What can you do? How can you tell a child about marriage? The relationship between a husband and a wife, about sex... the child has to experience it one day, but words at this point are worthless. The child will grow up and experience all that and after that there is nothing to ask. The child will eventually come to know, but [frank answers to the questions are uninformative to the child in its level.]

"Baba says, 'When they ask about that, tell them about the wedding. Oh yes, what the bride wore, what the groom wore, how many tiers there were on the wedding cake, the flowers... all these infinite details. That is what you are having from me in the answers to these questions. Until you experience it. Even this, all we talk about, is about the wedding. The one who knows his own true self, who becomes one with God, has no questions. Then the lips are closed, there is silence.'"

"But till then, the children need it, so He gives."

"We can miss Baba by longing for something of His, even if it is concerning Him. I'll tell you an example. When Baba was in the South of India, in Andhra, (just one example), a Baba lover has himself told us this story. Baba was with us for five days and we were so happy, it was such a joy to be around Baba. Baba was giving darshan to so many -- anyone who came to be with Him, and at that time it is so different you can't describe it. He was in the midst of that joy, and every day he saw people come and bow down to Baba. As you saw in the film the other day, people would put garlands of fresh flowers around Baba. It's a love offering, a reflection of your joy at seeing Him. This man would watch from a distance, and he would say, 'How fortunate the flowers are to snuggle around Baba. If only I had one of those garlands!' Of course, the garlands are removed from Baba's neck by Eruch after they accumulate, and they are set aside. At the end of the programme, when Baba would go to His room, after hours and hours of giving Himself to His lovers, after giving prasad non-stop, after giving His love, when he would come in the last of the garlands would still be around Him. There would be a heap of garlands there by His gaadi. This went on every day."

"Every day the man watched, and every day he thought about the garlands. He never had a chance to get any of the garlands, but every day he longed for one. The last day, when Baba went back to His room, Baba said to Eruch, 'Go call such and such.' His name was known. We don't know the drama, and all Eruch knows is that he has a task to perform for

Baba. For some reason, Baba wants that particular lover. The lover tells us the other half of the story in Guruprasad in 1969."

"Finding him in the crowd, Eruch says to him, 'Baba wants you.' The man comes happily and the moment he opens the door Baba has the biggest garland of the lot in His hands, and Baba flings the garland right at his chest and he had his garland, and Baba immediately said, "Go" and the door was closed.

"The man reflected to us, 'I longed for the garland, but if I had longed for something more worthy, He would have given that to me too.' [Mani reflects that it all depends on what you want and how much you want it.] So take care of your longings. You now have just what you need, but it depends on you to make whatever out of it you can."

[Female pilgrim says she feels she should take more initiative in loving Baba, that it is what Baba wants her to do, but she doesn't know how. Whatever she is supposed to do, it hasn't become enough of a reality for her to act on it.]

Mani says, "Baba had taken the pains to come to you, to touch your heart, to gather you to Him. The rest also Baba will do. So just relax, it's like a flowing. Go on loving Him. It's like a blossoming, an opening. If you're longing to love Him more, He will give that. It takes its time, but whatever He said, it will come true."

[Pilgrim continues, "I feel like a sleepy soul." ]

Mani laughs: "You must be alert because He comes in quietly."

"I'm just thinking about Him playing games. When He would play cards or gillidanda with us, He would cheat. But He would cheat, knowing that you know that He is cheating! It used to be a challenge to catch Him out, but we couldn't. We'd be up on our toes, 'We're going to catch Him this time.' He'd look with a twinkle in His eye, 'Should I do it again?' And even if He did it again, you couldn't catch Him out.

"Like that gilli-danda that we play with two pieces of wood, the long and the small? You have to hit the small stick with the big stick three times, and you have to measure how far you hit the small stick, in terms of the length of the big stick, when you finally hit the small stick for distance."

[The next part of the game is that you announce how far you think you have hit the small stick, like say 40 times the length of the big stick, but if you over-estimate, you lose. So you have to both hit the small stick a long distance and not claim more distance than the small stick has actually gone.]

"Baba would claim a certain distance, and we would say that He hadn't anything like that distance, and require Him to measure, to prove His claim. You have to bend down and measure along the ground using the big stick as a measuring rod. We'd go along with Him on both sides, counting, and somehow it would come out to the distance He said, even

though we knew it wasn't that far. 'Want me to count again?' Baba would say. We'd try to catch him the second time, but somehow He always had the better of us."

[Mani calls Rano over to talk, and starts it out with, "Bili was telling some really amusing anecdotes..." At the same time, Rano is saying, "unnn, doesn't sound good..." All are laughing.]

Rano: "Baba always impressed upon me, very forcefully, that I should never strain myself after eating, and I shouldn't lift anything heavy after eating, and I would say 'Yes, Baba,' and I tried to abide by that order. One day, I was eating and Baba sent for me. So I went to the room, and Baba said, 'Open that packing case.' Well, I could have said, 'Well, Baba, you said...' but it was disastrous when you said something like that. Instead I said, 'Yes, Baba' and I got a screwdriver and a hammer, and I hammered and hammered, and pried the packing case open. Then I went back to lunch, but of course by that time the food was stone-cold. People always used to ask me why I ate so fast. I said because I like my food hot. The day I dawdle over food will be the day that Baba calls me to do something."

Mani: "I was sitting at the table with Baba one day, and my chair is close to His. He said, 'After you finish eating, go tell Eruch such and such.' I started getting up. 'No, no,' Baba said, 'After you finish eating.' So, I thought, there must be no hurry, and I sat back down. Now I started eating fast, because after eating Baba would want the message sent. Baba said to me, 'Where's the hurry? Why are you eating so fast? Slowly, slowly.' Oh well, slowly. So I slow down. Two seconds go by, and He says, 'Will it take you very long to finish?'"

"Mani: 'No, no, I can go now.'"

"Baba: 'No, no, sit down, after eating.'"

"Again I eat fast, again He says, 'What are you eating fast for?' And you wouldn't believe it. This went on, and this was Baba's gesture for 'fast' [snaps fingers together] and this is Baba's gesture for slow, and I swear that at one point Baba was gesturing slow with one hand and fast with the other one!" [lots of laughter]

Rano: "Same thing happened to me. Baba wanted me to take a message to the mandali. I said, 'I'll take it now.'"

"Baba: 'No, no, eat your breakfast first and then go.'"

"I took about two sips, saw Baba watching me, and said, 'Baba, I think I'd rather go now.' Baba didn't say, 'No, no, go on eating.' I did take the message to the mandali came back and was able to finish my breakfast in peace."

Bili: "I had the opposite experience. When I first went to Myrtle Beach, as soon as I got off the bus, Baba gave me some typewritten pages to correct, to proofread, and he said to the others, 'Hurry up. You're keeping the cook. Go have your lunch.' Everybody rushed to the

lunch, while I went over to the guest house and started correcting. Here I was, everybody else is eating and I am feeling so sorry for myself. My better self remarked that 'you have a chance to be with the Avatar, He had given you His first order and you are feeling sorry for yourself? You stupid, forget the lunch, you're never getting lunch anyway.' Just after I had this revelation and started back into working on the corrections, Eruch stuck his head into the room and said, 'Baba wants you to go have lunch. I never saw those pages again. I have no idea what happened to them. [Mani laughs]

Rano: "Feeling hungry reminds me that whenever we were traveling on the bus [the Blue Bus tours of the late '30s], Elizabeth used to drive the bus, before she had a car in India. Kitty was given the order to have some extra tidbits for Elizabeth and the mandali who were driving the cars, it was hard work and they would get hungry. This particular day Kitty had cooked some dal in the morning, but by evening it had gone sour. That meant everybody was going to be on short rations. There was no special arrangement for Rano [as regards food] no matter how hungry she was, but I used to have to pack and unpack the inside of the bus so I thought I was doing as much work as Elizabeth and the drivers. So I was feeling sorry for myself, and I said to Kitty, 'I'm hungry. I want something to eat.' I forgot that Kitty has to go and tell Baba, because Kitty can't give me anything without informing Baba. But she didn't tell me -- I would have skipped the whole thing."

"The first thing I knew, Baba sent for me. By that time, I was worried. It was not a good thing. When i came face-to-face with Baba He said to me, 'I hear you're hungry.'"

"No Baba, it's quite all right, I shouldn't have said anything to Kitty..."

"Baba repeated, 'You're hungry,' and by that time I wasn't a bit hungry. Baba continued, to Kitty, 'Go and get Rano something to eat.' Even though I didn't want it by that time, I had to eat it because it was Baba's order. I felt so bad because I realized afterwards that I was only thinking of myself, and everybody else on the bus was just as hungry as I was, nobody was saying anything, but I knew."

Rano: "I'll tell you one story. It's my favorite story, a story in which, well if you do your utmost and do what Baba says, Baba always helps you somehow to see the thing through. This particular time we were traveling by train. Baba just had a few of the mandali traveling with Him, in addition to Mani, Meheru, Mehera and myself. Kitty and I used to take turns going out on these trips, taking care of the girls. Baba was chatting with the mandali, and we were put in a ladies' compartment. At that point, Baba had not always minded if there was a small boy in the ladies' compartment even though Mehera was there. But on this occasion He gave strict instructions that no boy should come into the ladies' compartment -- of course no men, but also no little boy no matter how little."

[To understand this story, the reader had to know that trains stop at the more important railway stations for extended periods of time, before getting underway to continue their journey. It's not uncommon for a train to stop for more than 20 minutes at an important station like Navsari.]

"We went along for quite a long distance, but finally we arrived at a station. The first thing I knew, the door was thrown open and some big Sindhi ladies in their white saris marched in to take over the compartment. That was all right, we expected that sooner or later something like that would happen, but what do I see! Among them was a boy, actually quite a big boy. I said, 'Oh, this won't do.' I couldn't speak directly to the women, because I didn't know their language and they didn't know my language. So I looked out and saw a man directing operations who I took to be the father. I said to him, 'You've got to take your son out of here. This is a ladies' compartment and we don't want him here. The father insisted that the boy had to be with his mother. I said, directly, 'He can't be with his mother.' We argued back and forth. Both of us were adamant. At one point he said, 'Don't make me forget you're a lady.' I didn't care if it got violent, I had to get that boy out of the compartment before the train started. At last I was desperate. The only thing I could think of to do was to take the boy by the scruff of the neck and throw him out, but I knew that doing that would make complications for Baba and wouldn't help matters any. So I told Mani, 'You all stay in the corner of the compartment and I will quickly go down to Baba's compartment and consult Him.'

"I went down to Baba's compartment and breathlessly told Him what was happening. He said, 'Alright, now, relax, calm down, you've told me now so go back.' It seemed to me that it was now in Baba's hands, and as I walked back to our compartment, and I saw all the women, the son, the luggage coming out of our compartment, and they are going in the opposite direction on the platform! I returned to a compartment that was empty, except for Mani, Mehera and Meheru. I asked what had happened. Mani said, 'I don't know, they just got up and walked out.'"

"I'd done my best, but Baba just took care of the situation. I've always found that if I have done my utmost, and just can't succeed, Baba will take over and get done what needs to be done. I was helpless and Baba took over."

[Some pilgrim woman says this parallels a scene in 'Oh God!' a Hollywood movie with John Denver as the aspirant and George Burns as God.]

Mani emphasizes that Baba expects you to control your emotions in the midst of these sorts of situations, not to act angrily and throw the boy out of the compartment by the scruff of the neck, so to speak. Mani now gives another example.

[I had to re-write the following considerably. She said all the words but in a different sequence.]

Mani: "We stayed in the hills above the Kulu Valley for a few days at one point. Doctor Donkin had gone down to the village in the valley and had encountered a pony and his keeper, the pony-walla, and had arranged for the pony-walla to bring the pony up to our villa. It did come, and Baba rode on the pony, we rode on the pony, and the next day the pony visit was arranged for 10 AM.

"Baba always wanted things to happen on time, or especially ahead of time, and He was fussing about the visit of the pony and its walla from 9:15 on. Finally when 10 rolled around, no pony, Baba went to Donkin and told him that he should yell at the pony-walla when he did arrive, feigning anger and scolding him.

"This is harder to do than you would think, because Don had to do it in Hindi. Don was a remarkable linguist, but to express anger in a language in which you aren't absolutely fluent requires language skills a non-native may not have. Eventually the pony and walla showed up, and Don attempted to chastise the man. The man had about a hundred excuses, and he tried to place his turban on Don's feet as a sign of submission. Baba was standing by, watching this develop, as Don continued to give it to the pony-walla. As Don was trying to scold the man, he was actually getting angry. At that point, Don felt a gentle tap on his shoulder, and there was Baba, who said to him, 'What are you getting angry for?' 'Well,' says Don to himself, 'of all the things. He tells me to do it...' But Don stopped, and upon reflection realized that he had really become angry.

"At this point Baba goes to the man with the horse and caresses him, pats him on the shoulder, pinches his ear, and says, 'Never again late.' The pony walla express his humility, places his turban on Baba and Don's feet and then he goes. "

[lunch time]

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### **Mani Irani**

Mandali Hall, Meherazad, India

December 15, 1979

### **Content**

Mani: [speaking about the tortoise that they used to keep as a pet]: "...because he goes there for aarti when we are there for aarti in the evening? We put him on the floor at Meherazad and he walks straight to Baba's room. Put him on the veranda and he goes straight to Baba's room. And he just sits there. So when we're singing the aarti he's there. After we take darshan, I pick him up, and make him take darshan. I tell him how lucky he is."

[Apparently, as Christmas is just around the corner, Mandali Hall is full of Christmas cards to Baba and the mandali, and Mani reads fragments of the lofty sentiments expressed in the cards.]

[Some pilgrim says to those outside that the doors to Mandali Hall are closing and anyone who wants to hear Mani should come in. A pilgrim says, "which Mani?" After a few giggles, Mani takes up the topic.]

"At one time there were three Manis here. All three of us would look around when we heard the name.

"This date, 15 December, reminds me of the many December 15ths I have spent with Baba. There was one time when everybody's birthday was celebrated. During that phase there were many of us women, and each one had a birthday. In this phase, Baba said everyone should give a present. We all had to dive into our belongings and find something to give, because we couldn't go out shopping. Also, the things we did have had often been given to us as gifts by others.

[tape ends]