

KG-125A

Mani Irani

Mandali Hall, Meherazad, India

February 10, 1980

44:28

Note: Continuation of KG-124B

Content

Baba was sitting on a low gaadi, and Baba put my head on his lap, and was tapping time to the music. My mouth was filled with candy, but I couldn't swallow well, and it was agony for not swallowing and ecstasy for being that close to Baba. When it was over, I said, "Never again will I go to Baba with a candy in my mouth."

The one and only time I got a beating from Baba: I was maybe 6-9 years old in Meherabad, and there was a gathering in front of Baba, and there was a sheet stretched across the isle separating the men and women. I went to Baba expecting the loving and cuddling I usually got. Baba looked at me, and gave me a resounding slap. I couldn't believe what had happened. Baba said to me, "Every one of them has removed sandals, and you have your slippers on. Go right out and remove them. I walked straight out, and slipped back into the women's side. Baba clapped, "Baba wants Mani, at once." I didn't want to go. I wasn't going to go, but they were pushing me, and they practically lifted me. I walked stiff and straight up to Baba. Baba embraced me, and I began to bawl. Baba patted me and kissed me and told me to go sit down again.

Someone had gone to Upasni Maharaj, and one day she came and sat among the others and when Maharaj said to go, everyone else went. The woman didn't go. She asked for him to beat her. He refused, and told her to go back to her mother and tell her that he had beaten her.

Khorshed's father [daughter of Soonamasi] was a very saintly person even by worldly standards. I would go to him, and to keep me quiet for a while he gave me some beads and told me to repeat Baba's name. A tiny scorpion came and stung me. I know what it is like to get a scorpion bit. I'm very allergic. The way he explained to me was that I was special, and "the scorpion was sent to you specially. Baba was asking you 'whether you can you bear this pain when you are repeating my name?'"

Mani Irani

Mandali Hall, Meherazad, India

February 16, 1980

Content

Topic is bad singers appearing before Baba. Mani says it was hard to bear the bad singers. Sometimes Baba would joke with them through signs about how bad the music was, and sometimes he would encourage them to go on singing.

Sarosh would give nicknames, and when our western family was flowing in there was a girl named Mary. Sarosh nicknamed her "long ears." In Irani you don't have the dirty words of abuse that exist in other Indian languages but an Irani curse is "may you be without work!"

Mani's father's strongest curse, when she was misbehaving the most, was, "May God be good to you.

Mani tells a story she heard in childhood about a mullah and a goat, the mullah had to take something to the kazi, but he kicked the grass toward the goat. That leg, the one that kicked the grass toward the goat, went to heaven.

I asked mother what happened to the other leg, and Shirin said that Mani was missing the point of the story.

Another story, this one also fanciful:

Some neighbors asked someone if they could borrow two stainless steel cooking pots, because guests were coming. Several days later, she returned four cooking pots. "Oh, didn't you know, those two had children." After some time the neighbor borrowed two silver cooking pots, but didn't return them. "Haven't you heard? Those cooking pots died." "If cooking pots have children, which you accepted, why can't cooking pots die?"

There's an Irani celebration on 21st March on which you are supposed to put on new clothes. But, they were on the New Life, and were up north in Dehra Dun, and in that season it is really cold, not like the peak of summer the way it is in the Deccan. It rains up north, where they were, and it was freezing cold, and all night it would drip on the tin roof. You have to go outside to go to the kitchen.

In that time, in the kitchen, Todi Singh and his family had taken residence. Taking baths was tough because it was so cold. Lakshibai asked us, "You must be bathing so early in the morning," because the cooks were bathing at 3 AM, so as not to discomfort them. We weren't, and I had to give a non-explanation to avoid telling her that we didn't want to take baths because we were too cold! Todi Singh would go to the bazaar to get vegetables and Mani would be knocked out by the beauty of the vegetables. Baba let them cook for 7 days, and then Baba told him to go back home and thanked him, telling him that He had done His work.

Todi Singh got mast-like, though he had been very affluent and influential. In 1965 Mani saw him in Guruprasad. He had white shirt and white pajama, much simpler clothing than he had come with. No rings of gold, nothing like that, but he had a waistcoat pocket with a picture of Baba in that pocket, and that was all he had. Baba was very pleased with him.

The family retired him from the family business, because he got overwhelmed and couldn't do his worldly duties.

I woke up once with tears after a dream of Babajan. There used to be a railing around Babajan that I called her "cradle." In this dream, just Babajan was there and she was tying up a bundle in a sheet. I was saying, "Please don't leave us, Babajan," and I was crying and pleading and said, "What can I do, child, I have no customers for my wares. Nobody can afford what I have for sale. I have to close the store."

Someone asks about rishis, eclipses and practices to gain spiritual benefit. Mani counters this to point out that giving is what is important, not receiving.

Mani: King story, palaces, coronations, all that. King loses the pleasure of the experience of taking the crown because he saw a button missing on the front of an officer's uniform.

Rano is going to complete some stories she was telling on a prior day, and then Mani is going to give some music.

[tape ends]