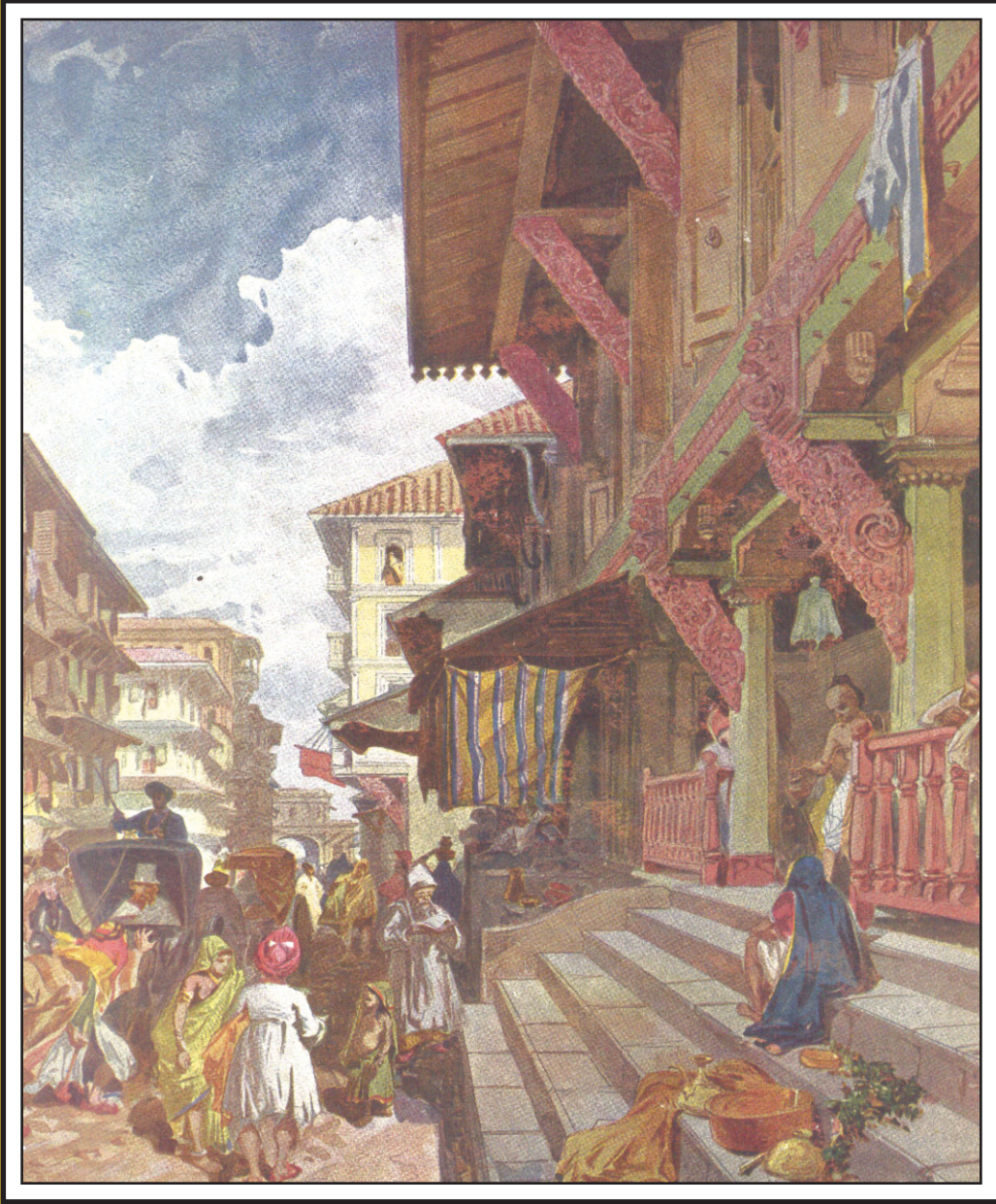


प्रश्नतरुणा

मूल्य - १० रुपये

दिवाळी अंक २०११





प्रभु तरुण भाऊवीज



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| १) श्रीम. रजनी तळपदेकडून श्रीम. नलिनी वसंत स्मरणार्थ | ५०००/- | १९) सौ. शोभा रंजन विजयकर | १५१/- |
| २) कीर्तिकर फॅमिलीकडून प्रभादेवी ट्रस्ट | २०००/- | २०) श्री. भालचंद्र कानिटकर | १५१/- |
| ३) श्री. विजय ग. प्रधानकडून सौ. सुनेत्रा वि. प्रधान स्मरणार्थ | १०००/- | २१) श्रीम. सरोजिनी नवलकर | १५१/- |
| ४) सौ. लीना मिलिंद वाझकर | १०००/- | २२) श्रीम. सरोज जयवंत प्रधान | १५०/- |
| ५) सौ. चंदिनी राजस अजिंक्य | ५०१/- | २३) सौ. अस्मिता राहुल प्रधान | १५०/- |
| ६) सौ. नीता दिपक विजयकर | ५००/- | २४) श्रीम. उर्मिला विजय धैर्यवान | १२५/- |
| ७) सौ. मयुरा गुंजारव नायक | ५००/- | २५) श्री. चारुदत्त नवीनचंद्र धैर्यवान | १११/- |
| ८) श्रीम. माधुरी विहंग नायक | ५००/- | २६) सौ. ऋता आनंद तळपदे | १०१/- |
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| १०) डॉ. सौ. सुमन सुवर्णकुमार नवलकर | २५१/- | २८) सौ. मेनका जयपाल तळपदे | १०१/- |
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प्रभु तरुण भाऊबीज



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| ३९) सौ. लुवीना समित विजयकर | १०१/- | ५८) सौ. कुंदा प्रताप वेलकर | १००/- |
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| ४२) सौ. निशा शरद कोठारे | १००/- | ६१) श्री. मिथील चंद्रकिरण नवलकर | १००/- |
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Prabhu Tarun was established on 25th August 1923 on the auspicious occasion of 'Narali Poornima'. A group of young socialites like Chandramadhav Trilokekar, Shivshankar Talpade, Vishnupant Kothare, Moreshwar Ranjit, Madhav Dharadhar and Dada Jayakar were the founder members who conceptualized the idea of starting a monthly newsletter in Marathi and named it 'PRABHU TARUN'. The first editor of this monthly periodical was Mr. Vishnupant Krishna Kothare .

Editors of Prabhu Tarun and their tenure of editorship:



Vishnupant Krishna Kothare

1923 to 1967



Suhas Vishnupant Kothare

1967 to 1998



Vihang Vishnuraj Nayak

1998 to 2008



Suhasini Ashok Kirtikar

2008 till date

The Executive Editorial board consisting of four Co-editors formed since 2008 till date

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Mayura Gunjarav Nayak | 2. Sanjana Deepak Kothare |
| 3. Vaijayanti Ashok Kirtikar | 4. Minakshi Kaushik Jayakar |

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The Prabhu Tarun website www.prabhutarun.org was launched on 6th June 2009

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प्रभुतरुण दिवाळी अंक २०११

अंतरंग

संपादकीय

कथा व लेख

सुहासिनी कीर्तिकर, उदय बा. जयकर, प्रताप वेलकर, डॉ. सुमन नवलकर, सौ. निकेता प्रशांत राणे, हेमलता केशव कोठारे, विश्वास अजिंक्य, कल्पना सुभाष कोठारे, चारुदत्त धैर्यवान, पं. सुजन राणे, अलका मिनलकुमार तळपदे, केतकी राजन जयकर, अनुराधा सीमित देसाई, शुभदा सुरेश आगासकर, नंदकुमार विजयकर, अपर्णा समीर विजयकर, उज्ज्वला आगासकर, उज्ज्वला ब्रम्हांडकर

कविता

मिलिंद सुहास प्रधान, उज्ज्वला ब्रम्हांडकर, कल्पना सुभाष कोठारे, अजित प्रमोद तळपदे, इना तळपदे, रजनी विनोद कोठारे

Growing Up Again

मयुरा नायक, राजा अजिंक्य, त्वरिता संजय दळवी, निरुपा अरविद व्यवहारकर, प्रविण मानकर, अपर्णा समीर विजयकर, दीपश्री सुदीप कोठारे, गौरांग कीर्तिकर, अनिल राव, ऐश्वर्या वेलकर, अजित मानकर, निलेश नायक, संजय दळवी

REINCARNATION

वैजयंती कीर्तिकर, संजना दीपक कोठारे, नितीन नवलकर, ज्ञानदा प्रधान, रौनक समीर विजयकर, प्रविण मानकर

KIDS SECTION

शिल्पा जयकर, अनीश नील कीर्तिकर, नीष्का कोठारे, आदिती सीमित देसाई, श्रिया कौशिक जयकर, ईशान कोठारे, लीना नील कीर्तिकर, आदिती सचिन विजयकर, अनिका जयदीप विजयकर, कृतार्थ शेटे, शौनक जयकर, मिथिल वेलकर

NRI

कश्मिरा स्वप्नील विजयकर, निखिल धुरंधर, अक्षय कोठारे, मिनिका रवीकांत अय्यर, अनुप्रिता भौमिक, जयदीप विजयकर.

गणपती बाप्पा मोरया

मिनाक्षी जयकर, अनिरुद्ध मल्हारी कीर्तिकर, दीपक कोठारे, पुष्पल विजयकर, शोभा नायक, विकास कोठारे, पराग तळपदे, प्रिया तेंडुलकर, अर्चना वैद्य, आशा राव, रंजन खंडेराव धैर्यवान, विजय धुरंधर, उल्हास खंडेराव अजिंक्य

Life Without Twitter

सुष्मिता कोठारे, अपर्णा व्यवहारकार, प्रेरित नाईक, सिद्धार्थ कोठारे, स्वप्नील व्यवहारकर, चैतन्य कीर्तिकर, जतिन दिलिप नवलकर, उत्कर्ष अजिंक्य, जान्हवी आगासकर, आनंद विजयकर, गौरांग कीर्तिकर

बाळाचे पाय पाळण्यात

भक्ती प्रधान शेटे, एच. जी. प्रधान, कॅ. आश्विन एच. प्रधान, डॉ. प्रदीप गजानन विजयकर, डॉ. तन्मय प्रदीप विजयकर, नेत्रा विजयकर, यशोधरा बन्सी धुरंधर, परज बन्सी धुरंधर

वात्रटिका:- डॉ. सुमन नवलकर

भाऊबीज, बातम्या, प्रभुतरुणाची डायरी, देणग्या
मुखपृष्ठ, अंतर्गत सजावट, व्यंगचित्रे- प्रदीप कोठारे

तत्त्वाचा बंदा जीव । मूर्तीला कोण विचारी?

प्रभुतरुण

दिवाळी अंक

मूल्य रुपये दहा

(स्थापना : तारीख २५ ऑगस्ट १९२३)



संपादिका : सुहासिनी कीर्तिकर

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मिनाक्षी जयकर, मयुरा नायक,
संजना कोठारे, वैजयंती कीर्तिकर

वर्ष ८८ वे)

ऑक्टोबर-नोव्हेंबर २०११

(अंक ९८७

संपादकीय

शुभेच्छा

-सुहासिनी कीर्तिकर

‘दिवाळी सण मोठा, नाही आनंदा तोटा ।’ असंच शब्द बदलून म्हणता येईल. दिवाळी म्हणजे पहाटेचं अभ्यंग स्नान. दिव्यांचा महोत्सव. अंधाराचा नाश. रांगोळ्या, सुकडी, नवीन कपडे, नवीन कोऱ्या वस्तू, दागदागिने, आतषबाजी, कंदील... अशा सर्वांनी दिवाळीत आनंदाचे कारंजे थुईथुई उडत असते. त्या आनंदात भर पडते ती दिवाळी अंकांची. ही खास मराठी खासियत.

बाकी अनेक बाबतीत संस्कृती निदर्शक एकेक चिरा आज ढासळत चालला तरी दिवाळी अंक अजूनही भक्कम पाय रोवून आहेत. ‘प्रभुतरुण’ही आपला दिमाखदार दिवाळी अंक घेवून या आनंदात सामील आहे. एकेक चिरा ढासळत चाललंय? खरंच की. कोलेस्टेरॉलच्या सजगतेमुळे शेवचकलींचे घाणे कमी होत चाललेत. तळण नको! गोड खाऊन वजन वाढते. मग कशाला करा लाडू, शिगड्या? तवसं नि घेवर?... असं म्हणत आता सुकडीचं प्रमाण रोडावलंय. एके काळी आपले कणे ही इतरांना लोभावणारी बाब असायची. निरनिराळ्या

कारणांनी त्याला मर्यादा आल्या. अहो, अंगणच कुठंय आपल्या आजच्या घरांना? मग दारपुढे, हॉलमध्ये हे कणे परभांच्या हौसेचा कणा ताठ ठेवताहेत. तरीही परभांचा आनंद कधीच कमी नाही झाला. होणारही नाही. ‘प्रभुतरुण’ दिवाळी अंक याची साक्ष आहे.

या अंकात ‘एन् आर आय’ विभागाने भव्य जग छोटं (जवळ) केलं अन् ‘प्रभुतरुण’ ला मोठं केलंय. दरवर्षीप्रमाणे आपल्या ‘युवामंच’ ने भरपूर मेहनत घेऊन हा अंक सिद्ध केलाय. त्यात किती विविधता आहे पहा! फेसबुक, मोबाईल शिवायच्या आयुष्याची मोजणी आहे, ‘ग्रींग अप अगेन’ चे खतपाणी आहे, या खतपाण्याने भरारून जाऊन तरारणारा लहान मुलांचा विभाग आहे. परभांची संस्कृती जोपासणारी गणपती-गौरीची आरास मांडणारा विभाग आहे. श्रद्धा - अंधश्रद्धेला स्पर्श करणारा पुनर्जन्माचा अद्भूत भाग आहे. कविता आहेत. कथा आहेत. विनोद आहे. माहितीपूर्ण लेख आहेत. ‘धन्य ते गायनी कला’ सांगणारा भीमसेन जोशींवर लेख



आहे. वात्रटिका, व्यंगचित्रे दरवर्षीप्रमाणे आनंदात भर घालायला आहेतच. हो! अन् देखणं असं मुखपृष्ठ आहे!

आमचे व्यंगचित्रकार श्री. प्रदीप कोठारे यांच्या संकल्पनेतून साकारलेलं. परभांच्या सांस्कृतिक खुणा जपणारं. अलिकडे श्री. विश्वास अजिंक्य यांनी परळच्या शंभरी गाठलेल्या जयकरवाड्यावर 'लोकसत्ते' तून लेख लिहीला. का? 'वाडा' संस्कृती लोप होत असताना हा वाडा टिकून आहे म्हणूनच ना? 'प्रभुतरुणा'च्या मुखपृष्ठावरचा वाडा पहा. केवळ बाह्यदर्शनच किती दिमाखदार आहे! आधी अंगण किंवा ओटा. नंतर संगमरवरी पायऱ्या वैभवात पहुडलेल्या. मग ओसरी किंवा ओटी. एका बाजूला देवघर, झोपायच्या खोल्या. मध्ये वठाण ('डॉइंगरूम'), त्याला लागून स्वयंपाकघर, ('चुलीपस'), कोठीघर, बाळंतीणीची खोली, मागे भांडी घासायची मोरी, विटाळशीची मोरी, जरा दूर संडास, त्या आधी पाठच्या अंगणात बंब, घंगाळ, हौद आणि तुळशी वृंदावन असा भलं मोठा पैस असलेला खटला होता एकेकाळी. पण कुटुंबकर्त्यांचा अंमल काळानुसारे कमी झाला. विभक्त कुटुंबपद्धती आली. घराची लोकसंख्या म्हणून रोडावली. 'आमदनी अठन्नी, खर्चा रुपाया' ही आपली वृत्ती सोकावली. मग 'सोकाजी' बंगल्या-

वाड्यातून छोट्या जागेत आला. एकेकाळी 'पार्टीचे गाणे' गात 'वीकएन्ड' मालाड-बोरिवलीला आपल्या 'फार्महाऊस' मध्ये साजरा करणारा परभू पार उपनगरांच्या टोकाला 'ब्लॉक' नावाच्या जागेत 'ब्लॉकड' झाला.

असं असलं तरी त्याच्या 'जुन्या खुणा' आठवाव्यात म्हणून, मुखपृष्ठात या कोरल्या गेल्या आहेत. 'परभांची दानत' या चित्रात पहाता येते. ओटीचे खांब कसे ताशीव, कलाकुसरी आहेत! वैभव सांगणारे हे या चित्राचे रंग घेऊन 'प्रभुतरुणा'ने आपला रंग अंकात भरला आहे. तितकाच ताशीव, कलाकुसरी अन् भक्कम!

'परभांची दानत' या अंकातील 'भाऊबीज' यादीत अन् जाहिरातींत दिसतेय. अनेक लेखकांच्या चित्रकाराच्या सहकार्यातही याची मोहर उमटली आहेच. त्याबद्दल मनःपूर्वक आभार.

चला तर; या मोहरीवर तुमच्या वाचनाचा शिक्का मारा आणि दिवाळीचा आनंद द्विगुणीत करा. परस्पर म्हणूया की 'देणाऱ्याने देत जावे. घेणाऱ्याने घेत जावे.'

आनंद घ्या, आनंद द्या. आनंद लुटा. आनंद वाटा. 'प्रभुतरुणा' च्या आनंदात वाटेकरी होणाऱ्या समस्त प्रभु परिवाराला दिवाळीच्या आणि नववर्षाच्या मन भरून शुभेच्छा.



सर्व प्रभु जनांस दीपावली आणि



नूतन वर्ष सुखाचे जावो!



ज्याचे उत्तर नाही !

मूळ लेखक : धूमकेतू

❖ अनुवाद : सुहासिनी कीर्तिकर ❖

आजपर्यंत कुणी उत्तर दिलंय का? मग नारंगीसारख्या अगदीच सामान्य असणाऱ्या बाईला याचं उत्तर कसं देता येणार?

याचं उत्तर कुणापाशीच नाही. माणसाला भूक अन् परस्परलिंगविरोधी आकर्षण – या दोन्हीचं कुटून देणं मिळालं असेल? कुणीच याचं उत्तर देऊ शकणार नाही. नारंगी काय मग वेगळी? दिवस कसेबसे ढकलायला या देवळात, त्या देवळात, या भजनमंडळीत तर उद्या त्या भजनमंडळीत, या कीर्तनात, त्या कीर्तनात अशी इकडे तिकडे फिरण्याची तिने स्वतःला सवय लावली होती. भटकण्यातून तिला उमगण्यापूर्वीच ती भरकटली. तिचं पाऊल वाकडं पडलं. कसं? पडलं एवढंच खरं. निसर्गाने आपलं काम चोख केलं. ती बिचारी अगतिक झाली. घाबरली. आता स्वतःच्या अब्रूचे धिंडवडे निघणार, लोक नावं ठेवणार, बोटं दाखवणार अशा भयाने तिचा जीव व्याकूळ झाला. हजारो काळजांनी तिचं माथं भणायून गेलं. आजपर्यंत ती केव्हाही निर्मम, सुखी होती! स्वतःच्या भाकऱ्या स्वतः बडवायच्या. पाणी भरायचं. केर काढायचा. स्वयंपाक करायचा की सारं आवरून चालली भटकायला. तिला अजिबातच तेव्हा पत्ता नव्हता की ती माणसांच्या दुबळेपणाबरोबर हिंडतेय! आणि कोठल्याही क्षणी हा दुबळेपणा अचानक प्रगट होणारंय!

निसर्गानेच बहाल केलेल्या या आवेगी, ताकदवान वृत्तीला दुबळेपणा तरी कसं म्हणायचं?

अन् अशी गोष्ट माणसाची हतबलता म्हणून तिच्यावर पांघरूणही घालता येत नाही!

या सगळ्या 'फिलॉसफी' चा नारंगीला काय लाभ? काहीही नाही!

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ती विधवा होती. आता या नैसर्गिक कृतीमुळे पडलेल्या प्रश्नांची उकल तिलाच करायची होती. ती

समाजाचे एक अंग होती. समाजात रहायचे तर चोरीमारी, छळ, अफवा, पळवाट अशा कोणत्याही मार्गाने तिला यातून मार्ग शोधायलाच हवा. केवळ निसर्ग, निसर्ग म्हणून ती गप्प कशी रहाणार? मार्ग शोधायलाच हवा.

एका दिवशी ती सकाळी लवकर उठली. तिच्या माहेरी कुणीच नव्हतं. पण भलं मोठं टाळं लावलेलं एक घर मात्र गावी होतं. एखाद्या किल्ल्यासारखं भक्कम वाटलं तिला ते घर. अशा परिस्थितीत विशेषच सुरक्षित असं. तिला ओळखणारे अन् भले असे त्या घराजवळचे शेजारी पाजारी पण असतीलच की. कदाचित त्याच्यापैकी कुणी तिला मार्ग दाखवेलही!

त्या गावाला जायला नारंगी निघाली. मनात भय घेऊनच.

कुणी पहाणार नाही, दखल घेणार नाही अशी वेळ साधून ती त्या घरी पोहोचली. घराची साफसफाई सुरु केली तिने.

इतके दिवस बंद असलेलं घर असं उघडं पाहून कुणी दाराच्या फटीतून हळूच नजर टाकली. कुणी वर चढून छपराच्या झरोक्यातून डोकावलं. कुणी बंद खिडकीच्या अर्धवट काचेतून चोरासारखे पाहिलं. आणि दुपार होण्यापूर्वीच गावात सर्वभर बभ्रा झाला! गोंधळ सुरू झाला.

संध्याकाळ सरता सरता शेजारची एक म्हातारी तिच्या घरी आली. नारंगी अगदी रडकुंडीला आली होती. आता 'हे' सगळं सगळ्यांना कळेल या भयानं तिला घेरलं होतं. पण या लहानशा गावात ते केव्हाच सगळ्यांना कळलं होतं!

“आज तुझी आई असायला हवी होती!” – म्हातारी बोलली. पण त्या बोलण्यात दुःख की उपहासच होता; खरं काही कळत नव्हतं. कळणं मुश्कीलच!

नारंगी काहीच बोलली नाही!

“अगं रांडे! मी तुला मार्ग दाखवते. पहिल्यांदा ‘ते’ पाड. टाकून दे उकीरड्यावर. नाळ पकडून कुणी बसतं का अशी? कुतरड्यांच्या भुंकण्यासारखं हे आता गावभर झालंच आहे. हे गाव पापी आहे. या गावाला स्वतःची पापं काय कमी आहेत? दुसऱ्याचं पाप मात्र अगदी पिंपळावर चढून खरवडून खरवडून पहात राहिल हे गाव. तू इथं या गावात थोडे दिवस रहा कशीबशी. मग सगळं नीट होईल.”

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म्हातारी म्हणाली तसं सगळं नीट तर झालं. नारंगीला निश्चित श्वास घेता आला. पण तिचा श्वास सुरळीत झाला न झाला तितक्यात गावात दुसरीच चर्चा सुरु झाली. “अरे! हिला चांडाळणीला गावाबाहेर काढा. नाहीतर शिपुरडे आपल्याला त्रास देत रहातील!”

मग काय? दररोज नवीन नवीन दोनचार जण दिसायला लागले.

सांगू लागले की, “तू पाचपंधरा दिवस कुठेतरी गायब हो. नंतर ये. हे गाव तुझंच आहे. तू येऊन रहा मग. पण आता जा. यात्रेला जा हवं तर! यात्रेसारखं दुसरं पुण्य नाही! आम्ही ‘ही’ गोष्ट कशीबशी सावरून घेऊ. पण आता तू जा.”

रोजरोजच्या या कटकटीला कंटाळून एक दिवस नारंगी शहराकडे पळाली!

कोण होतं तिचं शहरात? कुण्णी कुण्णी नाही! घरही नव्हतं तिचं. पण तिथं एक बरं होतं. तिथं गर्दी एवढी होती, कामाचे व्याप इतके होते की कोणी कुणाला काही विचारत नव्हतं, चौकशी करत नव्हतं. इथे गावात तिच्या घराच्या अंगणातून बाहेर पडणारा प्रत्येकजण जणू धर्माचा अवतार होता अन् पुण्याचा सागर. प्रत्येकजण धर्मपुण्यात्मा होऊन विचारी की गावातून कधी जाणार?

म्हणूनच तर नारंगी पुन्हा शहरात पळून आली. तिला वाटलं होतं की गावात शेजारीपाजारी भले असतील. पण तिच्या भ्रमाचा भोपळा फुटला होता.

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यावेळी ती अगदी गुपचूप येऊन शहरात बसली. शिकाऱ्यांनी पाठलग सुरु केल्यावर जनावर अगदी त्रासून लपत छपत जातं तसं अगदी लपत छपत ती राहिली.

सर्वात जास्त भीती तिच्या मनात होती की गावातून कुणी आपला पाठलाग करत इथपर्यंत येईल आणि आपल्याला शोधून काढेल! ती त्या भितीपोटी दिवसभर कोडून घेई. घरालाही बाहेरून टाळे लावी. रात्री हळूच बाहेर पडे. पुन्हा काही तासात अंधारातच परत आपल्या गुहेत शिरे!

पण याचीही खबर तिच्या नातेवाईकांपर्यंत पोहोचली. नातेवाईक होते; पण लांबचे. आजवर कधी तिच्या अंगणात फिरकले नव्हते. पण नारंगीची जणू खळबळजनक बातमी त्यांना मिळताच सगळ्यांनाच तिच्याविषयी भरते आले. एकामागून एक तिच्याकडे येऊ लागले. पूसतपास करू लागले. ती कुठे होती याविषयी उत्सुकता दाखवू लागले. नेमकं काय झालयं हे जाणून घेण्याकरता आडूनआडून विचारू लागले. कधी चेष्टा मस्करीच्या अविर्भावात; कधी टोमण्यांच्या रूपात; कधी अगदी कणव दाटून आलेल्या भयंकर नाटकी स्वरात ते चौकशी करू लागले!

‘एकटी बाईमाणूस! हिचा माझ्यापुढे काय टिकाव लागणार?’ – असा भाव. असा आविर्भाव!

सगळे गेले की नारंगी रडत बसे! तिला हरघडी, हरक्षण वाटू लागले की ती जीवंत पाहून सगळे तिला आता हडत हुडूतच करणार. आता मरणाशिवाय पर्याय नाही. मरण तिला आवडत नव्हतं!

पण एक दिवस असा आला की या छळाने परिसीमा गाठली. कुणी येऊन सांगितलं की, ‘मी इथे पोलीस ऑफिसला आहे. तुमच्या नावाने तपास सुरु झालाय. आतापर्यंत मी काहीच सुगावा लागू दिलेला नाही! पण असं किती दिवस चालणार?’

त्या रात्री, मध्यरात्री नारंगी उठली. स्वतःचे दार तसेच बंद ठेऊन खिडकीतून बाहेर पडली. बाहेर

हानीकारक

जेवताना टी.व्ही. पाहणं

आरोग्याला हानीकारक म्हणतात,

तोंडाशी सुग्रास अन्न आणि

टी.व्ही.वर टॉयलेटक्लीनरची जाहिरात.

-डॉ. सुमन नवलकर



येताना खरोखरच पडली. आवाज झाला. स्वतः पडली होती. लागलंही होतं. तशीच घसडत घसरत पुढे सरली. खाली रहाणारी माणसं जागी झाली. त्यातील एकानं आवाजही दिला: “काका! नारंगीबेन पडल्यात. तरीही कुठंतरी चालल्यात वाटतं! कुठं जात असतील?”

काकांनी लगेच उत्तर दिलं: “अगदीच वेडा आहेस तू! जाणाऱ्याला कुणी थांबवतं का? जिकडे जायचं असेल तिथं जाऊ दे!”

काळ ओळखून असणारा अन् जग पाहिलेला होता काका! पण त्याचा पुतण्या जरासा जग ओळखण्यात कच्चा होता. तो स्वतःच्या पांघरुणात पडून नारंगीला घसत घसत जातांना पहात राहिला. जखमी प्राणी जावा तशी ती चालली होती!

“काका, या तर विहिरीकडे सरपटत चालल्यात वाटतं! तिथं काय करतील?”

“अरे! तुला नाही कळत. पाणी प्यायचं असेल.” अंधरुणातलाच आणखी कुणी जागा झाला. त्याने उत्तर दिलं. अन् काकांबरोबर तोही विचित्र हसू लागला!

“काका! या पडल्यात. लागलंय त्यांना. घसत

घसडत चालल्यात त्या. तिथं पाणी कुठंय? आपल्या मडक्यातलं पाणी देऊ त्यांना? बोलवू का त्यांना?”

“अरे, वेड्या! पांघरूण डोक्यावर घेऊन झोपून जा नं! का उगाच त्रास करून घेतोस? आकाशातले सगळे तारे दिसतात म्हणून का ते मोजणार आहेस? फुकटचं कर्म कशाला ओढवून घेतोस?”

तेवढ्यात एक मोठा आवाज झाला. धडाम्! सगळे समजून गेले. घसत घसडत जाणाऱ्या नारंगीने स्वतःला विहिरीच्या काठावरून आत झोकून दिलं होतं!

मोठा धुडूम आवाज झाला तसे इतरही अनेकजण जागे झाले!

सगळे विचारू लागले, “काय झालं? काय झालं?”

पुतण्या सांगणारच होता तेवढ्यात काकांनी स्वतःच सांगायला सुरुवात केली. “कसला तरी आवाज झाला खरा! कुणी तरी विहिरीत पाण्यासाठी भांडे टाकले वाटते!”

“का कुणीतरी मातीचा गोणता टाकला?”— काकांचा शेजारी उभा रहात बोलला.

“अरे! तपास तर करा. काय झालं?” एवढ्यात विहिरीजवळून कुणीतरी येताना दिसलं. शेजारचेच विरमजीभाई होते. “विरमजीभाई! विहिरीत कसला आवाज झाला? कुणी पडलं का?”

“कुणी पडलं नाही हो माझ्या मित्रांनो!” या वाक्याचा खास अर्थ अधोरेखित करीत विरमजीभाई उत्तरले. “कोणी पडलं नाही हो माझ्या मित्रांनो! कुणाचं तरी पाप पडलं आहे. उगाच फुकटचं जागरण कशाला करता? सकाळी चौकशी होईल ती का उगाच अंगावर घेता? झोपा गुपचूप. किती छान रात्र आहे! काय झालंय नि काय नाही; इथं कुणाला माहीत! चला, झोपा आता!”

काकांनी विचारलं, “तीच ना?”

“अरे, तीच असणार नं काका! उगाच कशाला उगाळत बसता? झोपा ना स्वस्थ! त्या रांडेच्या मनात देव जागा झाला असं समजा ना! सकाळचं सकाळी पाहून घेऊ.”

एकामागून एक सर्वजण आपआपल्या खाटल्यावर गेले नि तोंडावर पांघरूण घेऊन पडून राहिले. हे सर्व ठीकच. नंतर त्या सगळ्यांना खरोखरच गाढ झोप लागली. हे सर्वात भयंकर होतं!

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निश्चयाचा महामेरू बहुत
जनासी आधारू अखंड
स्थितीचा निर्धार!
श्रीमंत योगी
हितेच्छू



सुनील जयकर



‘‘वेळ फ्युजनचा. ’’

❖ उदय बा.जयकर ❖



चाकरमानी माणूस ‘‘वरिष्ठ नागरीक’’ झाला की त्याला निवृत्त केले जाते नोकरीतून. कारण त्याची कार्यक्षमता उताराला लागते. वय हे वाढतच असते. त्याची बाजारहाटातील लुडबुड पण हळुहळू कमी केली जाते, त्याच्यावरचा वजनदार पिशव्या वाहण्याचा लोड कमी करण्याच्या हेतूने. पण तो स्वतःला वरिष्ठ म्हणवून घ्यायला बहुतांशी तयार नसतोच. जनरेशन १ किंवा १ जी असेच काही म्हणुया; ह्यांना घरची बाजारहाटाची जबाबदारी स्वखुशीने घ्यायला तयार झालेल्या २ जी वर सोपवून पार झालो व आरामखुर्चीत विसावलो.

हाती आलेला अधिक वेळ वर्तमानपत्राच्या पहिल्या पानावरच्या नावापासून ते शेवटच्या पानावरची पब्लीशडबाय... ही शेवटची ओळ वाचून काढत असे. पण पुढे त्याचाही कंटाळा आला. कारण बातम्या, घोटाळे, गुन्हे ह्या पलीकडे सरकतच नव्हत्या. अशा परिस्थितीत बिचारा संपादकही काय संपादकीय लेख लिहिणार? म्हणून कंटाळून हातात पिशवी घेतली व थेट बाजाराचा रस्ता धरला. काही नाही तर अर्धा डझन केळी घेऊन यायचे, गाठी बांधून निघालो आता सकाळच्या प्रहरी. पुढच्या दाराची मुभा असली तरी बसमध्ये डोकावयालासुद्धा मिळणार नाही, बऱ्या बोलाने चालतच निघालो. चर्चजवळ आलो तो काय समोर ‘‘कात्रक रोड’’ बंदची पाटी. भर रस्त्याच्या मध्यभागी पत्र्यांचे कुंपण, त्यातून अंतरा अंतराने उभे असलेले मोठमोठाले खांब मोनोरेलसाठी, मुंबईचे शांघाय करण्यासाठी आपलाही इलाखा कात टाकतोय. बाजारच्या समोरच्या पारशीनेही आपल्या किराणा मालाच्या दुकानाची मरम्मत करून कायापालट केलेला पाहून चकित झालो. ‘‘साहेबजी केम छो?’’ करत आत शिरलो. जुन्या लाकडी नक्षीदार उंच गल्ल्याची जागा बिलाची प्रिंट आऊटस् देणारा इलेक्ट्रॉनिक कॅश रजिस्टरने घेतली होती. त्यामागे बसलेला बावा जरा नाराजच

दिसत होता. साला....छोकरा ओ सताने लगा, दुकान ठीकठाक कर नही तो आर्क्यलॉजिकल सर्वे ऑफ इंडिया कब्जा कर लेगा. अशा ह्या कालपरवापर्यंतच्या ब्रिटीशकालीन दुकानावर मुलांच्या नादी लागून खर्च केला. खानदानी धंदा चालू ठेवल्याबद्दल बावाजी खूष; तसेच नुतनीकरणाबद्दल मुलेही खूष.

नजरेत येण्यासारखी गोष्ट म्हणजे ‘‘रेडी टू कुक/युज सर्व्हज ४ अशी मसाल्यांची पाकीटं रचलेली होती. बहुतांशी उत्तर भारतीय प्रकारच होते, नाही म्हणायला ‘‘चेट्टीनाड’’ वगैरे दक्षिणी व्यंजनेही होती. अर्थात पास्ता पिस्ताची पाकीटेही होती. तसे आजकाल स्वयंपाक करताना गृहिणीने प्रसन्न असावे ह्या आर्जीच्या विचारांना दुजोरा मिळायला लागल्याने ‘‘किचन’’ही सजविली जाते. त्यात पाकशास्त्र क्रियांची सुपस्, स्टार्टरस, डेझर्टस् वगैरेसाठी लागणाऱ्या पुस्तकांसाठी वेगळी फळी असते. पण त्यावर सापडत नाही ते लानी बाईचे, ‘‘गृहिणीमित्र’’ कारण बाजारात त्यांची प्रतच उपलब्ध नाही. नाहीतर प्रत्येक आर्जीने लग्नाचा अहेर म्हणून हे पुस्तक आपल्या नातीला देण्याची परंपराच होती.

परंपरा म्हणजे अंगवळणी पडलेली दिनचर्या. काही वर्षांपूर्वी माझ्या चुलत भावाची नात एक दिवस धावत धावत आली ‘‘आजोबा आजोबा, आज किनाय लामनवमी आहे.’’ ‘‘तुला कसं गं कळले लबाडे?’’ ‘‘त्यांत काय सगळ्यांच्या किचनमध्ये बोचकी लटकताय, म्हणजेच घरचे शिखंड म्हणजेच लामनवमी. पाऊस पडायला लागला की विठोबांची ‘बर्थडे’ येणार व मिळणार येल्लो वेफर्स (केळ्याचा काचरा) तसेच शाळेतून आल्यावर करंदीचे पंगोजी मिळणार.’’ गेल्या ७/८ वर्षांत त्याची नातवाला सवय झाली आहे. व त्यासाठी आर्जीकडे विचारपूस चालू होते पावसाच्या सरी पडायला लागल्या की. हेच पुढे चालू राहिले पिढी दर पिढी की त्याला ‘परंपरा’

म्हटली जाते.

घरात पाटा वरवंटाच नसल्याने बाजारातील 'कोकोनट मिल्क' वापरून कोलंबीचे हिरवे कालवण खायला घातल्याने चव उत्पन्न होईल, अन्यथा हॉटेलांतील "थायग्रीन करी"चे कौतुक ऐकावे लागेल. अर्थात २, ३ कडून मधूनच बर्गर, पिझ्झाच्या कार्यक्रमांत श्ने आनंदाने सहभागी व्हावे म्हणजे कुटुंबातील सर्वांनाच त्यांची "स्पेस"ही मिळते. झेपतील ते व तसे सणवार साजरे करावे. घरी वंदना नवलकरांचे दिवाळीतील आठविद्यापासून ते भाऊबीजेपर्यंतच्या "परभी" रांगोळ्याचे पुस्तक असल्यास त्या काढाव्यात. नाहीतर इतर रांगोळी काढावी.

जागतिकीकरणामुळे मूळ संस्कृतीचा विसर पडून पाश्चिमात्यांचे अनुकरण करण्यात अग्रेसर रहाण्याची चढाओढच जणू लागली आहे. त्यात अनैतिक, अनैसर्गिकतेचा विचार करायला कोणी तयार नाही. एकीकडे विवाहसंस्थाच मोडीत काढण्यासाठी

"विवाहबाह्य" सहजीवनाची पुष्टी केली जाते तर "समलिंगी विवाह"ला मान्यता मिळावी म्हणून धडपडताहेत. समाजातल्या अशा दिशाहीन घटकांना आवर घालणे अतिशय गरजेचे झाले आहे.

कालाय तस्मै नमः। म्हटले की लोकांना यमराज आठवतो. पण तसे नाही. काळ म्हणजे तुमच्या आमच्या जीवनयात्रेतील सतत घडणारे बदल आहेत. जे मृत्यूएवढेच अटळ आहेत. त्याचा स्वीकार करण्यास तयार रहा. पण वाटेत येणाऱ्या वाईट बदलापासून आपल्या सहचाऱ्यांना कसे वाचवावे? असे म्हणतात माणसाच्या हृदयाची वाट त्याच्या उदरातून जाते. म्हणजे खाद्य संस्कृती जपा. पण जागतिकीकरणामुळे इतर खाद्य संस्कृतीचा शिरकाव होतोय तो थांबवण्याचा प्रयत्न न करता त्यांचे "फ्युजन" साधायची वेळ आली आहे. तेव्हा चला दिवाळीच्या सुकडीच्या तयारीला लागू या. जोडीला पिझ्झाचीही सामग्री गोळा करायला हरकत नाही कारण सांटाक्लॉजही लवकर येणार आहे.



टिळक राष्ट्रीय उत्सव

हिंदूंना सार्वजनिक ठिकाणी कर न भरता, गणेशोत्सवाचे मंडप

उभारण्याची प्रथमच परवानगी, १९२६

- प्रताप वेलकर

सुमारे ८० वर्षांपूर्वी हिंदू-मुसलमान मिश्र लोकवस्तीत, उदा. नळ बझार, भायखळा, कामाठीपुरा, गोलदेऊळ इ. मुंबई येथे देवालयांतील आरत्यांना, पालख्यांना, आवाजाचे निमित्त काढून तेथील मुसलमानांना दंगा धोपा करायला हे गोरे पोलीस अधिकारी जाणून बुजून उत्तेजन देत. शिवाय, मोहरमच्या सणाला त्यांना सार्वजनिक ठिकाणी ताबूत उभे राहण्यासाठी कर न घेता मोफतपणे परवानगीही मिळे. हिंदूंना मात्र सणांसाठी मंडप घालण्याची तशी परवानगी नसे. चाळींच्या मोकळ्या जागेत सभामंडप घालायचाच झाल्यास, त्यांचेकडून जबरदस्त खंडणी सरकारतर्फे वसूल केली जाई. टिळक राष्ट्रीय उत्सव मंडळाचे सेक्रेटरी डॉ. मो. बा. वेलकर जेव्हा टिळक स्वराज्य पार्टीचे सभासद म्हणून मुंबई महापालिकेत व मुंबईकायदेमंडळात निवडून गेले तेव्हा प्रथमच, 'फोडा आणि झोडा' ह्या ब्रिटीश कारवाईला आळा बसला आणि तेव्हापासून हिंदूंना सार्वजनिक ठिकाणी मंडप उभारण्याची परवानगी मिळू लागली.

ह्या संदर्भात, दै. 'नवी मौज', मुंबई, दिनांक २५ जानेवारी १९२९ रोजी, वृत्तपत्राचे स. संपादक रा. अनंत हरी गद्रे यांनी, निवडणूकीला उभे राहिलेले डॉ. वेलकर यांची मुलाखत घेतली होती. ती कागदपत्रे उपलब्ध झाल्यामुळे, हिंदूवरचा अन्याय कसा दूर झाला हे माहित झाले.

अ. ह. गद्रे यांनी घेतलेली मुलाखत

अ. ह. गद्रे : "लोकांच्याठळकपणे लक्षात येईल, अशी आपली एकादी कामगिरी सांगा पाहू". (असा आमचा प्रश्न ऐकताच काही विशेष गोष्ट सांगण्यासारखी मुद्रा करून डॉक्टरसाहेब उद्गारले):

डॉ. वेलकर : "हं, ही एक गोष्ट मी लोकांपुढे मांडू शकतो. मुंबई महापालिकेकडून १९२६ सालापर्यंत हिंदूंना सार्वजनिक उत्सवाच्या बाबतीत मोठा अन्याय सोसावा लागत असे. मुसलमानांच्या ताबूतांना

सार्वजनिक ठिकाणी मंडप उभारण्यासाठी परवानगी व म्युनिसिपालिटीला मुळीच भाडे द्यावे लागत नसे. पण हिंदूंना गणेशोत्सवाचे मंडप उभारण्यासाठी परवानगी, शिवाय भंयकर भाडे भरावे लागत असे. चाळींच्या मध्य पटांगणात जरी एकादे छत उभारले, तरीही म्युनिसिपालिटी भाडे आकारी! हा अन्याय माझ्या कानी येताच मी तो म्युनिसिपल कॉरपोरेशनच्या भर सभेत नजरेत आणला. त्यासाठी खटपट करावी लागली. युक्तिवादाने तो पटविला. (त्याकाळी म्युनिसिपल कमिशनर, पोलीस कमिशनर गोरे अधिकारी असत) गेली तीन वर्षे म्युनिसिपल कॉरपोरेशनने सदर पक्षपाती अन्याय दूर केला असून हिंदूंना मुक्त परवानगी तसेच हिंदू उत्सवांना आता भूदंड भरावा लागत नाही."

अ. ह. गद्रे : आपल्या कामगिरीचे स्वरूप डोळ्यात भरण्यासारखे आहे. मतदारांना तुमच्या विषयी आदरभाव व आपलेपणा उत्पन्न होईल.

सांगण्याचे तात्पर्य हे की, डॉ. वेलकरांच्या खटपटीमुळे म्युनिसिपल कॉरपोरेशनकडून हिंदूंना तेव्हापासून सार्वजनिक ठिकाणी, कोठेही गणेशोत्सवाचा मंडप घालण्याची परवानगी कर न भरता मिळू लागली. आणि तेव्हापासून, मुंबईतच काय! मुंबई बाहेर, मुंबई प्रांताबाहेर, अखिल महाराष्ट्रात, सर्व म्युनिसिपालिटींनी, ग्रामपंचायतींनी मुंबईचे अनुकरण करून, हिंदूंना कर न भरता सार्वजनिक ठिकाणी गणेशोत्सवाचे मंडप घालण्याची परवानगी दिली आहे.

या यशाचे सर्वस्वी श्रेय टिळक राष्ट्रीय उत्सवाचे उत्साही सेक्रेटरी मुंबईचे टिळकशिष्य डॉ. मो. बा. वेलकर यांना दिले पाहिजे, आणि ते वावगे ठरणार नाही.

संदर्भ : 'नवी मौज', दिनांक. २५-०१-१९२९

संपादक : अ. ह. गद्रे

उत्सव मंडळ, मुंबईतील गणपती

उत्सवाची कार्यक्रमा पत्रिका,

(अव्यक्त लोकमान्य बाळ गंगाधर टिळक: प्रताप वेलकर,

टिळक स्मारक ट्रस्ट, पुणे)



उनाड टप्पू

❖ डॉ. सुमन नवलकर ❖

‘उद्यापासून मुळीच मस्ती करायची नाही. कोणालाही ओरडायची संधीच द्यायची नाही.’ टप्पूने रात्री झोपताना ठरवलं. पण मस्ती न करण्याच्या काळजीने तो झोपेतून दचकून तीन वेळा जागा झाला. तिन्ही वेळा मिट्ट काळोखाला भिऊन त्याने पुन्हा डोळे मिटून घेतले आणि झोपला कसा-बसा. साहजिकच दीदीला त्याच्या आधी जाग आली. दीदी दात घासत होती तेव्हा टूथपेस्टच्या वासाने टप्पूला जाग आली.

‘आता दीदीच्या पुढे घुसून दात कसे घासायचे? मस्ती करायची नाही असं तर ठरवलंय. पण दात घासायला घुसणं म्हणजे मस्ती थोडीच असते?’ टप्पूने मनाला समजावलं आणि घुसणारच होता तो. पण घुसलो तर दीदी ओरडणार आणि दीदी ओरडणार म्हणजे ‘घुसणं’ ही मस्तीच असणार, असं वाटलं पुन्हा. मग त्याने दीदीला दात घासू दिले आणि मगच घासले दात. दूध पिताना तो हळूच दीदीला वेंगाडून दाखवणार होता, पण तेवढ्यात पुन्हा आठवलं की मस्ती करायची नाहीये. मग कसं काय वेंगाडायचं बुवा? कसं-बसं दूध गिळून गप्प बसला तो. दुधात बिस्कट बुडवून खायचीही आठवण झाली नाही. मधल्यामधे शेवटी बिस्कट तशीच सुकी खाल्ली आणि भरले चूळ.

शाळेच्या बसमध्ये शिरतानाही तो चुपचाप रांगेतून चढला. खिडकीत बसायसाठी मारामारी न करता शुभमला खिडकीची जागा दिली. बाई शिकवत असताना सारखी झोप येत होती त्याला. पण जांभईसुद्धा दिली नाही त्याने. ‘जांभई देणं’ म्हणजे पण मस्ती असू शकते ना! मधल्या सुट्टीत ‘आंधळी कोशिंबीर’ खेळताना परागने त्याच्या डोळ्यांना नीट रुमाल बांधला नव्हता. सगळेजण दिसत होते त्याला रुमालाच्या खालून; तर टप्पूने चक्क डोळे बंद करून घेतले सरळ रुमालाच्या आत. झालं काय, की अख्खी मधली सुट्टी संपली तरी कोणीही पकडलं गेलं नाही. बंद डोळ्यांच्या आता पाणीही जमायला लागलं मग. पण नाही म्हणजे नाही उघडले टप्पूने डोळे. आता उद्या पुन्हा राज्य घ्यावं

लागणार. ‘काही हरकत नाही.’ टप्पूने समजावलं स्वतःला. दुपारी तर आजीला जराही त्रास न देता टप्पूने त्याला मुळीच न आवडणारी गवारीची भाजी चपातीबरोबर खाल्ली.

‘‘मुरांबा हवा का रे बाळा?’’ आजीने न राहवून विचारलं.

‘‘नक्को.’’ टप्पूने जोरात सांगितलं. जेवायला जरा जास्त वेळ लागला. पण टप्पूने पानामधली भाजी संपवलीच. ‘दुसऱ्यांदा पण घ्यावी का थोडी?’ असाही विचार आला त्याच्या मनात. पण नको, तो जरा अती शहाणपणाच होईल’ असं समजावलं त्याने स्वतःला.

टिवल्या-बावल्या न करता एका जागी बसून त्याने अभ्यास केला. आज त्याने आजोबांचा चष्मा लपवला नाही. जिना उतरताना चार-चार पायऱ्यांवरून उड्या मारल्या नाहीत. एवढंच नव्हे, तर संध्याकाळी पत्ते खेळताना हळूच वाकून अंगदची पानं पण पाहिली नाहीत.

एकच तास कार्टून पाहून त्याने टी. व्ही. बंद केला तेव्हा मात्र आई-बाबांनाही चहा पिता-पिता ठसका लागला. दुसऱ्या दिवसाची शाळेची पुस्तकं आपली आपण काढून, न हाक मारता टप्पू जेवायला येऊन बसला तेव्हा तर दीदी म्हणालीच, ‘‘काय टप्पू, शाळेत बाईंनी दम दिला वाटतं आज?’’

टप्पूने नुसतीच मान हलवली. पण सकाळचीच गवारीची भाजी पुन्हा पानात पाहून मात्र त्याला कसंतरीच व्हायला लागलं. या वेळी न विचारताच आजीने मुरांबा वाढला आणि आटपलं एकदाचं कसं-बसं.

रात्री तर न सांगताच टप्पूने दात घासायला सुरुवात केलेली पाहून आजोबांनी विचारलं, ‘‘काय टप्पूराव, टूथपेस्टची चव आवडली वाटतं?’’

‘‘नाही आबा,’’ टप्पूने शांतपणे उत्तर दिल्यावर आजोबांची खात्रीच झाली, ‘दात दुखत असणार कुठला तरी.’

खरं तर दिवसभर अजिबात मस्ती केलेली नव्हती. काल रात्रीही तीन वेळा झोपेतून जाग येऊन टप्पू उठला होता. आज झोप लगेच लागायला हवी होती. पण काही केल्या टप्पूला झोप म्हणून येईना. सारखा या कुशीवरून त्या कुशीवर.

— “आज आपला टप्पू अगदी ठप्पू झाला होता. मस्ती नाही, दंगा नाही.” आई बाबांना सांगत होती.

“मग बरं आहे की. नाहीतर मस्ती करून नुसता त्रास देत असतो.” बाबा म्हणाले, पण आईला पटलं नाही.

“इतकं शांतसुद्धा बरं वाटत नाही. थोडी तरी मस्ती केलीच पाहिजे मुलांनी.” आईचं म्हणणं टप्पूला पटलंच. मग काही कूस बदलावी लागली नाही त्याला. लगेच गाढ झोप लागली अगदी.

आणीबाणी

चिंतामणी राजा म्हणाला, “राणी, आणीबाणीत अशा भासायच्याच चणचणी राणी म्हणाली, “यावर एकच उपाय बाकीच्या राण्यांना करा बाय-बाय.”

-डॉ. सुमन नवलकर



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असाही एक आगळा अनुभव!

❖ सौ.निकेता प्रशांत राणे ❖

माझ्या मुलीचे, अपेक्षाचे लग्न ७ जुलै २०११ रोजी अमेरिकेतील 'न्यूयॉर्क' शहरी करण्याचे ठरले. त्यानुसार माझे पती, मी व माझी आई ह्यांनी तेथे जाण्यासाठी एप्रिल महिन्यापासूनच तयारी सुरु केली होती. आम्हा तिघांकडे दहा वर्षांचा विझा तयारच होता. पण यक्षप्रश्न माझ्या बाबांचा होता. नातीच्या लग्नाला जाण्याची त्यांना तीव्र इच्छा होती. पण पायांच्या दुखण्यामुळे व वृद्धत्वामुळे मनानं आणि शरीरानं दुर्बल झालेल्या माझ्या बाबांना २० तासांचा विमानाचा प्रवास झेपण्यासारखा नव्हता. त्यातच मे महिन्यात दोन वेळा त्यांना हॉस्पिटलात दाखल करावे लागले होते. आम्हाला तर तीन आठवडे अमेरिकेत रहावयाचे होते. इतके दिवस बाबांना ठेवायचे कुठे?

सर्व गोष्टी व्यवस्थित घडणार असतील आणि आपली जबरदस्त इच्छाशक्ती असेल तर तशी परिस्थिती निर्माण होते. खारच्या हौशी कला मंदिराचे एक कार्यकर्ते श्री. लक्ष्मीकांत उर्फ प्रकाश बाळाजी नायक आमच्या मदतीला पुढे आले. त्यांनी सांगितले की खार दांडपाडा येथे मारुती मंदिराजवळ 'सरला आझाद नर्सिंग होम' आहे. ते फक्त जेष्ठ नागरिकांसाठी चालविले जाते. योग्य मूल्य घेऊन ते तुमची खाण्याची राहण्याची उत्तम व्यवस्था करतात. मी माझ्या आईला जेव्हा मी व माझी पत्नी अमेरिकेला व मलेशियाला गेलो होतो तेव्हा दोन, तीन महिने ठेवले होते. सरला आझाद ह्या स्वतः डॉक्टर असल्यामुळे तेथे रहाणाऱ्या वृद्धांचे रोज ब्लडप्रेसर पहाणे, इन्श्युलिन देणे, वेळेवर औषध गोळ्या देणे ही कामे त्या स्वतः त्यांच्या नर्सिंग व स्टाफ करतात. मुख्य म्हणजे येथील स्वच्छता, वेळेवर सकस जेवण!

सृष्टीचे कालचक्र अनादि काळापासून सुरु आहे. मानवी जीवनात हेच कालचक्र अनुभवण्याची वेळ येते त्यावेळी जीवनाचा अखेरचा टप्पा ओलांडणं किती अवघड आहे याची जाणीव होते. वृद्धत्वामुळे मनानं आणि शरीरानं दुर्बल झालेली माणसंही

घरातील अनेकांना नकोशी वाटतात. आजारी, अपंग, विस्मरण झालेले वृद्ध, अतिवृद्ध यांनाही असे जगणे नकोसे वाटते. कुटुंबाने झिडकारलेल्या, आयुष्याला कंटाळलेल्या व मनाने खचलेल्या वृद्धांना गरज असते ती मायेची. अशाच वृद्धांना आईसारखी माया मिळावी यासाठी प्रयत्नशील आहेत. डॉक्टर सरला आझाद पूर्वाश्रमीच्या खोताच्या वाडीतील डॉक्टर सरला हटाळकर. स्वतःच्या मालकीच्या प्रसूतिगृहाचे रुपांतर वृद्धाश्रमात करून आपल्या वैद्यकीय ज्ञानाचा उपयोग थोडाफार दुसऱ्यांचा आधार घेऊन स्वतःच्या गोष्टी स्वतः करू शकणाऱ्या वृद्धांच्या सेवेसाठी करीत आहेत. त्यांच्या सोबतीला दिवसपाळी व रात्रपाळीच्या नर्सिस व आया काम करतात. स्वयंपाक घरातील स्त्रिया उत्तम स्वयंपाक करतात. शाकाहारी आणि मांसाहारी दोन्ही प्रकारचे जेवण व नाश्ता तेथे देण्यात येतो.

तिथे प्रवेश घेण्यासाठी पुढील अटी पाळाव्या लागतात-

- १) काठी घेऊन का होईना त्या व्यक्तीला चालता फिरता आले पाहिजे. आंघोळ, बाथरूम व शौचाला जाणे ज्याचे त्याला करता आले पाहिजे.
- २) त्या व्यक्तीला कोणताही रोग नसावा. रक्तदाब, मधुमेह कंट्रोलमध्ये असावा.
- ३) धूम्रपान किंवा मद्यसेवन इत्यादी व्यसन नसावे.
- ४) नर्सिंग होमच्या ठरलेल्या वेळेनुसार त्या व्यक्तींनी आंघोळ, नाश्ता, जेवण जेवावे. उगाच जागरण करून इतरांना त्रास देऊ नये.

आम्ही त्यांच्या सर्व अटी मान्य करून माझ्या बाबांना २८ जून ते २३ जुलैपर्यंत तेथे रहाण्यास ठेवले. बाबा म्हणाले, "८० वर्षांच्या आयुष्यात अनेक बरेवाईट अनुभव घेतले तेव्हा हासुद्धा नवा अनुभव घेऊन पाहू! वृद्धाश्रमातील वृद्धांच्या समस्या काय असतात त्या तरी समजतील!"

येथे एक नमूद केले पाहिजे की हा वृद्धाश्रम



मर्यादित लोकांसाठी आहे. येथे फक्त १२ व्यक्तींनाच प्रवेश दिला जातो. त्यात दहा वृद्ध तेथे कायमस्वरूपी राहतात. दोन वृद्धांच्या जागा आमच्या सारखे तात्पुरत्या सोयीची गरज असलेल्यांसाठी ठेवलेल्या आहेत. ही तर एक महत्त्वाची सोय आहे. आपल्या प्रिय व्यक्तीला कायमचे दूर न ठेवता घरी एकाकी जीवन जगत असताना काही दिवस इतर लोकांमध्ये राहून विचारांची देवाणघेवाण करता येते. दर शनिवारी होणाऱ्या मनोरंजनाच्या कार्यक्रमात सहभागी होता येते.

प्रत्येक व्यक्तीला स्वतंत्र पलंग, कपाट, टेबल देण्यात येते. दररोज चादरी, पांघरुण व उशांचे अग्ने बदलण्यात येतात. प्रत्येकाला पाणी पिण्यासाठी वेगळा तांब्या, कप, पाण्याची बाटली देण्यात येते. आंगोळीला गरम पाणी देण्यात येते. बाथरूममध्ये जाण्यासाठी तेथे उपलब्ध असलेली आया सर्वांना मदत करते. प्रत्येकाचा साबण, टॉवेल बाथरूममध्ये ठेवणे, आंगोळ झाल्यावर प्रत्येकाच्या खोलीत नेऊन ठेवणे, प्रत्येकाचे धुतलेले कपडे, नॅपकीन, रुमाल त्या त्या व्यक्तीच्या पलंगावर ठेवून देणे, ही सर्व कामे 'आया' करतात. प्रत्येक व्यक्तीची औषधे व ती घेण्याचे टाईम टेबल नर्सिंगहोमच्या ऑफिसमध्ये जमा केलेले असतात. त्यानुसार नर्सिस येऊन प्रत्येकाला औषधे देतात. बाबांच्या विनोदी स्वभावामुळे दोन तीन दिवसातच सर्वांमध्ये ते नवीन आजोबा म्हणून पॉप्युलर झाले. दररोज प्रत्येकजण येऊन आजोबा, काहीतरी नवीन जोक्स सांगा ना असे पाठीस लागत असत.

बाबांना एकच कंटाळा येत असे की सकाळी ६ च्या आधी उठून ब्रश करून आंगोळीला जाणे. म्हणून त्यांना सर्वांच्या शेवटी उठवत. सकाळी ६ वाजता चहा व बिस्किटे, नंतर ८ वाजता दूध,

कांदेपोहे, उपमा, डोसे इत्यादी भरपूर नाश्ता. दुपारी १२ वाजता गरम गरम चपात्या व साग्रसंगीत जेवण. परत दुपारी ४ वाजता चहा, बिस्किटे किंवा भेळ, पाणीपुरी इत्यादी खाणे. रात्री ७.३० वाजता जेवण. पाहिजे असल्यास ९ वाजता दूध देण्यात येते आणि प्रत्येकाच्या खोलीतला टी.व्ही. बंद करून, काळोख करून सक्तीची विश्रांती घेण्यात भाग पाडतात.

दररोज संध्याकाळी ५ ते ७ वाजेपर्यंत फ्रेश होऊन मुख्य हॉलमध्ये सर्वांनी एकत्र जमून निरनिराळ्या संस्थांचे प्रतिनिधी येतात त्यांच्याशी गप्पाटप्पा करणे, दिलेल्या विषयावर चर्चा करणे, निबंध स्पर्धेत भाग घेणे, त्यासाठी वृद्धांना मदत करतात. निबंध आपण बोलत जातो त्या आपल्याला लेखनिक म्हणून मदत करतात. फिजीओथेरेपीस्ट व योगा शिक्षक येऊन सर्वांना व्यायाम करावयास लावतात. तेथे नेहा नावाची एक सायकॉलॉजीची विद्यार्थिनी येते. ती वृद्धांच्या जिव्हाळ्याच्या विषयावर प्रश्न विचारून सर्वांना बोलते करते. सर्वांना गत जीवनाचा आढावा घेऊन तुम्ही तुमच्या आयुष्यातील अनुभवाचे आनंदाचे क्षण सांगा असे सांगून त्यावर चर्चा करते. कोणाला गाणे येत असेल तर त्याने गाणे म्हणावे. कोणाला नाटकातील संवाद येत असतील तर ते म्हणावेत. कथाकथन, विनोदी किस्से सांगावेत अशाप्रकारे ती सर्वांना बोलते करते. कोणी गहिवरून आल्यास त्यांच्या पाठीवरून मायेचा हात फिरवते. अशाप्रकारे तुम्ही येथे एकटे आहात ही भावना दूर करण्याचा प्रयत्न करतात. मुख्य म्हणजे सर्वजण हसत खेळत आपल्याशी वागतात.

७ जुलैला नातीचे लग्न असल्यामुळे बाबा सकाळी नवीन कपडे परिधान करून बसले होते. सर्वांना त्यांनी लाडू व वेफर्स वाटले. नर्सिंग होमने त्या दिवशी सर्वांना आईस्क्रिम दिला.

बाबांच्या घरी परत जाण्याच्या आदल्या दिवशी सर्वांनी त्यांना निरोप देण्याचा कार्यक्रम करून गुलाबाचे फूल दिले. एका बाईने 'क्षण आला भाग्याचा' हे गाणे म्हटले. बाबांनी पण 'टांग टिंग टिंगा' हे गाणे स्वतः म्हटले व सर्वांना म्हणावयास लावले. स्नेहा ह्या क्लार्कने विचारले, येथील २२ दिवसांचे वास्तव्य तुम्हाला कसे वाटले? तेव्हा बाबानी सांगितले की, 'वास्तव्य अगदी सुखावह झाले. पण उद्या मी माझ्या घरी जाणार तेव्हा माझ्या

गुपचूप

फोन म्हणाला मोबाईलला चोंबडा
मोबाईल म्हणाला फोनला घरकोंबडा
फोन आपला चिडून बसला गप्प—
मोबाईलने पाठवले एसेमेस धपाधप.

-डॉ. सुमन नवलकर



मनात विचार आला की लग्न होऊन मुलगी कायमची सासरी जाते. परंतु संधी मिळाली तर माहेरी जाण्यास एकदम उतावळी का असते ते मला आज कळले!”

बाबांना घरी परत आणण्यास मी व आई जेव्हा गेलो तेव्हा एकच विचार आमच्या मनात आला की, निदान तात्पुरती सोय करण्याची पाठारे प्रभु चॅरिटीज्कडे सोय झाली तर त्यांनी ती शक्यतो करावी! बोलणे सोपे आहे पण करणे कठीण आहे हे ही तितकेच खरे आहे! पण हे स्वप्न जर वास्तवात उतरले तर दानशूर असलेला पाठारे प्रभु लाखांच्या देणग्या देण्यास नक्कीच पुढे सरसावेल. कारण आज ती एक काळाची गरज आहे! बाबांच्या तेथील वास्तव्यात आपल्या ज्ञातीतील जवळ जवळ ५१ व्यक्तींनी बाबांवरिल प्रेमाने त्यांची विचारपूस करण्यासाठी ह्या नर्सींगहोमला भेट दिली. त्या प्रत्येकाच्या मनात आमच्यासारखाच विचार आला असेल!

सरस्वती वरदान

सप्तऋशींच्या संगतून
इंद्रधनुष्याच्या रंगातून — (१)

वक्तृत्वाच्या रानामध्ये
कवितांच्या पानावरती — (२)

सात सुरांच्या तालावरती
एका सुंदरीच्या स्वपनामध्ये — (३)

रोपटे आले लहान
त्याला सरस्वतीचे वरदान
त्याला शारदेचे वरदान — (४)

—मिलिंद सुहास प्रधान



माझे विदेश गमन

❖ हेमलता केशव कोठारे ❖

परमेश्वराच्या कृपेने व माझा मुलगा कॅनडा (टोरॉंटो) व मुलगी ऑस्ट्रेलिया (सिडनी) येथे वास्तव्यास असल्याने मला तीनदा ऑस्ट्रेलिया (एक वर्ष) तीनदा कॅनडा (नऊ महिने) व दोनदा अमेरिका (पंधरा दिवस) असे वास्तव्य घडले. ऑस्ट्रेलियाच्या प्रथम वारीस निघण्यापूर्वी दीड दोन महिने आधी मुलगा व मुलगी फोनवरून प्रवासासंदर्भात अनेक सूचना करित होते कारण तो माझा एकटीनेच प्रथम विमान प्रवास व तोही परदेश गमन. नंतरचे इतर सर्व प्रवास मी एकटीनेच केले. माझा पहिला प्रवास मुंबई-सिडनी व तोही थेट प्रवास, हा साडे तेरा तासाचा प्रवास करतांना मनावर एक प्रकारचे फार दडपण होते. परंतु सुदैवाने प्रवास सुखकर झाला. गंगेत घोडं न्हालं. वरील तिन्ही देशात मुलगा (सुदेश) व मुलगी (प्राजक्ता) ह्यांचेबरोबर बरेच भ्रमण केले. तेथील काही गोष्टी बुद्धीस व मनास भावल्या. परंतु काही गोष्टी मनाला रुचवता व पचवता आल्या नाहीत. खरे म्हणजे वरील तीन देशांतर्गत वर्णन ६-७ पानात करणे अशक्य आहे. तरीही क्रमवार वर्णन माझ्या साध्या-सोप्या शैलीत व थोडक्यात करण्याचा प्रयास करित आहे. कारण मी काही हाडाची लेखिका नव्हे.

१) ऑस्ट्रेलिया देश हा क्षेत्रफळाच्या दृष्टीने विशाल आहे. त्यातील बराच प्रदेश वाळवंटी आहे. या देशावर बराच काळ ब्रिटीश साम्राज्याचे आधिपत्य असल्याने साहजिकच देशावर ब्रिटिशांची छाप जागोजागी दिसून येते. त्यामुळेच कदाचित भारत व ऑस्ट्रेलियातील कायद्यात बरेच साधर्म्य आहे. भारत व ऑस्ट्रेलियातील हवामानातही बरेच साम्य आहे. परंतु ऑस्ट्रेलियात बारा महिन्यात केव्हाही पाऊस पडतो. आता मी पाहिलेल्या ऑस्ट्रेलियाकडे वळते.

सिडनी हे शहर सन १७८८ ला वसले. कॅनबेरा ही ऑस्ट्रेलियाची राजधानी असली तरी आर्थिक राजधानी सिडनी आहे. औद्योगिक हेतूने सन १७८८

ला डार्लिंग हारबर बांधण्यात आले. सन १८५७ साली हारबरमध्ये 'पीरमॉंट' ब्रीज बांधण्यात आला. जगातील अत्यंत जुना व विजेवर चालणारा व सरकत्या पद्धतीने (स्वींग स्पान ब्रीज) व ठराविक कोनामध्ये व ठराविक वेळाने उघडणारा हा ब्रीज आहे. ब्रीज उघडला की वरील रहदारी बंद होते. व खालून मोठी मालवाहू जहाजे बाहेर पडतात. सिडनीला समुद्रकिनारीचे जगप्रसिद्ध 'ऑपेरा हाऊस' बांधले आहे. डेन्मार्कच्या जॉर्न युटझोन नावाच्या तरुण इंजिनियरने ह्या वास्तूचे डिझाईन व बांधणीचे काम केले. जगातील आधुनिक स्थापत्याचा उत्कृष्ट नमुना म्हणून ह्याचा उल्लेख होतो. सन २००७ला सिडनी "ऑपेरा हाऊस" चे नामनिर्देशन जगाच्या उत्कृष्ट ऐतिहासिक वास्तूच्या यादीत जाहीर झाले. हारबरच्या परिसरातच एक मोठे मत्स्यालय आहे. जे समुद्राखाली बनविण्यात आले आहे. ह्यात नानाविध मासे व समुद्रातील कोरलस ठेवण्यात आले आहेत. सिडनीत मोठे मोठे पार्कस् बघितले. त्यापैकी "कोआला पार्क" बघितला. कोआला हा प्राणी मूळ ऑस्ट्रेलियातील. ह्याचे वैशिष्ट्य म्हणजे हा केवळ निलगिरीची पानेच खाऊन जगतो व झाडावर १८-२० तास झोपून रहातो. निलगिरी झाड हे मूळचे ऑस्ट्रेलियाचेच. ह्याच्या शेकडो जाती आहेत. पार्कमध्ये अनेक प्राणी व पक्षी बघावयास मिळाले. त्यापैकी एक कांगारू. कांगारू प्राणी मूळचा ऑस्ट्रेलियाचा. ऑस्ट्रेलियन "काँन्ट्रास" एअरवेजच्या विमानाच्या शेपटावर लाल रंगाचे कांगारूचं चित्र असते. 'ल्लू मॉन्टन्स' हे सिडनी शहरापासून बरेच लांब आहे. कॅप्टन कुक नावाचा जगप्रवासी सर्वप्रथम ल्लू मॉन्टन्स येथे उतरला. व त्याने तेथेच वास्तव्य केले. येथे घनदाट निलगिरीचे अरण्य होते. ह्या परिसरातील निसर्ग फारच विलोमनीय आहे. ह्या पहाडावर तीन उंच सुळके शेजारी शेजारी आहेत. त्यांना 'थ्री सिस्टर्स' असे

म्हणतात. सिडनी व मेलबर्न ह्या दोन शहरांच्या वादातून शेवटी सन १९०८ला 'कॅनबेरा' ही ऑस्ट्रेलियाची राजधानी करण्यात आली. सिडनीतून कारने तीन तासांच्या अंतरावर हे शहर वसले आहे. कॅनबेरा हे पूर्णतः नवीन व नियोजनबंद शहर वसविण्यात आले. शिकागो येथील वॉल्टर बर्ले ग्रीफीन व मेरीऑन मोती ग्रीफीन या दोन स्थापत्यकारांनी कॅनबेरा या शहराची रचना फार सुंदर केली आहे. कॅनबेराला समुद्रकिनारा नाही. परंतु वरील दोन स्थापत्यकारांनी तेथे मनुष्यनिर्मित विशाल सरोवर निर्माण केले. ही ऑस्ट्रेलियाची राजधानी असल्याने येथे ऑस्ट्रेलियाच्या पंतप्रधानाचे वास्तव ठिकाण आहे. पार्लमेंट हाऊस, हायकोर्ट, राष्ट्रीय टाकसाळ (मींट), राष्ट्रीय संग्रहालय, राष्ट्रीय ग्रंथालय, निरनिराळी महत्त्वाची शासकीय कार्यालये आहेत. वरील सर्व बाबी लोकांना बघण्यास खुल्या आहेत. वरील इमारती ह्या उत्कृष्ट स्थापत्याचा नमुना होत. कॅनबेराला जातांना ऑस्ट्रेलियन क्रिकेटवीर ब्रॅडमनचे जन्मगाव लागते. त्याचे जुने घर व त्याच्या वापरातील वस्तूंचे सरकारने संग्रहालय करून त्याचे जतन केले आहे. औद्योगिक व आर्थिकदृष्ट्या मेलबर्न हे शहर मोठे आहे मेलबर्नला विशाल समुद्रकिनारा लाभला आहे. मेलबर्नहून पुढे २४३ किलोमीटरचा ग्रेट ओशन ड्राईव्ह आहे. कारने जातांना एकीकडे उंच पहाड तर दुसऱ्या बाजूला सलग २४३ किलोमीटरचा फिकट हिरवट रंगाचा अथांग समुद्र. हा कारचा प्रवास फारच मनोहारी होता. हा प्रवास करताना समुद्रातील १२ अपोस्टल्स बघितले. मेलबर्नहून पुढे बॅलारट येथील सोन्याची खाण बघितली. सन १८५०ला येथील सोन्याच्या खाणीचा शोध लागला. खाणीत आत जाण्यास प्रवेश मिळतो. येथे सोन्याची वीट बनवण्याचे प्रात्यक्षिक दाखवितात. ऑस्ट्रेलिया देश हा खनिज संपत्तीकरिता प्रसिद्ध आहे. जगातील एकूण युरेनियमपैकी चाळीस टक्के युरेनियम एकट्या ऑस्ट्रेलियात आहे. याशिवाय हिरे, सोने, लोह व कोळसा ही खनिजेही फार मोठ्या प्रमाणावर आहेत. मेलबर्नच्या काही अंतरावर फिलिप्स बेटे आहेत. येथील समुद्रकिनारे फार सुंदर आहेत. येथील वैशिष्ट्य म्हणजे समुद्रात सकाळी खाद्याकरिता गेलेले पेनग्विन्स सूर्य मावळल्यावर अंधारात थव्या-थव्याने

समुद्रातून बाहेर येतात. नंतर एक रांग करून किनाऱ्यावर येऊन आपापल्या घरात जातात. ही पेनग्विन परेड बघायला खूप लोकांची गर्दी असते. फार मजेशीर दृष्य असते. एकूण ऑस्ट्रेलियाला विशाल समुद्रकिनारा, निबिड अरण्ये, विशाल पहाड, भरपूर वाळवंट, अमाप खनिज संपत्ती लाभल्याने समृद्धी व सधनता आहे. असे म्हणतात की लोकसंख्येच्या तुलनेत भारत प्रतिवर्ष एक ऑस्ट्रेलिया निर्माण करतो.

मी ऑस्ट्रेलियाहून कॅनडास (टोरोंटो) मुलाकडे प्रयाण केले. भारत ऑस्ट्रेलिया या प्रवासापेक्षा ऑस्ट्रेलिया-कॅनडा हा प्रवास लांबचा आहे. ऑस्ट्रेलिया व कॅनडाचे हवामान एकमेकांच्या अगदी विरुद्ध आहे. ऑस्ट्रेलियाहून निघतेवेळी हिवाळा (कडक थंडी) होती तर त्याचवेळी कॅनडात उन्हाळा चालू होता. परंतु उन्हाळा असून निसर्ग हिरवागार व फारच सुंदर होता. येथे सहामहिने उन्हाळा व सहा महिने हिवाळा असतो. बारा महिने पाऊस पडतो. बरेच दिवस बर्फच असतो. तेथील झाडांपैकी वैशिष्ट्य म्हणजे क्रिसमस ट्री व मेपलची झाडे. क्रिसमसची झाडे आजपर्यंत चित्रात व सिनेमात बघितली होती. परंतु आता मी प्रत्यक्ष बघावयास मिळाली. क्रिसमसची झाडे म्हणजे अणकुचीदार सूर्याची पाने. मेपल ट्रीही सुंदर असते. एअर कॅनडा ह्या एअरवेजच्या विमानावर मेपलचे लाल पान असते. तसेच राष्ट्रध्वजावरही मेपलचे पान असते. कॅनडाची राजधानी ओटावा आहे. परंतु आर्थिक राजधानी टोरोंटो आहे. येथे स्वातंत्र्यापूर्वी ब्रिटीश व फ्रेंचांच्या वसाहती व अधिपत्य होते. त्यामुळे कॅनडात इंग्रजी व फ्रेंच ह्या दोन्ही भाषांचे प्रभुत्व आहे. ब्रिटिशांच्या अधिपत्याखालील प्रदेशाला ऑटोरिओ

सर्दी

खोकून बिचारा झाला बेजार,
खोकल्यावर केले उपाय हजार
एकदा चुकून शिकला धडाम्
खोकल्याचं काम झालं तमाम्.

-डॉ.सुमन नवलकर

प्रोव्हीन्स व फ्रेंचांच्या अधिपत्याखालील प्रदेशाला क्युबेक प्रोव्हीन्स नाव दिल्या गेले. टोरोंटोला अतिविशाल सरोवर आहे. ह्यालाच ऑटोरिओ लेक म्हणतात. हे सरोवर नसून हा जणू अथांग सागरच आहे. ह्यात मोठी मोठी जहाजे चालतात. विधात्याच्या दिव्य निर्मितीचे जेवढे कौतुक करावे तेवढे थोडेच. कॅनडा हा देश जगामध्ये मुख्यत्वे “नायगारा” ह्या धबधब्याकरिता प्रसिद्ध आहे. नायगारा हा धबधबा, ‘नायगारा’ ह्या नदीमुळे बनलेला आहे. ही नदी अमेरिका व कॅनडा ह्या दोन देशांतून जाते. त्यामुळे धबधब्याचा काही भाग अमेरिका व काही कॅनडात आहे. त्यावर ब्रीज बांधल्यामुळे कारने ब्रीजवरून अमेरिकेस जाता येते. अमेरिकेतील धबधबा सरळ रेषेत आहे तर कॅनडातील धबधबा गोलाकार (घोड्याच्या नालेच्या आकाराचा) असल्याने कॅनडातील धबधब्याचे रूप प्रचंड व अप्रतिम दिसते. अमेरिकेतील लोकसुद्धा कॅनडातील नायगारा धबधबा बघण्यास आवर्जून येतात. नायगारा बघतांना भगवंताच्या भव्य-दिव्य निर्मितीची प्रचिती येते. रात्री दिव्यांच्या रोषणाईत नायगाराचे रूप फारच सुंदर दिसते. दुसरे स्थळ म्हणजे ‘सीएन टॉवर’. टॉवरवरून संपूर्ण टोरोंटो शहराचा देखावा फार सुंदर दिसतो. कॅनडामध्येही मोठे मोठे पार्कस् आहेत. क्रुडावर जाऊन “थाऊजंड आयलंड” ची सफर केली. टोरोंटोत बरीच देवळे आहेत. त्यापैकी एक म्हणजे “स्वामी नारायण मंदिर” होय. हे मंदिर पूर्णतः संगमरवरी आहे. भारतातील कारगिरांकडूनच तयार झाले आहे. भारतातील दिलवाडा मंदिराशी बरेच मिळते जुळते आहे. हे मंदिर म्हणजे भारतीय स्थापत्याचा उत्कृष्ट नमुना होय. हे मंदिर बघण्यास भारतीय व कॅनेडियन व इतर लोकही आवर्जून येतात. टोरोंटो व्यतिरिक्त किंग्स्टन, ओटावा, मॉंट्रॅअल व क्युबेक, मसकोका ही शहरे बघितली. किंग्स्टन हे शहर फार जुने आहे. येथे जुनी प्रसिद्ध युनिव्हर्सिटी आहे. ह्या शहरावर पूर्णतः ब्रिटिशांची छाप दिसते. ओटावा ही कॅनडाची राजधानी आहे. येथे बऱ्याच सरकारी इमारती व भव्य चर्च आहेत. ह्या इमारती म्हणजे ब्रिटीश स्थापत्याचा उत्कृष्ट नमुना होय. मॉंट्रॅअल हे शहर क्युबेक प्रोव्हीन्समध्ये मोडते त्यामुळे येथे फ्रेंचांचा ठसा दिसतो. येथे फ्रेंच (बहुतांश) भाषेचा वापर होतो.

बऱ्याच ठिकाणी इंग्रजीचा अभाव आहे. येथील इमारती २००-२५० वर्षापूर्वीच्या असून व चर्च फार अप्रतिम आहेत. मुख्य म्हणजे इमारतींचे जतन फार सुंदर केले आहे. क्युबेक हे शहर ४०० वर्षापूर्वीचे आहे. मला हे शहर फार आवडले. येथील भव्य इमारती व चर्च म्हणजे फ्रेंच स्थापत्याचा उत्कृष्ट नमुना होय. क्युबेक शहर बघून पुन्हा टोरोंटोकडे परतीचा प्रवास करतांना ‘फॉल सिझन’ बघायला मिळाला. येथे फॉलसिझन टोरोंटोच्या तुलनेत लवकर सुरू होतो. हा काळ जेमतेम एक महिना असतो व तो उन्हाला संपणे व हिवाळा सुरू होणे ह्यांचे मध्ये असतो. क्रिसमसच्या झाडांची पाने वगळता (त्या सूयाच असतात) इतर सर्व झाडांची हिरवी पाने लाल, केशरी, पिवळी, डाळिंबी, तपकिरी रंगाची होतात. तसेच बऱ्याच फुलांचे रंगही बदलतात. निसर्गात सगळीकडे निरनिराळ्या रंगाची उधळणच होते. निसर्गाचे अनोखे रूप बघावयास मिळते त्यानंतरचे सहा महिने (हिवाळा) सर्व झाडांची पाने झडलेली असतात. सगळी सृष्टी ओकीबोकी होते. मनात आले, विधात्याची किमया बघा कशी आहे. सृष्टीतील सौंदर्याचा ज्हास होण्यापूर्वी (पानझडती) तो सौंदर्याची लयलूट करतो व पूर्ण चैतन्य फुलवून जातो. मसकोका हे शहर बघितले. तेथे अनेक विशाल सरोवरे आहेत. तसे पहाता अमेरिका व कॅनडाला बघा, सरोवरे ह्यांचे वरदानच आहे. त्यावर मोठेमोठे बिचेस आहेत. त्यावर बोटिंग करता येते. हे छोटेसे पण दुमदार शहर मला फार आवडले. एकंदरीत ऑस्ट्रेलियाच्या तुलनेत कॅनडात निसर्ग फार सुंदर आहे.

मी पाहिलेला तिसरा देश म्हणजे अमेरिका. ही जगातील महासत्ता होय. जगातील अनेक देशांतील वेगवेगळ्या धर्मांचे, जातीचे व बहुभाषिक लोक एकत्र येऊन अमेरिका देश तयार झाला. सन १७७६ला स्वातंत्र्य मिळून “युनायटेड स्टेटस् ऑफ अमेरिका” स्थापित झाली. अमेरिकेत एकूण ५२ राज्यांचा समावेश आहे. मी पाहिलेल्या ठिकाणांचे क्रमवार वर्णन देत आहे. न्यूयॉर्क शहर हे मॅनहॅटन बेटावर वसले आहे. न्यूयॉर्क हे राज्य आहे. जगातील अर्थकारणाची उलथापालथ जेथे घडते त्या महासत्तेचे प्रमुख केंद्र म्हणजे “न्यूयॉर्क स्टॉक मार्केट.” ही इमारत बाहेरून बघितली. ह्याच इमारतीजवळ स्टॉक



मार्केटचा प्रसिद्ध भव्य बुल आहे. तो तांब्याचा असून त्याचे वजन ७ टन आहे. तेथे मजा म्हणून फोटो काढला. न्यूयॉर्क म्हणजे उत्तुंग भव्य-दिव्य इमारती. सगळीकडे झगझगाट. मोठे मोठे पार्कस् न्यूयॉर्क म्हणजे मायानगरीच. युनायटेड नेझन्स बिल्डिंग, न्यू एम्पायर स्टेट बिल्डिंग, टाईम स्क्वेअर, काही म्युझियम्स, ज्युलिया म्युझिक स्कूलची बिल्डींग बघितली. जगातील निरनिराळ्या देशातील लोक येथे म्युझिकचे प्रशिक्षण घेण्यास येतात. कारण ही एक जगमान्य प्रसिद्ध संस्था आहे. न्यूयॉर्कचा सेंट्रल पार्क, तसेच ट्रम्फ प्लाझाची भव्य इमारत बघितली. समुद्रातील प्रसिद्ध ब्रुक्लिन ब्रीजवरून प्रवास केला. प्रसिद्ध स्वातंत्र्य देवतेचे (स्टॅच्यु ऑफ लिबर्टी) स्मारक बघायला जाताना प्रथम फेरी बोट एलिस बेटावर नेतात. एलिस बेटाचे महत्त्व म्हणजे जगातील वेगवेगळ्या देशांतून अमेरिकेत आलेले लोक प्रथम एलिस बेटावर उतरत. तेथे त्यांची सर्व प्रकारची इमिग्रेशन पडताळणी होई. आता तेथे “इमिग्रेशन म्युझियम” बांधण्यात आला आहे. त्यात १६०० सालापासून २०१०पर्यंत अमेरिकेत कोणत्या देशातून किती लोक आले, ह्याविषयीची आकडेवारी दर्शविण्यात आली आहे. फार पूर्वी आलेल्या लोकांचे जुने सामान, त्यांचे फोटो ह्यांचे फार सुंदर प्रदर्शन केले आहे. तेथून पुढे लिबर्टी बेटावरील स्वातंत्र्य-देवतेचा भव्य पुतळा बघितला. पूर्वी लिबर्टी बेटाचे नाव “वेडलवोव” असे होते. परंतु १९५६ ला ते बदलून “लिबर्टी आयलंड” असे करण्यात आले. हा पुतळा बनविण्यास बऱ्याच देशांचे सहकार्य आहे. हे अमेरिकेतील सर्वात उंच स्मारक आहे व ते अमेरिकेचे राष्ट्रीय स्मारक म्हणून स्थापन झाले. ह्या देवतेच्या उजव्या हातात स्वातंत्र्य-ज्योत व डाव्या हातात अमेरिकेची घटना आहे. न्यूयॉर्कच्या पाथ रेल्वेतून (न्यूजर्सी ते न्यूयॉर्क) प्रवास केला. ही रेल्वे समुद्राच्या खाली पाण्यात बांधण्यात आली आहे. ह्या रेल्वे स्टेशनमधून न्यूयॉर्कला बाहेर पडताक्षणी थोड्याच अंतरावर वर्ल्ड ट्रेड सेंटरच्या जुन्या इमारतीची जागा बघितली. ज्या इमारती २००१ ला दहशतवाद्यांनी नेस्तनाबूत केल्या होत्या. त्यातील एक इमारत बांधून पूर्ण झाली आहे. व दुसरीचे बांधकाम चालू आहे. न्यूयॉर्कला समुद्राखाली बांधलेल्या टॅनलमधून कारने प्रवास केला. ह्या

सगळ्या आधुनिक गोष्टींचा अनुभव घेतल्यावर लक्षात येते की खरंच! अमेरिका ही जगातील एक बलाढ्य महासत्ता आहे. परंतु सध्या तिची अर्थव्यवस्था डामाडोल झाली आहे. न्यूयॉर्कनंतर वॉशिंग्टन डीसीमध्ये भ्रमण केले. येथील पहिले वैशिष्ट्य म्हणजे अमेरिकेच्या अध्यक्षांचे जेथे वास्तव्य असते ते “व्हाईट हाऊस” दुरून बघितले. तेथे सामान्य माणसांना आत प्रवेश नसतो. ही पांढऱ्या शुभ्र रंगाची भव्य इमारत आहे. कॅपिटल हिल ही संपूर्ण पांढरी शुभ्र इमारत आहे. इमारतीवर मोठा उंच घुमट आहे. येथे युनायटेड स्टेट ऑफ अमेरिकेच्या सिनेटचा कारभार चालतो. त्याचेच समोर अमेरिकेचे उंच स्मारक (मॉन्युमेंट) आहे. आम्ही ४ जुलैला वॉशिंग्टन डीसीमध्ये होतो. ४ जुलै हा अमेरिकेचा स्वातंत्र्यदिन. ह्या दिवशी रस्त्यावरून दोन तासाची परेड असते. ही परेड रस्त्याच्या बाजूला खाली जमिनीवर बसून (सर्वच बसलेले किंवा उभे होते) बघितली. बँडच्या तालावरील परेड बघण्यासारखी असते. वॉशिंग्टन डीसी म्हणजे भव्य म्युझियमचे आगरच. बरेच अप्रतिम म्युझियम बघितले. त्यातील ‘स्पेस म्युझियम’ फार आवडला. राईट बंधुनी उडवलेल्या पहिल्या विमानापासून ते पुढील सर्व सुधारित विमानांची मॉडेल्स ठेवण्यात आली आहेत. तसेच त्यांचा इतिहासही देण्यात आला आहे. तेथे एक स्पेसवरील ‘थ्रीडी’ डॉक्युमेंटरी फिल्मही बघितली. “लायब्ररी ऑफ कॉंग्रेस” ही वास्तू म्हणजे उत्कृष्ट स्थापत्याचा उत्कृष्ट नमुना होय. ह्या स्थापत्याविषयीच लिहायचे झाले तर चार पाने अपुरी पडतील. ही लायब्ररी म्हणजे जगातील सर्वात मोठे ज्ञानाच्या भांडाराचे प्रवेशद्वारच आहे. महत्त्वाची बाब म्हणजे सन १७७६ साली अमेरिकेस स्वातंत्र्य मिळाले. त्या स्वातंत्र्य कराराच्या (डिक्लरेशन ऑफ

उपाय

लेखकाला एकदा लिहायलाच सुचेना
लेख-बिख, कथा-बिधा काहीसुद्धा जमेना
समीक्षेच्या प्रांतात तो शिरला मग सरळ
दुसऱ्यांवर ओकू लागला टीकेचं गरळ.

-डॉ.सुमन नवलकर

इंडीपेन्डन्स) हस्तलिखिताच्या प्रती (मूळप्रत नव्हे) लोकाना वाचनासाठी ठेवण्यात आल्या आहेत. पेंटागॉनची इमारत फार दुरून बघितली. बोटनिकल गार्डन बघितले. हे राष्ट्रीय ऐतिहासिक गार्डन म्हणून प्रसिद्ध आहे. युनियन स्टेशन बघितले. हे जगातील एक भव्य स्टेशन आहे तसेच स्थापत्याचा उत्कृष्ट नमुना होय. पिटस्बर्ग व ग्रोसिटी ही दोन शहरे बघितली. पिटस्बर्गला भारतीयांचे सुंदर बालाजी मंदिर बघितले. ग्रोसिटी ही कपडे व जोडे ह्यांचे खरेदीकरिता प्रसिद्ध आहे. कारण तेथे कपडे व जोड्यावरील टॅक्स (१०-११ टक्के) बसत नाही. त्यामुळे येथे मोठ्या प्रमाणावर खरेदी केली जाते.

एकंदरीत ऑस्ट्रेलिया, कॅनडा व अमेरिका येथील जुन्या वास्तू कसोशीने जतन करण्याची प्रवृत्ती व ती अंमलात आणण्याची कला वाखाणण्यासारखी आहे. ह्या सर्व इमारती बघतांना मन थोडे विषण्ण झाले की ही प्रवृत्ती भारताकडे का नाही? आपल्या भारतातही अनेक अप्रतिम सौंदर्यस्थळे आहेत. परंतु त्यांचे जतन केले जात नाही.

बरे असो. एकंदरीत असे माझे तीनही देशांचे भ्रमण झाले. परंतु प्रत्येक फेरीचे वेळी पुन्हा कधी आपल्या भारतात जाते; असे होत असे. दुसऱ्या देशांत कितीही सुखासीन व झगमगीत जीवन मिळाले तरी आपण ज्या मातीत जन्मलो, वाढलो, बहरलो त्या मातीतील पाळमूळ दुसरीकडे रुजवणे ह्या वयात शक्य होत नाही हेच खरं! गड्या आपुला गाव बरा!

*

सहल

देवळातल्या देवाने केली तीर्थक्षेत्रांची सहल
टवटवीत वाटण्याऐवजी त्याला आली मरगळ
कुठे अधिक मोठी रांग, कुठला प्रसाद टेस्टी
सहल अर्धीच सोडून आला होऊन दुःखी कष्टी.

-डॉ.सुमन नवलकर

BEST WISHESH

FROM

PARAJ BANSIDHAR DHURANDHAR



मोगल आणि मोगलाई पदार्थ

❖ विश्वास अजिंक्य ❖

इ. स. १५२६ मध्ये पानिपत येथे बाबर आणि इब्राहिम लोदी यांच्यात लढाई होऊन त्यात बाबराचा विजय झाला आणि हिंदुस्तानात मोगल घराण्याची मुहूर्तमेढ रोवली गेली. बाबरानंतर हुमायून, अकबर, जहांगीर, शहाजहान, औरंगजेब असे एका पाठोपाठ एक बादशहा या राजवटीत झाले. भारतीय पाक कलेचे वैभव सुरू झाले तेच मुळी या मोगल साम्राज्यात. मोगलांच्या आसक्त व रंगेल स्वभावामुळे जिभेचे चोचले पुरवले गेले. बाबर १५२६ मध्ये मोगल सम्राट म्हणून दिल्लीच्या सिंहासनावर बसला खरा. पण बाबर व त्याचा मुलगा हुमायून यांना खाण्यापेक्षा पिण्यातच जास्त रस होता. अकबर बादशहाला मात्र खाण्याबरोबरच नवीन नवीन खाद्यपदार्थ करून पहाण्याची हौस होती. त्याच्या कारकिर्दीत मोगलाई पाककला कळसाला पोचली होती. स्वतः पाककुशल असणाऱ्या अकबर बादशहाच्या भटारखान्याचे अधिकारी वर्षाच्या सुरूवातीलाच विविध प्रकारची धान्ये, सुकामेवा, साजूक तूप, केशर आणि मांसाहारासाठी उत्तम जातीचे प्राणी-पक्षी जमवून ठेवीत. गावापासून दूर नदीच्या काठी हे प्राणी मारले जात व त्यांचे मांस पोत्यात भरून आणले जाई. बादशहावर विषप्रयोग होऊ नये म्हणून कोणताही पदार्थ तयार झाला की अधिकारी प्रथम तो चाखून बघत आणि मगच तो टेबलावर नेला जात असे.

जहांगीर हा मदिरेच्या संपूर्ण आहारी गेला होता. एवढेच नव्हे; तर त्याला अफूचे व्यसन होते. पण शहाजहान मात्र अकबराप्रमाणे उत्तम पाककुशल होता. त्याच्या भटारखान्यात देशोदेशीच्या उत्तम वस्तू आणून ठेवलेल्या असत. शहाजहानच्या राज्यात एक उत्तम कबाब बनविणारा कबाबवाला होता. तो आपली कृती कोणालाही सांगायचा नाही. शहाजहानला मांसाहार अतिशय प्रिय. शहाजहानला ती कृती हवी होती. त्यासाठी त्याने कबाबवाल्याला राजवाड्यात येऊन गरमागरम कबाब बनवून खिलविण्याचा आदेश

दिला. आपण कबाब बनवू त्या ठिकाणी एकही व्यक्ती हजर असता कामा नये अशी अट घालून कबाबवाला तयार झाला. त्यासाठी त्याला जे साहित्य पुरवण्यात आले होते. त्यांची तंतोतंत वजन मापे बादशहाने आधीच नोंदवून ठेवली होती. जरूर तेवढे सामान वापरून बाकीचे ठेव असे कबाबवाल्याला सांगण्यात आले. त्याने तयार केलेले स्वादिष्ट कबाब शहाजहानने मनसोक्त खाल्यावर कबाबवाला निघून गेला. त्यानंतर शहाजहानने राहिलेले सामान पुन्हा मोजायला लावले. त्यामुळे त्याला कोणती वस्तू किती वापरली ते आपोआपच समजले. त्याप्रमाणे स्वतः कबाब बनवले तेव्हा कुठे त्याला खरे समाधान मिळाले. एखादा प्रकार माहित नसेल तर कितीही कष्ट करून तो आत्मसात करायची त्याची तयारी असे.

औरंगजेबाचे भोजन मात्र साधे होते. तो रमझानचे उपवासदेखील करित असे. त्याला दारूच नव्हे; तर कसलेही व्यसन नव्हते. मुसमान मद्यपान करताना आढळले तर त्यांचे हातपाय तोडण्याचा हुकूम त्याने दिला होता.

मोगलाई खाद्यपदार्थातही विविध प्रादेशिक शैलींचा ठसा उमटलेला आहे. प्रत्येक ठिकाणच्या पदार्थाचे वैशिष्ट्य वेगळे. त्यांचा पसारा हैद्राबाद, काश्मीर, लखनौ, पतियाला, पालनपूर वगैरे ठिकाणी पसरला आहे.

हैद्राबादच्या बिर्याणी आणि कबाबांचा ढंगच वेगळा आहे. निझाम-उल-मलीक हा हैद्राबाद संस्थानचा संस्थापक मोगलांचा दख्खनचा सुभेदार. मोगल साम्राज्याची गाडी उताराला लागल्यावर स्वतःचे राज्य स्थापन करावे असे त्याला वाटले. दिल्ली सोडून येताना वाटेत एका वृद्ध माणसाच्या झोपडीत मुक्काम केला असता त्या गरीब वृद्धाने त्याला कुलचे खायला दिले. निझामाने सात कुलचे खाल्ले व पाणी पिऊन निघाला तेव्हा त्या वृद्ध पुरुषाने त्याला आशीर्वाद दिला की तुझ्या सात पिढ्या राज्य करतील. ते खरेही झाले.

संस्थाने विलीन झाली तेव्हा जो शेवटचा निझाम होता तो सातवा निझाम होता. निझाम गेले; पण कुलचे मात्र अजूनही आहेत.

सर्व निझामांनी ऐश्वर्य भोगले. निझामांच्या दरबारात तीनशे आचारी होते. प्रत्येक आचारी एकेक पदार्थ करण्यात वाकबदार. एक कबाब करण्यात, दुसरा मिठाई करण्यात, तर तिसरा बिरयानी करण्यात. हैद्राबादप्रमाणे रामपूर हेही एक संस्थान हैद्राबादच्या खालोखाल खाद्यपदार्थात नाव मिळविलेले होते. रामपूरचा महाराजा हाही खाण्याचा शौकीन. एकदा निझामाने त्याला जेवणाचे आमंत्रण दिले. सोन्याच्या प्लेट्स, सोन्याचे काटे, चमचे, सुन्या व विविध खाद्यपदार्थांनी निझामाचे टेबल भरले होते. वीस प्रकारचे पुलाव, अनेक भाज्या, साठ प्रकारच्या मिठाया वगैरे वगैरे. रामपूरच्या संस्थानिकांनी ते पाहून म्हटले की, “एवढे पदार्थ खाणे मला शक्य नाही. पण ते सर्व मी चाखून मात्र बघीन.” ते सर्व पदार्थ चाखून बघायला त्यांना अडीच तास लागले. उत्तमोत्तम मेवा, उंची केशर, सुगंधित गुलाब पाकळ्या, अस्सल चांदीचा वर्ख वापरून हैद्राबादी खाद्यपदार्थ तयार केले जात.

लखनौ येथील पदार्थ दम्पक असत. कणीक लावून सीलबंद केलेल्या भांड्यात बराच वेळ मंद जाळावर अंगच्या रसात शिजविलेले पदार्थ म्हणजे दम्पक. या पदार्थांना एका आगळीच लज्जत असते. सुमारे दोनशे वर्षांपूर्वी लखनौचा नबाब आसफउदौला आपल्या प्रजेला रोजगार मिळावा म्हणून ‘बरा इमाम बारा’ ही इमारत रात्री बांधून सकाळी पाडून टाकीत असे. त्या कामगारांसाठी रात्री मातीच्या ‘बुखारी’ नावाच्या भट्टीमध्ये भात व मांस मंद आचेवर रात्रभर शिजत असे व सकाळी त्या कामगारांना वाढण्यात येत असे. एकदा नबाबने सहज म्हणून हा पदार्थ चाखला आणि ती चव त्याला अप्रतिम वाटली. तेव्हापासून नबाबासाठी सुद्धा मंद आचेवर शिजविलेले दम्पक पदार्थ करण्याची पद्धत सुरू झाली.

बिरयानी हे पूर्वी मुसलमान लोकांचेच खाद्य समजले जात असे. बकरी ईद, रमझान ईद हे मुसलमानांचे सण बिरयानीशिवाय साजरे होणे शक्य नाही. परंतु अलिकडे सगळ्याच धर्माच्या व जातीच्या लोकांमध्ये बिरयानी अधिकाधिक लोकप्रिय व्हायला लागली आहे. बिरयानी या पर्शियन शब्दांचा अर्थ तळणे असा

आहे. बिरयानीसाठी मटण जवळ जवळ तळूनच घेतले जाते. कांदाही तळून कुरकुरीत करून वापरतात. म्हणूनच भात व तळलेले मटण एकत्र करून जो पदार्थ तयार करतात त्याला बिरयानी हे नाव पडले.

मोगलाई मांसाहारी पदार्थांप्रमाणे मोगलाई शाकाहारी पदार्थही प्रसिद्ध आहेत. मिठाया तर अनेक प्रकारच्या आहेत. बकरी ईदच्या आदल्या रात्री तांदळाच्या पीठाचे रहम, गव्हाच्या पीठाचे गुलगुले, मलीदा असे गोड पदार्थ बनवायची पद्धत असते. तर शीर खुर्मा हा बारीक शेवयांपासून बनवलेला गोड प्रकार कोणत्याही सणाला असतोच असतो.

मोगलाई पदार्थांची लज्जत वाढविण्यासाठी हे पदार्थ बहुधा कल्हई केलेल्या पितळेच्या भांड्यात, कोळशाच्या भट्टीवर, मंद आचेवर शिजवतात व पाट्या वरवंट्यावर वाटलेले तसेच कुटलेले ताजे मसाले वापरले जातात. भेंडीबाजाराचे हॉटेल शालीमार आणि ग्रँट रोडचे दिल्ली दरबार ही हॉटेले खास मोगलाई खाण्यासाठी प्रसिद्ध आहेत. शालीमारचे मालक शहाबुद्दीन शेख हे मूळचे जौनपूरचे. त्यांच्याकडचे रसोईये खास मोगलांच्या रसोई यांचे वंशज आहेत. शालीमारचा रान मसाला, मटण दो प्याजा हे पदार्थ अतिशय प्रसिद्ध आहेत. त्यांचं मुर्ग मसल्लम अगदी ओरिजिनल. प्रत्येक पदार्थासाठी वेगवेगळे मसाले व तेले वापरली जातात.

वांद्रयाच्या पश्चिमेला बाजार रोड व चॅपेल रोडच्या जंक्शनवरील सैफुद्दीनभाईचे लकी स्टार हे तंदूर बकऱ्यासाठी प्रसिद्ध आहे. (एस्. व्ही. रोडवरील लकी रेस्टॉरंट नव्हे) अख्खा बकरा तंदूरमध्ये भाजून त्यात चिकन बिरयानी भरलेली असते. पण तो ऑर्डर देऊन खाण्यासाठी २०-२५ माणसे तरी हवीत. तर सांताक्रूझ स्टेशनच्या बाहेर पश्चिमेला नॉव्हेल्टी फूट मार्टच्याच मन्सूर सायकलवाला यांचे शब्बार कॅटरटर्स बिरयानी आणि कटलेटसाठी प्रसिद्ध आहे. प्रत्येकाचे वैशिष्ट्य वेगळे.

पूर्वीच्या काळी लोक कष्टाळू होते. वाहनांची फारशी सोय नव्हती. भरपूर पायपीट करावी लागे. त्यामुळे मोगलाई पदार्थांची लज्जत वाढविणारे मेवा, साजूक तूपासारखे जड पदार्थ सहज पचत असत. आता सुखसोयी वाढल्या. कष्ट कमी झाले पण जिभेचे चोचले अजूनही शाबूत आहेत!



'हितवाडा' या नागपूर येथील दैनिकातील मूळ इंग्रजी लघुत्तम कथेचा अनुवाद

आपण इतकी वर्षे का जगतो..

— कल्पना सुभाष कोठारे

एके दिवशी अगदी प्रथम, देवाने गाय निर्माण केली व तिला सांगितले, 'तू शेतात जा व शेतकऱ्याबरोबर कष्ट कर, वासरांना जन्म दे आणि शेतकऱ्याला दूधदुभतेही दे. यासाठी मी तुला साठ वर्षांचे आयुष्य देतो.' गाय म्हणाली, 'इतके साठ वर्षांचे कष्टप्रद जीवन जगण्यापेक्षा, मला वीस वर्षेच फक्त जगू दे, तुझी चाळीस वर्षे मी तुला परत करीत आहे.' देव म्हणाला, 'तथास्तु!'

दुसऱ्या दिवशी देवाने कुत्रा निर्माण केला. देव त्याला म्हणाला, 'तू दिवसभर, शेतकऱ्याच्या घराबाहेर बसून त्याचे रक्षण कर. कोणीही चोर आल्यास, भुंकून त्याला हाकलून दे. याकरिता मी तुला वीस वर्षांचे आयुष्य बहाल करतोय.' कुत्रा देवास म्हणाला, 'वीस वर्षे सतत भुंकणे हे फारच लांबीचे वाटते. त्यापेक्षा मला फक्त दहाच वर्षे जगणे आवडेल. तुझी दहा वर्षे मी तुला परत करीत आहे.' देव म्हणाला, 'तथास्तु!'

तिसऱ्या दिवशी देवाने माकड निर्माण केले व त्यास देव म्हणाला, 'तू माणसाची करमणूक कर, माकडचेष्टा करून, त्याला हसव! याकरिता तुला मी वीस वर्षांचे आयुष्य देतो! माकड म्हणाले, 'सतत वीस वर्षे एकच काम करणे किती कंटाळवाणे होईल! कुत्र्याप्रमाणे मीही तुला तुझी दहा वर्षे परत करीत आहे,' देव म्हणाला, 'तथास्तु!'

चौथ्या दिवशी, देवाने मानव निर्माण केला व त्यास देव म्हणाला, 'जा! खा! पी! झोप आणि खेळ! काहीही न करता, खूप, खूप मजा कर! याकरिता मी तुला वीस वर्षे देतोय! माणूस म्हणाला, 'काय? फक्त वीस वर्षे? मी काय म्हणतो, या माझ्या वीस वर्षांत, तू गायीने परत केलेली चाळीस वर्षे, कुत्र्याने व माकडाने परत केलेली दहा, दहा वर्षे का मिळवीत नाहीस? म्हणजे मला पूर्ण ऐंशी वर्षे तरी जगता येईल. 'देव म्हणाला, 'तथास्तु!'

म्हणूनच आता, माणूस पहिली वीस वर्षे खाणेपिणे, खेळणे, झोपणे अशी मजा करतो. काहीही काम न करता त्याचे वीस वर्षांचे आयुष्य सरते. नंतरची चाळीस वर्षे मात्र तो कष्ट करून कुटुंबियासाठी राबत असतो. (गायीप्रमाणे!) पुढील दहा वर्षे माणूस, नातवंडाबरोबर माकडचेष्टा करण्यात दवडतो आणि शेवटची दहा वर्षे तो (कुत्र्याप्रमाणे) फक्त घरासमोर बाजूने, येणाऱ्या जाणाऱ्यावर भुंकून, कटकट करण्यात घालवितो.

हितवाद' या इंग्रजी वृत्तपत्रातून साभार!



A GRAND LADY

❖ Kalpana Subhash Kothare ❖

Memories like rain-drops keep falling. Each drop is shining like a diamond in my hands. My sad heart is not yet ready to accept that one who gave me these beautiful diamonds is no more with us.

I had climbed a wooden stair-case of an old bungalow in Khar. I was there to collect a parcel of Parbhi Sambar for my N. R. I. daughter. A smiling lady clad in nine-yards sari, welcomed me. It was our first meeting.

At the age of sixty years I joined the Sanskriti Stree Mandal in Khar. There I met her again! Soon a close friendship budded. I came to know that although her name was Laxmi Prabhakar, she was fondly called Kekibay! Pathare Prabhu Sundari, Rasanavani were her other objectives, although eldest, she was evergreen, everyone's friend in the Mandal. Her participation in yearly cooking competition & wining a prize was certain. She loved to share her experiences with us. Be it a Lonavala trip with relatives or felicitation by Pathare Prabhu community, she used to bring a written paper along and make me read it out loudly for all Mandal ladies.

For a while, the Prabhakars came to stay at Santacruz. while their old residence was being redeveloped. She made my sister revisit this home as I was absent for the first visit. The occasion was Ganpati Darshan. It's a pleasant experience to visit Prabhakars' Ganpati. The decoration consists of traditional silver toys, plus various decorative pieces from abroad. (A silver Chimbori is here. How I wish, I should have shown my N.R.I. granddaughter this Parbhi display!) Laxmi never

failed to draw our attention to the modern Rangoli, drawn by her granddaughter Priyanka.

Her love and pride for her grandchildren knew no bounds! She repeatedly phoned me and sent her daughter in law to my place, with information about her grand-daughters success stories. When I realized the information was not enough, she arranged an appointment with her busy granddaughter, Priyanka. At last I could fulfill my friend's wishes. Thanks to the editors, the 2009 Diwali issue of Prabhu-Tarun contained an enlightening interview with Priyanka Prabhakar. She used to thank me for this whenever we used to meet.

Sometimes she used to buy from me Amla-jam, a favorite with her husband. Once she surprised me with an order for my home-made bread-buns. She wanted them for her grand-son in America. I thought she was joking so just to humour her I agreed. Whoever heard of buying Indian home-made bread-buns for a N.R.I.? Ultimately I had to give in due to her persistence. Everyone knows that old age is second childhood. Laxmi, THE GRAND PARBHIN had innocence of a child, persistence of an adult and humour of a good friend. She definitely taught me a M.B.A. lesson. i.e. to follow up.

Friends, forget `me', `my' hands and only remember these shining diamonds this grand old lady has given me. Hope you enjoyed this sharing of experiences. May you too learn this art of sharing taught to me by Laxmi Prabhakar!



LANGUAGE NO BAR!!

–Charudutta Dhairyawan

Recently there was a discussion on Facebook related to language and coincidentally I had come to Manila in Philippines where I met people from different countries. This brings me a reason to share something related to my experience in communicating with people here.

Filipino speaks Tagalog (local language) I found it very interesting interacting with people here. When they speak in English they pronounce few words differently e.g. FOCUS (FO COOS), SUPPLIER (SOOPLIER) this makes me laugh but when I say it in normal way of English that we learned in India they find it different.

One more important thing that I noticed is that when they speak in office within their local team members they speak in Tagalog, it means they speak in their mother tongue among themselves. When it comes to interacting with foreigners like me from India, another colleague from China and US / Europe they speak in English using the words in their own way. Most important is that they follow speaking in their language with each other even in front of us.

I and other colleague from China continued speaking to each other in English. I faced great challenge to understand her English as she pronounced some words differently, still we were able to understand each other and had great time. When I asked her about what language they speak in office, she said that they speak Chinese / Mandarin. The fact is that Chinese people are facing challenges in spoken English.

This also reminds me when I had been to Chennai (City in our own country India. The only possible language to speak with Tamil guys was English as I don't understand Tamil and people there don't understand Hindi. Reason is that their state government had discontinued Hindi

education from school syllabus somewhere in 60s and so we get to meet large number of people who can't speak/read/write HINDI (Our National Language). Today they have realised that it is a great failure of the government and now they have re-introduced Hindi in school syllabus. This also indicates that they have added it as second language and still have Tamil as compulsory Language.

I have given above three examples which clearly indicate that there are many people who speak their own mother tongue. If you have watched any International Summits where various country leaders come together and deliver their speeches you must have noticed that Presidents from Japan, China, Russia, France, Germany and few more countries often give their speech in their own language whereas President of India gives speech in English.

I think we Indians have some fear to speak either in our mother tongue or in our language. I feel first of all we should try to kick that fear out. If we are successful to be fearless with language then there won't be any necessity for each one of us to make compulsion on young ones to be conversant with English. If they aren't compelled then they will also be able to focus on other languages and will be stronger to meet people from other parts of the world.

I was comfortable to speak in English with Pilipino, Chinese and even European. They all stated that they were also very comfortable speaking with me compared to speaking with each other. I really thank my parents for taking good decision in sending me to English Medium School (Not a Convent School).

Secondly I would also thank my teachers who taught me English by keeping Marathi & Hindi speaking atmosphere in the school.

Purpose of writing on this subject was the



sort of HIT & HOT debate on the Facebook and we got to see very good comments from many regarding Marathi / English / Hindi. All past articles I wrote were in Marathi which has reached many people. This time I have written in English so as to reach those youngsters who find difficulty to understand Marathi. At the same time this will not stop me writing in Marathi and would also encourage youngsters to read, write & also speak in Marathi at least within us (includes family, community friends & also other Marathi friends).

I feel we all should be proud of our Mother Land & Mother Tongue. So being Pathare Prabhu the so called inhabitant of Aamchee Mumbai a city in Maharashtra where the regional language is MARATHI, we should have pride in Reading, Writing & Speaking MARATHI!!!



प्रतिक्रिया

Your annual function was very good. But the time allotted for the debate was too short. At least 5 minutes should have been given. I feel the point whether Prabhu Tarun should be in Marathi or English is not important, the influence of the language is most. English is required for international contacts, but another language, that is, Hindi is making a dent in our society. Wherever you go outside your house in Mumbai and other cities of Maharashtra, we have to speak in Hindi. That is our working language, Marathi is spoken in the house but half Marathi half English and even Hindi. Gone are the days that people of my generation and before, had to speak English in offices compulsorily; but the present generation in all offices communicate more in Hindi. It means Hindi is creeping in. Therefore, the main attention should be whether the present generation gives attention to reading. Today most libraries are deserted on account of dearth of readers. Internet has contributed largely to it. Our generation, although studied in Jesuits English schools had a liking to read Marathi Magazines, like Chandoba, Chandrakant Kakodkar's mysterious stories, loved to go through Diwali magazines like hilarious 'AWAAZ' and many more. We inculcated the habit watching cartoons and caricatures drawn in them which ultimately developed in interest in reading in Marathi. As a result, we were conversant in both languages, Marathi and English. Unless the present generation is made to read in Marathi and English, the problem of publishing in Marathi or English will not be solved. This requires firm resolution on the part of young parents to make their pupils read in both languages to circumvent and solve the issue. Otherwise Hindi is making inroads swiftly and our young generation will not know where they lie in future.

—ANIL RAO



GROWING UP AGAIN

Introduction

–Mayura Nayak



It was a usual Friday Night weekend party at a friend's place. After all the 'hungama' and 'masti' with half of the crowd falling asleep, just before sunrise some of us started playing the game "Truth or Dare". The most entertaining and deadly "DARES" did their usual rounds with all of us, and then it was our turn to finally play the TRUTH game! Some of us got away with some easy questions while some of us were cornered with some embarrassing and trying moments. With a closely knit group, there is never a need to lie but sometimes remembering a past moment in our lives can be rather embarrassing or at times an eye opener! One question that was etched in my mind even days after the party – "Tell us three things / events in your life you repent the most!" Well an ideal answer that we all like to give is "I repent nothing in my life, as I have learnt something from every experience of mine!" yes, this is a great answer probably in an interview for a job, but does this answer seem true to any of us? I am sure we all have some actions or events to repent in our lives which we never like to admit and keep covering them up by saying - "yes I admit it was a mistake but I don't repent it as I learnt a lot from it!" Well that sure is a brave front to take and I am sure we learn a lot from our mistakes, but I am also sure of this that there are some mistakes that we wish we never did!

I would have never gone back in time to relive my past, had it not been for this article. "Growing Up Again!" – What an optimistic thought. I look at it as a chance to live my life again! Well that is technically impossible, but imagination can be as wild as that! And if I have to imagine this then some of these mistakes I would

like to undo. Yes of course many of my mistakes did teach me a lot, and were definitely required to mould me into the person that I am today. Imagine what a wonderful feeling it is to have the maturity of a 30 year old and still have the ability to change or undo certain actions that I did in my adolescence or may be childhood! Life would be so perfect! But these imperfections in life itself teach us the path ahead! Those sweet mistakes which accidentally introduce us to the love of our life, or which cause a fight between two thick pals only to bring them closer together, would never see the light of the day! Those days of hiding a Mills & Boons behind the science text book pretending to study, and then crying over a low percentage, those days of splurging our pocket money in the first week of the month, only to beg and borrow for the remaining weeks, fighting with our dad for a low pocket money least realizing that it is silently teaching us to plan our finance, those days of cribbing over not having a room to ourselves only to grow up and realize how much we miss sharing the bed and secrets with our siblings, those days of envying older cousins on having their independence waiting for the day when we will start working ourselves, only to realize that childhood was that golden period of our lives which will never return, etc. etc. these are experiences, and sweet mistakes which are worth every tear, smile, frown, and sleepless night they bring along with them. But even today when I introspect, I remember certain situations which probably haven't affected me much, but have troubled someone else in many ways! These are mistakes I may have committed unknowingly which may have hurt someone and in the heat of adolescence I must have never bothered to even make up to that person! Today as a 30 year old my reactions are far more calculated and thought over, but as a teenager I know I must have hurt a friend, or a loved one least bothering about his or her feelings. These are some of the spoken words, or actions that I would like to undo if I get a chance to live my life again!

I have been very fortunate to have had a wonderful, secure and happy childhood unlike many people I know! Childhood comprises of

those formative years of our lives where the experiences and learnings actually mould us into unique individuals. Although we were 10 people living in one house, our family extended over a larger group with other cousins living in the same building as us. We were a family of almost 30 living under the same roof! In school I remember telling my teachers on various occasions that I live in a joint family, least knowing that mine actually was a unique joint family with almost 30 people living in the same building sharing, playing, celebrating, cribbing and crying together! We had the most wonderful vacations and never needed friends to spend time with, as our cousins were our best friends! We had what many children could only dream of - A financially and emotionally secure childhood! But what I appreciate today, I took it for granted as a child. At that time, at any given time, I could walk into any of my uncle's home and find someone to talk to or play with right from a 75 year old to a 5 year old! Today I miss having all those people around me. On the third floor of our building all flats were occupied by our family, so often in the evenings, the main doors of those flats would be wide open and we would walk in freely and move around and play wherever we like. As a kid I used to hate to see those doors shut and would always assume that it is against the family's tradition to keep those doors shut, but today, I am eagerly waiting for all of them to just come back in the reconstructed building to live together not even bothering about those doors open or shut! When my parents decided to leave that flat and settle in Vikhroli, I visited my empty home many times before relocating myself.... But many years later recently when I saw pictures of our building terrace posted by a cousin on Facebook, I realized that I missed giving a last visit to that terrace which is witness to some of the most memorable moments of our lives. It was our cousins' so called 'adda' where we have celebrated all festivals, played holi, organized fun n fares, had our birthday parties, in fact some of us must have celebrated all our milestone events on that terrace right from our own naming ceremony to birthdays to wedding sangeets, to baby showers and probably completed the circle



with our kids' naming ceremony too! This 'adda' cannot be replaced by any other hang out area in the world; still as a kid I never really appreciated it as much as I do today! Such a wonderful childhood probably could have just bettered had I appreciated all these things while I experienced them! If I have to grow up again, I would want to live exactly the same childhood with the awareness of being given life's best childhood and the ability to appreciate the same at the same time!

Growing up again! – In a matter of a few hours I could relive my complete life and imagine what I would want to retain and undo in my life in a jiffy! Imagination can surely reveal some truths that we often overlook in reality. Well many situations and experiences in our lives happen out of our own or other's actions and reactions. But there are some experiences that are led by fate and are not governed by anyone's actions or reactions. Are we destined to see happiness and pain in the degree that we actually do or do we decide that degree ourselves? Can we rule our destiny? If I have to grow up again, Can I make

that small change in my life, where I can plan my destiny? Can I undo an event when I have lost a dear one? Can I undo a mishap in the life of a close friend? Is it possible to evade a natural calamity? Will I still see that much pain in some other form, if these events have to change? May be yes, or may be no! I don't really know the answer to this, but it would be great if in my second chance of growing up I could edit my life in such a fashion that I could contribute in a larger way towards my fate not merely through my actions and reactions, but by changing certain patterns in life which seem rather unpleasant. I know this isn't possible in reality, but imagination need not be bound! It is only in our mind's eye that we can see fiction and wishfully think of living it someday! Alas! Growing up again does seem to be a great option, but is not a reality... we are here to live just ONE life, and we must do all we can to live it to the fullest!! Here's wishing all the readers a very Happy Diwali and as we step into the New Year, I wish another healthy, happy and prosperous year for all of us to live to the fullest!

*

नवा जन्मेन मी

संजय दळवी

संजनाने फोन केला व गणपतीदर्शनाला फक्त एकाच गोष्टीचा पाठपुरावा केला. लेख हवा- TOPIC : GROWING UP AGAIN त्वरिताही लेख लिहीणार होती म्हणून मी हाच लेख मराठीत लिहायचे ठरवले आणि तरुणाच्या वाढदिवसाची ENGLISH OR MARATHI OR Bi.LANGUAL ह्या विषयाची DEBATE ताजी असल्याने पटकन होकारही मिळाला.

GROWING UP AGAIN - म्हणजे “पुन्हा वाढताना” का ‘लहानपण देगा देवा...’ ह्यावर पुन्हा वाद-संवाद आणि शेवटी संजनाने सुहासिनीताईशी बोलायला सांगून सुटका करून घेतली.

सुहासिनीताईशी बोलणे हा एक अजूनच वेगळा अनुभव होता. मात्र त्यांच्याबरोबर

केलेल्या विचारमंथनातून एक छान धागा हाती आला. शांताबाईंच्या ‘पुन्हा नवी जन्मेन मी’ वर गाडी स्थिरावली आणि “पुन्हा जन्मेन मी” ह्या विषयावर शिक्का मोर्तब होऊन... The ball was back in iny court.

पुन्हा जन्मेन मी!! काय सुंदर कल्पना आहे. खरेच, गेल्या उण्यापुण्या बावन्न वर्षात जे काही करायचे राहून गेले, ते सर्व करायची उमेद मनात दाटून आली. आत्याबाईला मिशा असत्या सारखे काहीसे ह्या विषयाचे रूप असले तरीही सदैव स्वप्नरंजन करणाऱ्या माझ्या मनाला हा विषय खूप भावला. जावेद अख्तर ह्याच्या दोन ओळी मला आता सतत आठवू लागल्या.

“सब के खुशी का फासला, एक कदम है हर घरमें बस एक कमरा कम है!!”



काय काय करायचे राहून गेले आहे...
 खांद्याला पंख लावून उंच उडायचे होते... राहून
 गेले.
 अंतरिक्षाच्या पोकळीत अणू होऊन विहरायचे
 होते... राहून गेले.
 कवितेच्या नाजूक ओळींत विरघळायचे होते...
 विज्ञानाच्या परिभाषेत दुंबायचे होते...
 फुलांच्या राशींत पहुडवायचे होते...
 सारे-सारे राहून गेले...

वयाच्या अठराव्या वर्षी वडीलांच्या
 आकस्मिक निधनाने कर्तेपणाची झूल खांद्यावर
 अडकवून घेतली, आणि मग-सारे सारे राहून
 गेले...

प्रभुतरुणाचे उपकार की आज त्या
 सर्वापासून अलग होऊन “पुन्हा जन्मेन मी...”
 असे मंथन करायला मिळाले... पण खरंच जर
 का पुन्हा जन्म मिळाला तर त्या गत-स्मृतींसह
 कसे पुढे सरकायचे... लहानपणी आम्हाला
 अतिप्रिय अश्या गोट्या-भोवरे ह्यांचे माझ्या नव्या
 सवंगड्यांना काय आकर्षण वाटणार?... लगोरी,
 डबा-ऐसपैस, सूर-पारंब्या, काचपाणी,
 जमवलेली सिगारेटची पाकिटे व त्यांचा खेळ,
 सागरगोटे (होय- मुलगा असूनही मी सागरगोटे
 उत्तम खेळत असे अगदी पाच आणि सहा
 पाखडींपर्यंत), कॅरम व चेस चे अड्डे, मे महीनाभर
 सतत कुटलेले पत्ते-आणि किती विविध प्रकारचे
 ते पत्त्यांचे डाव- LADDIES, NOT-AT HOME, ५-
 ३-२ (किंवा ७/८), गुलामचोर, झब्बू, बदाम
 सत्ती आणि मुख्य म्हणजे बिझीक... ह्या
 साऱ्यांना आठवतांना VIDEO-GAMES ROAD-
 STAR मध्ये मन रमेल माझे? मला नाही वाटत
 तसे...PIZZA BURGERS, NACHOS
 POPCORNs च्या ह्या जमान्यात तोंडात घोळवून
 विरघळलेली रेवडी विसरता म्हणता विसरू
 शकणार नाही. NATURALsच्या सर्वकष
 Flavoured Icecreams पेक्षा घरच्या Pot-

Icecreamची गोडी मधल्या Iron ब्लेड्स
 चाटतांना जिभेला झालेल्या चुरचुरीइतकीच मुरून
 बसलीय. Postman 5 5 5 ही हाक ऐकली की
 मोहरून जाणारे मन, त्या “आंतरदेशीय”
 निळ्याशार कागदाची सर्वांना वीट येईपर्यंत
 केलेली पारायणें, आणि मग कपाटात खोल
 कुठेतरी लपवून ठेवलेला तो बहुमूल्य पत्रांचा ठेवा,
 ह्या सर्वांची आजच्या email/smsची तुलना
 निदान माझे मन तरी नाही करू शकणार.

“ह्या हिमाचा पडदा कधी-बाजू सरेल
 काय...हिमगिरीच्या शिखराचे मज दर्शन होईल
 काय...” ह्या संभ्रमावस्थेतून बाहेर पडायलाच
 पाहिजे... कारण- पुन्हा जन्मेन मी जरी. पुन्हा
 जन्मेन मी कधी... ह्याचे उत्तर जर होकारार्थी
 असेल तर ह्याच जन्मी केलेल्या चुका, त्यावर
 झालेल्या उपरत्या (!!) अनपेक्षितपणे अनुभवलेले
 खाच खळगे, अनेक सुहृदा सोबत त्यातून
 काढलेले मार्ग, तेवढ्याच अनपेक्षितपणे
 अनुभवलेले असंख्य छोटे-छोटे बाण साध्याश्या
 पेन्सिलच्या बक्षिसाने उंचबळलेले मन... असंख्य
 क्लेष, अनंत वेदना, गडद अपारदर्शी असे
 भावनावेग, ह्या साऱ्यांचे गोठोडे उराशी (का
 उरावर) घेऊन जगता येईल मला?? मुळीच नाही
 आणि जर का कोरी पाटी घेऊन नवा जोडणार
 असेन मी तर रंगीत. संगीत अश्या ह्या दुनियेत
 वेगळाच कुणी असेन मी, अर्थात पुन्हा जन्मेल
 एक नवा जीव-पण तो नसेन मी. जरी तो मी
 असलो तरीही तो नसेन मी...

श्रीगुरुचरित्रातल्या विसाव्या अध्यायात
 स्वामींनी ढळढळीत सत्य मांडले आहे...

देव दानव ऋषेश्वराशी । होणारे न चुकेल परियेसी ।

ब्रह्मां लिही ललाटेनी ॥ तेघी अढळ जाण सत्य ॥

अवतार होताती हरिहर । तेही न राहती स्थिर ।

तुम्ही तर मनुष्य नर । काय अढळ तुम्हासी॥

*



Growing up again

–Mr. Raja Ajinkya

It has been hardly few years that I have been addressed as "Uncle" (tough to hear) by my nephews and nieces. As the age is racing ahead physically, the child in each of us (so called uncle) does not accept the reality of growing old. Probably this is the secret of staying young (at heart). The child in each one of us would surely like to rewind a certain part of our life.

Ufff...!! What ifI'm given a chance to grow up again! A chance to relive my young college days and complete my incomplete dreams...how exciting it would be!!

During my college days I used to love playing percussion instruments like *congo*, *tumba* etc. in numerous orchestras and stage shows. If given a chance to grow up again I would surely try to become a great percussionist. I could have approached famous musicians of our film industry especially the most loved and my personal favourite R.D. Burman and his music group.

I would have worked hard to become the most known percussionist in the music industry.....by this time I would have been

improving my talent, signing autographs and living a celebrity lifestyle!!!

As the time passed I would pass on my knowledge of percussion to other talented upcoming musicians of the industry and later simply retire as one of the best percussionist in the music industry.

But probably time and destiny did not permit me to pursue my dream as a musician. Still the thought of growing up again and chasing the dream makes me feel reborn. If given a chance to relive my young days then the passion for musicyes its music for which I would love to grow up again and play rhythmic instruments all day long!

So what if I was not able to complete my dream??? I still enjoy and am enthusiastic about music. Of late to feed my musical buds I have bought an African percussion instrument called as "*Djembe*" to re-tune the years (ears) in my life and play on recorded music numbers of R.D. Burman.

What a wonderful feeling it is to grow up again!

GROWING UP.....AGAIN

-Twarita Sanjay Dalvi

"Grow up, Aai!" my daughter taunted me.

I was stunned. What was so childish and immature in asking her to dress up 'properly'?

When I was her age I never back answered my mother. In fact my clothes were bought by my parents and I just wore them. I never chose them.

When it comes down to it, being grown up sucks, it isn't half as fun as growing up. What with all the responsibilities and tensions that go hand in hand with being a grown up!

I was already thinking like Atmaram Tukaram Bhide of 'Taarak Mehta ka Ulta Chashma' fame, and getting nostalgic about 'hamare jamaane....'

Those were fun filled days when the only

thing that mattered was just following your heart.

When dad was your hero and mom was the epitome of all things good.

When your brother was your idol and your cousins were your friends. While other friends were not "jaroori like chai ke liye toast..."

When all I longed for was a 'scenty rubber' which my classmates had and I did not, as it cost 50 paise and that was lots of money.

When innocence was, slurping slyly on 'barfacha golaa' and wondering how to hide my red lips and tongue from Mom.

When evenings were meant for screeching and screaming out friends' names and horsing around playing 'dabaa aaispaais' 'lagori' 'kho kho' 'viti daandu' 'kabaddi' 'langdi'



'saankhlee'.....whew.....and what not.

When 'saali/saala' were major 'bad words' unlike the 'F word' used today as if swearing was going out of fashion.

Jeez sweetheart..... I too wanna grow up... again! And this time round I will improvise.

Baba will wake me up at 6.00 am and I will put my arms around him and ask him to join me in my slumber party. My 'Oh so strict' Baba too will smile before yanking me out of bed. But NOW I will just go early to bed and get up before being yanked out of bed.

My Aai will 'paste' me with a ruler for playing out after 7pm. But NOW I will be back home by 6.59pm.

Baba will still not sign my test mark sheet. But NOW I will burn the night oils and be a star pupil.

My Dada and I will fight like two rams in the afternoon and both will be punished in the evening. But NOW I will just be smart and not get caught.

I will cry when my college friends go for a movie and I am not allowed since boys are part of the group. But NOW I will.....

Whoa... what am I writing????

I have lived that part! I am grown up 'officially'. Those are my 'beetein hue din,..' ... Can I change them? Do I really want to change them?

Those are the days that have groomed me into what I am today. Our past reflects on our present and our present ushers our future.

Looking back makes one nostalgic. Listening to old songs connect us with our growing up days, when making mistakes, getting punished and moving ahead was natural. Sometimes we feel we could go back to those carefree days. But you can't go back and manipulate things to the way you wanted them to happen. Life will be meaningless and boring and just not worth living. Besides, we value the past for the way it has happened. It is HOW we grew up. That is Our past that has moulded us and our future.

But yes, while growing up again I would prefer try and change the course of my future and that's a beautiful thing about life. Yes, one will make mistakes. And yes, one will have bad days -

but as long as you let the past go, you'll have such a gorgeous and bright future ahead of you.

To grow up again, I would also like to do something to improvise my personality. Make me a better person. Moving on with our lives, making new memories, and gaining knowledge, learning something new each day, making exciting realities that were once ideas that seemed so far away.

As a child one believes nothing can be wrong for a long time and whatever the problem, your parents will make it right. As a parent wouldn't it be beautiful if your own child had the same faith in you. When children can talk out their growing up fears with you, when they can discuss their friends and fears with you and not fumble while telling you where or with whom they are. You being grown up helps their growing up.

I understand why my parents behaved in a particular fashion when I was small. Today being in their shoes I am tempted to toe the line but I avoid it. I try to be less rigid. Understand my kids' point of view (most of the times they are right) because circumstances are different today, children are different. Their problems are different so how can solutions be the same age old ones?

Trying to be as close to their youthful thoughts, I too learn a lot that wouldn't be possible being a 'normal' mom. I let them be their natural selves instead of trying to mould them according to the so called norms of society. Not because I am careless but because I know that kids today don't blindly follow what parents ask them to do. They question ... why...??

I'm not a little girl anymore I've learned who to trust & who to ignore. I don't forgive people because I'm weak, I forgive them because I'm strong enough to know that people make mistakes. We all do. Earlier I would have hated the person erring me but today I can understand that majority of the people don't hurt you intentionally, and that they are just going through a rough phase themselves.

We must try and put ourselves in others' shoes, to understand them and see how soon we master anger management. As I grow up each day I want to understand why people behave the



way they do. If they are willing to confide in me, then go ahead and help them sort things out.

Does this mean I have mellowed down with age?? I don't think so. No woman worth her salt 'ages'. It is just a maturity that comes with experience. You are as young as you think.

I have friends like the 'jaroori' type. I could CHOOSE my friends. Growing up taught me whom to choose.

When I was little I felt that life could be perfect. That if you were careful enough, you'd never make a mistake, never be lonely, never be misunderstood, never be frightened, but it doesn't work that way. Life is big and messy, and you just have to face it boldly and hope for the best.

I have adapted to the current lifestyle, current lingo, latest trends. It is important to

change with the times, because change is the only constant in our life. Changing with the times is a positive sign of growing up.

I dream and look forward to fulfilling those dreams. Those that are not within my reach, I keep for tomorrow. As Scarlet Ohara says, "Tomorrow is another day...".

I am on Facebook and Twitter that has given friendship and networking a new meaning and has brought the world in our lap (top). I donate for charity. I became 'Anna' and stood for a cause.

Yes, I am growing up againits different ...its fun...

That reminds me of a wonderful phrase, "Every yesterday is a past. Every tomorrow is a vision. But every TODAY well lived makes every yesterday a dream of happiness and every tomorrow a vision of hope."

GROWING UP AGAIN

–Nirupa Arvind Vyavaharkar

It is truly said that in every Man or Woman a child is hidden!

And if this child and his dreams are not nurtured aptly in the early ages they remain active in the sub-conscious!

During school days, I wanted to dance and act but unfortunately did not get a chance to show my potentials.

"The Burning Desire To Act Remained Buried Deep Within Me"

College Life too was not enjoyable as I had started working for Union Bank, immediately after S.S.C. and had to complete my studies by joining Morning College. Here too destiny did not allow me to pursue my passion of Dancing and Acting.

Whenever I used to see young boys and girls giving performances on Television, my inner desire surfaced.

Years passed and the Balancing Act of managing Home and Kids on one side and my career on the other left me no time to express my self as an actor.

Time flew by and I became a Mother In – Law. My Mimicking Talent was always appreciated by my family members and now

my daughter – in - law Kashmira took a special liking to it and ignited the fire of acting again and coaxed me to take part in "Pratish 2011 !

Thanks to Kashmira, I decided to go ahead with her idea.

All the Tensions of a school girl surfaced in my mind. Would I be able to do justice to the role, will I be able to face the audience with confidence?

I just prayed to God and plunged Whole Heartedly into the role.

It was a very small role but I put my best efforts and Lo it was a success. I had made it!

The pent up desire to act had finally been released. I myself was also surprised that at this late age also I was able to do a good job. The constant support of my family also helped me to achieve this success. I also thank my director for showing so much trust in a new comer like me.

Today I have achieved my dream and I feel that if placed in the hands of a good director, I will definitely do full justice to the role given to me!

It is really a feeling of GROWING UP AGAIN.



Recycled! If I were to grow up again...?

–Pravin Mankar

My mother was smiling at me! Suhas Kothare was smiling at me! Suhas is my cousin. Hey! Wait a minute. My wife is weeping. She is standing besides a body wrapped in a white sheet. My daughter is looking busy. She is in her organization mode; officious looking, issuing instructions, organizing something. What's going on?

My mother? Suhas Kothare? What are they doing here? Why are they smiling? They are supposed to be dead long ago. Who is that lying on the floor? Why is my wife weeping? Why am I looking down at my wife and my daughter? Where am I standing? This is all so confusing! I am now peering at the dead body in white wraps. Looks familiar! Taking a closer look at the face! Hey! That is me! Why am I wrapped in white? A benign smile from Suhas Kothare! An understanding smile from mom!

And suddenly it struck me ... I am dead!

I am on the other side of the divide. No wonder I met Suhas and mom! What happened to dad? Why is he not here? And who is that unknown face talking to Suhas? Suhas does the introductions. Pravin, meet Yum! Yum? Is he edible? As in yummy? I am a tube-light today; with a flickering starter. My convent educated brain suddenly recalls the story of Satyavan and Savitri narrated to me by mom in my childhood. This is 'Yama' (the convent spelling for Yum), the God of death or the presiding authority over death. Yum is not at all hideous looking as depicted in comic books and TV serials. On the contrary he is quite friendly, pleasant faced and almost like the Gods depicted in the comic books. Of course! He too is God isn't he? The God of death!

Yum takes me aside, a gentle hand over my shoulder and says "We need to follow protocol and complete some formalities before I allow you the passport to roam-free in the celestial kingdom". I am perplexed. "You mean I won't be sent to heaven or hell?" Yum smiled

again. What a let down! Not once did he guffaw aloud. He said, "Most of you guys are under the misconception that heaven and hell are on this side of the divide. Heaven and hell are actually situated on your Earth itself. If you have lived badly, your next life will begin in a godforsaken place. Say a slum like Kurla." WOW! Yum is savvy. He knows about slums of Kurla. Yum continues "If you have lived your life well, then your next life begins with a golden spoon in your mouth. Say a posh locality like Colaba." Hmm, he is not THAT savvy after all. Colaba is passé. The sum and essence being that I shall be on roam-free and completely free! I planned to see all those things not possible from Earth. Like Jupiter, Mars, maybe Mercury and even the Sun. I will take a call on inter-galactic missions or travels once I assess these nearby journeys.

"Come, let's do a quick review of your past life so that we can chalk out your future life on Earth". Yum jolted me back to.. reality. I was about to say Earth and suddenly realized that I am an NRE (Non-Resident Earthling). "What is this review?" I asked. "Well, we run through your past life on Earth and we give you the freedom to change anything in your growing-up phase; anything that you would have done differently, if you were given a second chance to do such a thing." Actually, I quite liked the idea. And thus began my review.

I looked at my birth in a Pathare Prabhu household; a decent set of parents; a decent bungalow in Khar, a decent set of relatives. Would I change anything there? Well... maybe a couple of relatives here and there; but really it didn't matter anyway. They went their own ways and faded from my life. And within one year of my birth I got whisked away from Mumbai to Junagadh and after a couple of years, on to Ajmer. My dad was a government employee and had a job that involved transfers. Now this is something I would have most certainly changed if I could. My formative years



were spent in an underdeveloped town of a, then underdeveloped State. It was like beginning a game with a handicap. Part of a child's education comes from his surroundings. My surroundings were not conducive for rapid progress. I think those golden six years of my beginning were lost in the sluggish, backward environs of Junagadh and Ajmer and perhaps retarded my growth as I did not have the opportunities to observe a fast paced life, which Mumbai has always been. Another major loss was the disconnection with Marathi literature and Marathi culture. My education began in Hindi medium and here again the richness of English and Marathi was sacrificed.

But, I think I gained spiritually. I was always in contact with nature and was fascinated by the vegetable and animal kingdoms. I am perhaps a rare breed of city guys who has enjoyed a roti and radish on the back of a buffalo, wrestled with donkeys, collected honey from beehives, plucked fruits from wild trees directly and drunk goat's milk freshly taken out of a goat in front of my eyes. I have enjoyed the flavours of small-town life; like smoking a beedi at the age of four. The other direct benefit was that I spent my whole childhood with my mother without having to share her with any relatives, friends or social circles because there weren't any. But when I look at it now, despite the proximity to nature and mom, I would still change my surroundings to a progressive place like Mumbai.

We relocated to Mumbai when I was in the fourth. Convent school brought along with it difficulties of English; my vocabulary being limited to "yes" and "no". Quite obviously, school results were nothing to talk about as there was no comprehension due to lack of understanding of English. Mom was diligently tracking my progress with her instinct. In an astute observation and decision, mom put me in the hands of Mr. Malhari Rane popularly known in our community as "Rane Master" and to the near and dear ones as "Pappa". The first "strong" influence in my life was Pappa. If I could change anything in my life it would be advancing his influence over my life. A simple,

disciplined soul if ever there was one, he brought order in my chaotic education. A constant failure in mathematics, I started scoring high percentages and with that my popularity among school friends increased. This bolstered my confidence and changed my approach towards education, work and life. Would I change my school? No way! Mom was an institution for me. Even when my mathematics marks improved, she noticed that I was not so good in languages. One fine evening she brought for me a book from the library. "Lassie the sheep dog" by Enid Blyton! I got hooked! Life was never the same again. English became easy to understand. expressions fluidized and life became a cakewalk. Would I change anything? Sure! I would rewind the advent of Enid Blyton in my life at a much earlier age and fast track my learning process.

College life was fun and stress. Fun in academics and the extra-curricular and stress at home as dad had retired mid-way through college. An adjustment in career plan was imperative but the physical and mental stresses of limited resources were not quite strong enough to dampen the spirit of youth, the thrill of adolescence and the sudden sense of responsibility as I initiated into adulthood. Would I change anything in my college life? I guess not!

Working life began in right earnest. Bosses were powerful influences in shaping the career. One boss was outstanding and stands out as the builder of my career. A difficult, scheming man who would have scaled dizzy heights if he were a more humane character! But what an enterprising individual! Sharp, resourceful, tireless, relentless, meticulous-to-a-fault, practical and a brutal taskmaster! Wouldn't want another boss as he taught nuances and tricks in navigating through professional and personal life. If I were to grow up again in professional life, he would be the boss I would seek out.

In adult life there are four milestones that I shall never ever forget and all four were associated with meeting people. A major

influence in my life after "Pappa" was Swami Chinmayananda in the year 1989 when I was thirty three years old. Seven days of attending his discourses on Upanishads and Geeta and I came out with a completely transformed outlook in life. A Pathare Prabhu is not merely a non-vegetarian, he is a carnivore. I was that! With job stability and a few coins to spare, I had picked up society's trendy symbols. A burning white roll with a curling blue smoke was threatening to become a life-long companion. Blender's pride had become my pride too. Those magical seven days with Swamiji and a personal discussion later, I came out squeaky clean. A vegetarian Pathare Prabhu who doesn't smoke and drink, emerged and remained so till date. Would I change anything? Sure! I would want to meet Swami Chinmayanada much, much earlier; maybe even during my school days and reshape the course.

About ten years later, another big influence came in the form of a Vaastu Shastri from Chennai. A factory designed by me just would not produce. Since I was, and still am, a firm believer in science and management techniques, I was proud of my creation except for the fact that it was a failure as it did not deliver what it was meant to. Someone suggested the name of Mr. Venkatesan, a manager with Sumeet Mixers, as a Vaastu Consultant. Reluctantly, I agreed because the suggestion came from the boss and more importantly, my product was deemed a failure. This guy, about 7 years younger, attired in a simple checked shirt and trousers walked with me to the plant with a compass in hand, As soon as he entered, he turned around and asked, "Who designed this factory?" My chest puffed up and I announced rather pompously, "I did!" He smiled and congratulated me. My chest became puffier. Then he said, "Never demolish this factory". Now I was smiling from ear to ear and wanted to hear more praise. "Why?" I asked. With a completely straight face he replied, "This is a classic example of how a factory should not be built". My gas balloon deflated with a big whoosh! Mr.

Venkatesan recommended some changes and I blindly implemented them. BINGO! The factory started producing immediately! It introduced me to a whole new world of magnetism and Vaastu and it's influence on day-to-day life. So much so that I associated with Mr. Venketasan on a few more occasions and became a student and practitioner of Vaastu Shastra. I wish Vaastu was known to me much earlier in life. I could have made several corrections. Will I learn Vaastu Shastra if I were to relive again? Redundant question! Let's move on.

I met Sumita as a twenty seven year old, budding Ayurveda doctor sometime in the year 2001/02. If ever I have seen any magician, she is one. Her ability to diagnose ailments simply by feeling the pulse, is astounding. She was a visiting practitioner at my retail pharmacy for few years and I had the good fortune of witnessing the weave of her magic first hand. Hopeless cases, patients given up by allopaths came to her and went healthier and happier. Would I change anything if I were to relive? As far as meeting Sumita is concerned, nothing!

The year 2005 brought about one of the biggest influence in my life in the shape and form of Brahmavidya, an ancient Indian science for healthier, happier and successful life. Six years down the line I have qualified to teach the basic course of Brahmavidya. Would I wish anything different were I to relive my life? MOST CERTAINLY YES! I would wish for Brahmavidya in my life from my age of ten. Not earlier, because Brahmavidya rules allow for Children's Course from the age of ten upwards. If anything has changed my life as dramatically as Swami Chinmayananda did twenty two years ago, it has been Brahmavidya. I was a regular pill-popper. A tinge of running nose, a hint of fever, a whiff of cough or any disease condition and I would be popping one pill after another. That I am a pharmacist and own my retail pharmacy made it that much simpler for me to be popping pills. I am happy to say that from the year 2007, I have not consumed even a single tablet; not even a Crocin. The entire credit is to the practice of Brahmavidya and its



principal propagator, Mr. Jayant Divekar.

You must be wondering what happened to my dad who was not around when my mom and Suhas dada were smiling at me in my dream at the beginning of this article. As I was about to wake up, dad arrived and I saw him smiling briefly too. This quite fits the pattern as dad was always on out-station jobs and was never around in shaping my life and career in a direct way. He was indirectly there as a figure of up-righteousness, hard work, discipline and

generosity. If I could change anything about my growing up, I would love to have a more respectful relationship with my elders, a more harmonious relationship with my friends and colleagues and a softer approach in life with all its shades of grey. I think I tried to live a lot in the black and the white.

You must also be wondering why I have not referred to my wife and daughter! Keep wondering! I wouldn't change them for anything in this world.

Growing Up Again!

–Mrs. Aparna Sameer Vijayakar

Really an interesting topic ,in fact an amusing thought ;

A process which begins the moment our mums know of our micropresence within them ...

A process that will not end till death do us apart .

It is a lifetime achievement process...trying our level best to grow upagain and again and yet again .

Today scans determine with proof that we have attained certain "specific "weight, : in times gone by ,it was like, the to –be – mum has filled out very nicely

Every single person who comes to know about the Thumbelina in mum's tum is interested in our growing up

U know ,the moment the tiny creature comes out ,yowling and confused , the aaji is already planning baarse ani munj and then you have "babdya kadhi motha honar re ani kadhi aaji barobar bolnar!" Another shove towards growing up . "sonya ,kadhi re aaji aajobancha haath dharun park madhye firayala yenaar...?" "The height of pushing the baby further up the growth ladder is obviously the sibling who wants to race the older one in everything 'dada'paan and 'tai'paan makes sure the growth is fast and furiousand irreversible ..you cannot behave like a four year old that you are ,simply because "small baby will say dada vedaa aahe ...let him take the cycle ,you are his tai/dada na ..?.....!so a baby of 4 has grown up !

and how !!!

Is there no end to our growing up ?

There is this period of growing up when we want to show we are grown up ...therein lies our immaturity . A stage that thankfully (for parents) slips away just as it slid in.

Do we ever get tired of growing up ? No ,as it is that beautiful process which we are aware of but not in control of .

The lovely carefree growing up as we skip , dance, cry, feel hurt ,get embarrassed, act the fool ,sing tunelessly ,tease and get teased ,diet mindlessly . And we never ever are consciously stepping in another fascinating grown up role....that of a responsible professional ...we just transform like a pupa to a chrysalis....awaiting self realization ,of having to grow ,assume responsibilities...

With this awareness comes a lot of freedom and suddenly we are actually enjoying our moments of GROWING UP ..

Tell me dear friends , can we now stop growing ...? Certainly not .! yesterday we were growing up to set a role model for the younger siblings..... today we have grown up to comfort and hold the very hand which helped us to steady our toddling first steps

Does this growing up ever going to stop ?

The sunbai has just come in from the doctor . what does she have to say ...?

Yes guys , we have got this lovely chance to grow up again with our new tiny family member



on the way ...

To see again simple, natural things through fresh unspoilt sight, experience small wonders as if they have never ever been experienced beforeexpress wonder & start guessing again "aajoba, who has tied that mango on the

tree .."? aaji, how could you ever have been a baby? aajoba, please don't tell aai I broke the window paneso, here we are again growing upto act as a shield, an encyclopaedia.....but this is the growing up what everybody looks forward to

Growing Up Again!!!!

– Deepashry Sudeep Kothare

"Grow up! Grow up!" is an oft – heard cliché in our formative years. Little did we comprehend at that point in time, the cache (hidden) pile of wisdom in that repeated utterance. Caught up in the whirlpool of intolerance of our "should's" and "have to's", acceptance is erased out. When we clutch resistance to our chests and vow never to change....we cement ourselves into a situation, attitude or pain. Remember always, our attitude determines our altitude.

Now, the "Growing up again", I'm referring to here (in my experience) is not giving up or lapsing into hopeless resignation. In order to be our most creative selves and develop our potential, we need to accept the responsibility of carving our own niche, remain flexible and willing to change the unique abilities that are best suited to us. It is having the wisdom to know when to say "voila!" How can I have the peace of mind in the face of this? Fueled by a social belief that we need approval from others "to be ok'!", we scurry around hunting for "self –esteem" from outside suppliers. Will this work? Of course, we need people to appreciate us but our primary source of "growing up again" is to support and approve ourselves. We definitely must not overlook our shortcomings or give a "self –pat" for being nasty. That doesn't work either. A learner who is in loving response to a respected teacher simultaneously... a teacher and a learner.... Not as an errant child in need of punishment. Accepting the fact that we are responsible for our own

lives is incredibly empowering- this task being creative and productive... honors and embraces our queries and trusts that if we allow..... the best answers will eventually evolve.

Let's wrestle with the demon of low self-esteem and disallow our hearts to break! Let's not wait until eternity to accept 'who we are'...let's do it right now!. The magic mantra is "NOW"!! (Not Over the Week-end for sure ...dear procrastinating minds, please!...) .Our lives are a constant parade of paradigm shifts.....some inspiring and exciting wanting us to grab our baton n jump in front of a band n shout for joy....others might resemble closely a funeral cortege. Befriending a "grow up again" is a comforting philosophy for us to work toward. Imagine, what if the caretaker of an aquarium never changed the water in the tank? The fish would die attempting to glean oxygen from a stagnant and used – up source....the water change helps the fish to circulate and thrive in their habitat. Without change, we would stagnate too.

We, only, are the authors of our thoughts which give rise to (in order) our feelings, attitudes, actions, personality which finally shape our destiny. Great, ain't it? Changes make us grow, evolve, become more flexible, more resilient and more confident....if we trust ourselves with heaps of "self – worth"we can over time easily flutter gently n cheerfully in Nature's breeze. The very knowledge that I'm in charge of my feelings is one of the most life-enhancing realizations...I am a total optimist



n happily cherish this priceless possession.

I choose to expect the GOLDEN BEST AT ALL TIMES...how does it work for you, dear readers?. Having the power to reframe my reality, I fully appreciate my life with its variations...when we are on the threshold of a decision, we tend to oscillate between responsibility and seriousness of life which shuttles our S-O-H (hey guys....no inclinations of leading you into a laboratory'Sense Of Humor' is what I intend to say) off into a cold storage where it goes into lack of use....Hey friends.....so let's grow up again!....let's lighten upbubble rather than grumble...sometimes...our funny bone n our zest for life gets buried under fear of ridicule or rejection.

Feminism called upon me to have the courage for growing up again – discover n exercise my womanly strength...unafraid of pain as it's immeasurable and invariably self – drawn.. It prompted me to weed out unnecessary 'can'ts' and 'won'ts' from my mental schedule n translate my actions into a

wondrous, nourishing, fulfilling and deserving language for a healthier n happier existence. It is necessary to drain out our 'shoulds' with empowering words like 'can', 'will', 'choose to', 'want to'. Stop living under the tyranny of one's 'shoulds'....Then, one is bound to feel more loving, more joyful n one's worthy life will certainly not be laced with resentment n hopelessness.

In fact, every moment of my cheerful life 'I'M GROWING UP AGAIN N AGAIN"--- slicing out for me a newer realm of brighter lifepenning on a fresher slate of experience. I sincerely hope n pray that my verbal bouquet of philosophical scribble ushers in a happier n more prosperous Diwali, for my very dear patient reading audience,.....also it furnishes you with a stronger fibrous mental nourishment ...which can be utilized to design a more durable and satisfying net to comfort n support you as and when you need it.....Yo!let's grow up again and absolutely enjoy countless 'SMILEY' times.....!!!!

†



Growing Up Again

–Gaurang Kirtikar

Who wants to grow up ? Frankly, growing is fun but 'growing up' to my mind is age, a load of responsibilities, worries, working for living and a hoard of such things . So my motto is "I refuse to grow up" I believe in "Vrudhatve nij Shaishavas japane" .

I was on a pilgrimage (read as Trek) to Hemkund Sahib recently. I was all excited as I was resuming the trekking activity after 17 long years. I started from Chandigarh (where I live) and joined the Jatha of Sikh pilgrims at Roorkee enroute to Hardwar and Hrishikesh. We stopped at Hrishikesh for 'Mattha tekoing' that is paying obeisance since we were a sikh jatha, at the Gurudwara . On the way to Gobind Ghat our first halt was at Kirtinagar in Srinagar (UK) at a lovely Resort going by the name "River View Resort" . Next morning we went thru picturesque winding roads to Gobind Ghat. On the way we had to stop briefly for 'Gate' at Joshi Math. This is the famous place from where you branch off to Auli for skiing.

The mountain roads being narrow, they follow a one-way traffic system for which gates are installed at strategic places like Joshi Math, Pandukeshwar & Badrinath. Unidirectional, traffic is allowed to flow at regular time intervals.

The road was treacherous to say the least. Plenty of landslides , lengths of road washed away and the driver steering us skillfully through dangerous terrain. How dangerous a terrain can be , one has to experience this to believe me. One moment you are on a good road and next moment you are gaping at huge gaps in the road and the bus goes precariously on almost three wheels. At least that is the feeling I got. Finally we reached Gobind Ghat.

Gobind Ghat is a small hamlet situated on the gurgling shores of Hem Ganga on the way to Badrinath. This is the base for the revered shrine of Hem Kund Sahib. A Gurudwara at a height of 4329 meters or 14200 feet. A

Gurudwara exists here which is called Govind Ghat.

Hemkund (Snow Lake) Sahib, as the name itself suggests, is a high-altitude lake (4329 m) surrounded by seven huge snow-covered mountains, which are collectively called Hemkund Parvat. The Holy Flag or the 'Nishan Sahib' is flown atop each parvat. Close to the lake is a sacred Gurudwara that is a pilgrimage centre for Sikhs and Hindus from all over the world. It is said that Shri Guru Govind Singh Ji (the Tenth Guru of the Sikhs) meditated on the very banks of this lake where a number of sages and religious teachers from the Hindu mythology, including Rishi Medhasa of the Markandeya Purana and Lakshman, the brother of Lord Ram performed penance. Besides the Gurudwara, you can also see a temple here. The lake is the source of the Laxman Ganga (alternatively called Hem Ganga) stream that merges with the Pushpawati stream flowing from the Valley of Flowers, at Ghangaria (Gobind Dham). From this point on, the river is called Laxman Ganga .

A very popular trekking destination, Hemkund is a 20 km trek from Govindghat. The trek takes one through pine forests where rhododendron (burans), wild roses, ferns and alpine flowers abound. With breathtaking views of the surging waters of the Lakshman Ganga, the last five kilometres of the trek entails a steep climb from Ghangaria, which is a base for visiting Hemkund. It is an awesome trek route made so with the gurgling river on one side and steep mountain on the other with scenic beauty throughout. The lake is about two kilometers in circumference. It has clear, still water mirror images of the Saptashringa peaks (5500 m) that surrounds it.

One can visit Hemkund only between May and September. During these days, you'll find the water still, has shards of ice floating in it,



glinting in the sun with the rock- strewn banks of the lake covered in moss and the flowers in bright bloom

The valley of Flowers in full bloom is a sight to cherish. Almost 2000 species of flowers bloom in this 20 km stretch of the valley. One has to go on foot, horses are not allowed inside the valley. The flora changes many times during season. It's a photographer's delight.

This imposing star-shaped structure of stone and concrete masonry is on the shores of the lake. An outlet behind the Gurudwara is source of the Lakshman Ganga.

Temple of Lord Lakshman

A small temple nearby is dedicated to Lord Lakshman, probably the only one which does not have Ram & Seetaji with him.

I had done this trek earlier with little difficulty way back in 1993 and I was trying today. The sites were same picturesque nature, abundantly beautiful, the path was better compared to my earlier foray. But alas, though the spirits were same and high, the body was not giving equal support. The route which I had trudged so easily was being difficult. The 15

kilometers to Gobind Dham seemed like 150 kms. I had started with the group around 8 AM from Gobind Ghat and reached Gobind Dham (Ghangaria) by 4 PM earlier. Today the starting time remained same but the end was nowhere near in sight. The last 2 kms or so became too much and I was fortunate to get a Horse up to Ghangaria. Euphoria prevailed among the group members who had reached earlier that I had reached albeit on Horse back. The time was 7 PM. And this was the moment, as Avdhut Gupte says "heech tee vel, hach to kshan", I realized that I have GROWN UP.

Needless to say the rest of the trek to Hemkund was continued the next day on Horse back only. Yes, I could visit the holy shrine, but not on my own feet totally. I had to take assistance. In the afternoon we returned to Govind Dham. Stayed the night in tents at Garhwal mandal Vikas Nigam's Hotel.

Next morning I walked back to Gobind Ghat and to Badrinath by bus.

Yes I could complete the Trek with some assistance and suddenly felt Grown Up and old.

I did not like this "Growing UP again" to say the least.

GROWING ALL AGAIN

– Anil P. Rao

My tiny tot grandson, Varun, sitting in the balcony of flat at Irvine, Los Angeles, watched daily an array of cars lined up systematically in a perpendicular manner and his infant brain also followed the same ideology when he too lined up his toy cars in the same manner. His vision led me to backage where I am embroiled now.

In Mumbai and Pune where I dwell, I am aghast to see two wheelers and cars meticulously parked, no bumper to bumper as I find roads absolutely clean bereft of any potholes or any unscientific speed breakers lined up on the roads. Oh! how clean roads are, washed daily by municipal employees and watching them dedicately attending daily to removal of garbage to keep the city absolutely

clean and tidy. How sensitive are the municipal employees towards hygiene so that we have long said bye bye to viral diseases and now breathing throughout the whole year fresh air and are so healthy. Oh! This all happening before my eyes.

No masjid, temple, church nor any religious place obstructing the flow of traffic with roads wide having 10 to 12 lanes, smooth traffic flow, enjoyable risk free driving. A park at every nook and corner of city, lush greenfields, trees line up systematically on both sides of roads, a feeling of driving in Kashmir Valley. Our dedicated servants of people, Corporators, MLAs and MPs all showing dedication to public work, not accepting any bribe or 'CHIRI-MIRI' but attending to any query and easily



approachable even on mobile too. Educational institutions flushed with intellectual and learned staff giving full devotion to campus vocational training and not encouraging joining coaching classes or taking tuitions. In fact, taking tuitions and joining coaching classes is below grade, talking or thinking of it is blasphemy. All government work attended fast and resolved too, with no bait or bribery. Every public servant is devoted and thinks only of his nation, BharatMata. What a change, in which I

am living and growing all again. People mix up in social gatherings, no mention of caste, creed or religion. Caste totally uprooted and not found in dictionary. Everyone says, only 'I AM INDIAN'. BHARATMATA NARA heard everywhere. Every citizen looks at other as a human being. Love and peace pervading.

Oh! how I wish to grow like this all over again, a world of heaven only, no hell seen. At this moment, my wife uttered, 'It would be SATYAYUG'. Really I wish it would be.

Growing Up Again

–Aishwarya Velkar

One lazy Saturday afternoon, I was in a retrospective mood. I asked myself "When was the last time I did something just for the sake of doing it and not because I gained something from it??" After several soul searching seconds I came up with an answer that was really pitiable. It was when I was a little girl, still caught up in a fanciful world of fairies and princes and when I used to dance blithely in the rain without a care in the world!! Nowadays, I don't step out in the rain for the fear of falling sick and missing college! Make no mistake, I am not that kind of a person who whines about how unfair life is, because I firmly believe that if anyone can mess up your life it's YOU!

We live in this mad, mad world where you are considered a failure if you don't get into a top notch engineering or medical college at 18, if you don't land up in a "prestigious" job at 22, don't get married by 26, have kids, don't have a BIG house, at least one car and a huge bank balance meant to raise quite a few eyebrows by 50!! Is this what life is all about? Heaven forbid, if someone tries the less trodden path that person is condemned to be a maverick or even a mad delinquent! In the process of trying to win the rat race of life we lose the little things that give us joy and make life worth living and ultimately lose ourselves too. As I was writing this article I realised that I was missing out on the simple pleasures of life and was being sucked into the quagmire of routine life.

Every morning there was this little fella, a toddler of about two who waves cheerfully to me as I race past him to go to school. I have but spared him a cursory smile. I have never stopped to even know his name as I race to get into the school lest I get a late remark! I can't carry a tune to save my life but I remember how much fun I had when I use to croon (off-key of course!!) my favourite songs. I resolved then, I don't want to simply exist, I want to LIVE!! I would rather try something new and fail rather than sit back and wonder "What if?" There was this poem called 'Leisure' that went along the lines of "What is this life if, full of care We have no time to stand and stare..". That was then I decided. I will never take the simple things in life for granted and let the little girl in me die. These poignant lines just about sum what I felt. "Give me some sunshine, Give me some rain, Give me another chance, For I want to grow up once again..."

विस्मरण

आजोबांना झालं असं विस्मरण

शेजारणीला समजू लागले आजी विनाकारण
आजी म्हणाली, "मलाही आणता येतो आव,
उखाण्यात मी घेते आता शेजाऱ्याचंच नाव."

-डॉ. सुमन नवलकर



"Growing Up Again !"

–Ajit Mankar

Generally speaking , as I glance through my by-gone years , I tend to classify the same into 3 stages.

Firstly,between the ages of childhood and the end of my teens , like any other boy , I used to feel my father was the greatest hero !.The reason for this feeling was that I was well protected from the rough-tides of life.

Then came the second stage of life ever since becoming an adult till the age of 50 .The burden of family responsibilities gradually fell on me and with it came the awareness of achievements of the all time great idols from different walks of life such as Shivaji Maharaj, Lokmanya Tilak, Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Maulana Azad, Vallabh Bhai Patel, Subhash Babu Bose, Nelson Mandella, Don Bradman, C.K.Naidu, Mustaq Ali ,Vijay Merchant, Vijay Hazare, Poly Umrigar, Chandu Borde, Sunil Gavaskar, Dr.Homi Bhabha,

Dr.Sethna, Dr. Abdul Kalam, Field Marshal Gen.Manekshaw,JRD Tata and the likes, just to name a few although , ofcourse , the list does not end here.The inspirational ideologies and achievements of all these immortals were simply fascinating to drive middle-aged life of a common man like me.

However,as the age advanced further,the turns and twists of the past life crossed my mind further maturity of thought and wisdom.The time has come when the advise of Bhagwan Krishna to Arjuna in Bhagwat Gita now reins supreme in my mind .

" Do what you have been destined to with sincerity in this life , irrespective of expecting the worldly rewards.The Ultimate Moksha is the best heavenly reward and goal for the good deeds of the present human life ! "

This being my philosophy of life , I for one , do not look forward to "Growing Up Again !"

Growing up again....

–Nilesh Nayak

On the 17th of August 2011, I received a mail from Sanjana to send a write up on "Growing up again". I felt a bit confused as I was not very clear on the relevance of the topic. I immediately picked up my phone and spoke to Sanjana. I asked her what she expected from me on this topic and prompt came the reply.... "Let your imagination go wild Nileshmama. You can interpret the topic as you feel appropriate."

Wow now that was a great opportunity for me to start thinking and pen down my thoughts as I went down the memory lane.....

I was born on 7th April 1961 in a middle class family. My mind does not permit me to remember the first few years of my life from infancy to childhood. Yes but from the photographs that I see from the old albums, I can make out that I was the darling of my parents being the only child. The "Vadi" photographs of mine showing

me garlanded with floral decorations on me sitting on a wooden bicycle suggest that they cherished and loved me. Every family member had picked me in the arms and taken a photograph. Oh it must have been a happy moment since I see myself smiling all the way.

My childhood days:

Some of the memorable events from my childhood that I remember are....

1. The Moon Beam Nursery at Dadar - I started going to school here. I remember how I used to cry at the top of my voice from the balcony to call on my parents to take me back home. I was then staying at my maternal Aji – Ajoba's place.
2. Then one fine day my parents brought me to stay at Chowpatty in a chawl – the famous Saraswatibai Chawl at Huges road. I was admitted to one of the best schools of Mumbai – The Hill Grange High School at Peddar road. By



this time I had grown into a naughty child playing all the mischief in school. I remember right on the first day my dad showed me the School bus and told me that I would soon be joining this bus to come home. I mistook him that I should come home by this bus from the first day itself and sat in the bus. The driver went on his usual round and finally saw that I was the only child left in the bus and he did not have a clue of where to drop me. My dad on the other hand went to my school to pick me up. He was shocked to see me missing from school. I saw the bus crossing Huges road and I could see my house. I immediately called the cleaner of the bus and told him to drop me there. The driver refused since he was confused if I was telling him the truth and took me back to school. I could see my anxious dad waiting for me in school and his ordeal of missing me finally came to an end. Not to forget the pasting that I got for this great adventure.

3. I remember we used to make pellets out of paper and hit them with a rubber band. One fine day I used this trick on one of my classmates and it hit his eye. The next day he complained to my class teacher with a swollen eye. Apart from getting my first cane in school I got my first remark in my diary and was asked by the school teacher to get my dad's signature on it. I did not know how to approach this. I gathered courage and showed the diary to my dad. My dad gave a stern look at me and that was enough for me to get the signal that I am now going to face a tough time. He made me write 100 times in my notebook that I was sorry for what I had done and that I would not repeat the same in future. He made me show this to my class teacher and get her signature on it. Now this was like a double edged sword. Teacher asking dad to sign on my diary and then dad asking teacher to sign on my punishment. However I was loved by my teachers as academically I used to always get good marks in my studies.

4. I remember in my vacations and weekends I used to stay at my maternal Aji – Ajoba's place. I cherish those memories with my cousin Nandita and her friends. We used to play "Bhatukli" at home. In the evening we used to play "Daba Ice

Spice", "Drop the gun", "Chor Police", "Hitti Kitti" etc. They were all outdoor games and by the time we came home in the evening, we used to be hungry for dinner.

5. I remember going to Baby Atya's place at Pune and enjoying my vacations with my paternal cousins Sandip, Seema, Twarita, Kiran, Kshama, Mangala, Lata, Dilipdada and Naren. Oh how I wish these days would come again. Today due to egos, misconceptions, prejudices and many more, we have forgotten these golden moments.

6. I remember my chawl friends Nandu, Ninad, Deepak, Sainath, Mahesh, Atul, Kishor, Vidya, Suji, Neelam, Raji, Satish, Santosh, Shalan, Rashmi, Rupa, Shobha, Priya, Hima, Haseena, Pardon me if I have forgotten some names. We used to play marbles.... "Raja Rani", "Koiba", "Triangles". We played cricket in our "Galli". We played "Badam Satti", "Ladis", and "Jhabbu"- the famous card games. The fights that we had and then again the next day forgetting the past and playing together again. I remember the Diwali celebrations where all of us used to do "Jagran", light crackers, go for a movie on the penultimate day of Diwali and walk down from Lotus cinema at Worli to our chawl at Chowpatty. Oh what a great experience was this. I wish I could cherish these memories again.

7. In 1969 when I was in the 4th standard, I remember my dad buying our first asset "The Telephone". This was the first telephone in our building and also our adjoining building. I remember we used to call out people from one end to the other to come and answer their calls. I was also fortunate to get the first TV in our building in the year 1974, a black and white "Televista". I remember how my neighbors used to flock my 12 x 12 room to see "Chaaya Geet", "Phool Khile Hai Gulshan, Gulshan" and the "Sunday Movie". These events brought us all together and the bondage that we had was unimaginable. Somehow I find this lacking today..... I mean the bondage.

My young days:

These were the golden days of my life. I was studying in Bhavan's College just opposite my Chowpatty residence. Having received



education from a Cambridge school, I always had an edge over my friends in studies. My extracurricular activities such as being the cricket captain, GS and Chairman of college helped me to be the centre of attraction in college. This gained me popularity in college. I had a huge circle of friends (mostly girl friends Ha ha ha)

I remember the college get-together in which I participated in plays, dances, "kavita" competitions etc. Today when I see the famous advertisement of Airtel "har ek friend jaroori hota hai" I get goose bumps as it reminds me of the great enjoyment that I had in this period. But we did not have mobile phones, laptops or computers in our days. I thank god for this. We could invest our time in meeting friends physically and developing relationships.

I remember being an office bearer in Rotaract Club which helped me expand my horizons in social life. Helping the blind, disabled, and raising funds for the welfare of such communities was our objective in this

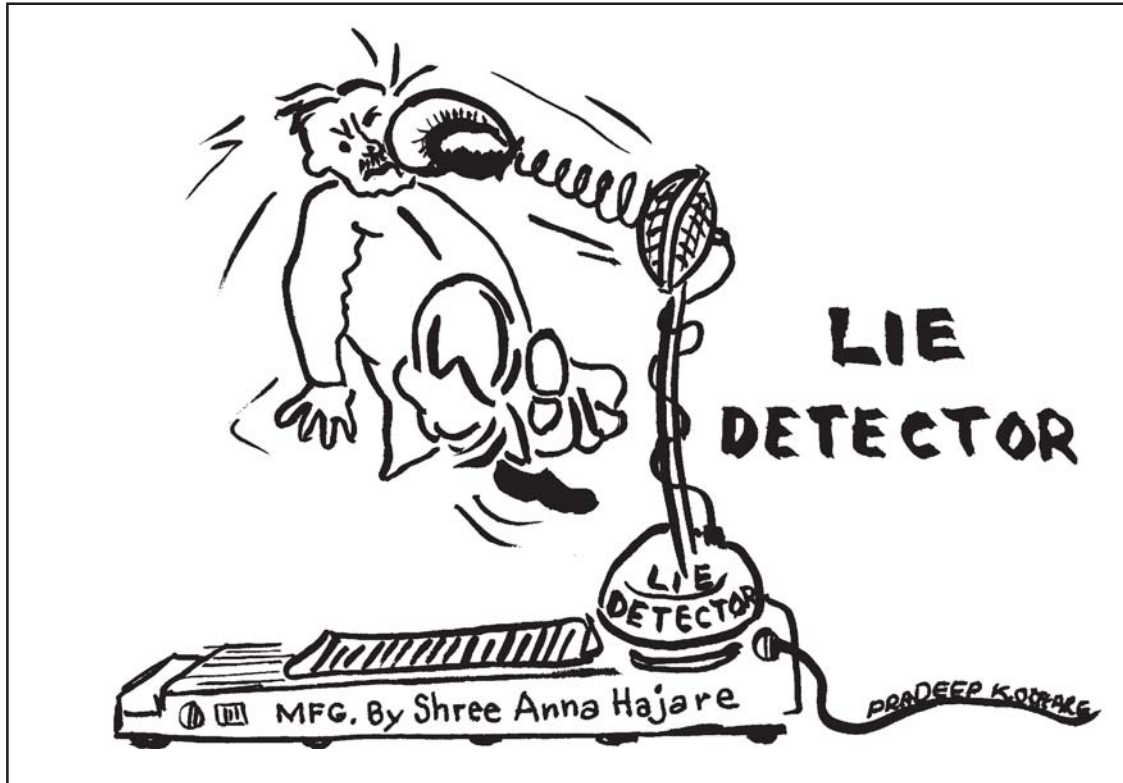
social service.

It was during this period that I became the member of "Bal Bhavan". The plays and dances organized by Kundan Agaskar along with Bela, Sandeep, Nilima, Tushar, Sujata, Netra and others can never be forgotten. I remember the night outs after the rehearsals and the celebrations after the success of our events.

It was during this period that I met Anuja (now Nutan) my wife. The social function of Bal Bhavan brought us together. I remember my cousins teasing me "AT" meaning Anuja Talpade and "Limca" since I had offered limca to her while proposing. We were steady for 6 years waiting for both of us to complete our academic careers before getting married in 1987. Oh How I wish I could live these moments once more.

My professional days:

I passed out my MSc in 1984 and immediately the very next day I was fortunate to get my first job in a company called Serdia – a French pharmaceutical company. I started my career as a medical representative.



In 1986, I joined Burroughs Wellcome as a scientific officer. My dedication and interest in the selling profession earned me many laurels in the form of merit awards in this period. These successes gave me my first promotion as Area Manager in 1991 based at Nagpur. It was a mixed feeling for me. On one side I was extremely happy that I had become a Manager at a fairly young age. On the other side I was equally nervous as I was going to leave Mumbai and my parents for the first time and stay in a new city. I was ably supported by my wife Nutan who encouraged me to take the leap. I had a six month old daughter Nishita and a four year old Nivedita accompanying me. But my anxiety was short lived. Soon I realized that there is a life outside Mumbai. I enjoyed my job and was involved in extensive travelling across Maharashtra. This helped me gain a lot of vital experience to further grow in my career.

In 1992, I was promoted as Product Manager and brought back to Mumbai. It was a delight for my parents as we had a reunion of our family. Life was difficult for me as a product manager since I did not have a professional marketing degree with me. I took up this challenge and joined NMIMS for post graduate degree in Marketing. I successfully completed this in 1995. This helped me to get promoted in my company to the post of Marketing Manager. It gave me a great sense of achievement.

In 1995 Burroughs Wellcome merged with Glaxo to form GlaxoWellcome. My success as marketing manager was rewarded and I was promoted as Sales Training Manager in 1997. It was a new segment for me that gave me the opportunity to shape peoples careers by using my Sales and Marketing experience. I found it extremely interesting and since then made training as my profession.

In 2000, GlaxoWellcome merged with SmithKlineBeecham to form GSK. There were huge job losses and I had to go through the agony of facing an interview once again for saving my job. Fortunately for me, I could not only retain my job but was promoted to Core Training Manager. My hunger for learning helped me to get another opportunity. I joined an



executive MBA course from S. P. Jain a premier institute in Mumbai. I passed this course in 2006 and was then promoted to Senior Manager in 2007.

In the same year I completed one more post graduation degree in Training and Development known as ISTD. This helped me to get a new job opening in Bayer as Head – Training and Organizational Development.

I could achieve all these professional achievements due to:

- The basic education provided by my parents and
- The support of my wife Nutan who always stood by my side and encouraged me to progress in my professional career.

I shall remain indebted to these people for ever in my life. Today I am quite satisfied with what I could achieve so far in my life. To top this all, I have been gifted by the almighty with two lovely daughters who have made me proud with their individual achievements. I am sure they have their own success stories to tell us in "Growing up again...."



भारतरत्न पं. भीमसेन जोशी

-पं. सुजन राणे, (प्लेन्सबरो, NJ)

भारतरत्न पंडित भीमसेन जोशी २४ जानेवारी २०११ या दिवशी कालवश झाले, ही बातमी भारतभर सर्व वृत्तपत्रांत व दूरदर्शन वाहिन्यांवर झळकली. ते कालवश झाले असे म्हणण्यापेक्षा त्यांनीच काळाला वश करून घेतलं असं बोलण्यात अतिशयोक्ती होणार नाही असं मला वाटतं. कारण गेली ६० वर्ष त्यांनी मैफिलीत अधिराज्य केलं होतं. त्यांच्या निधनाने मला



विशेष दुःख झालं याचं पहिलं कारण म्हणजे ते माझ्या गुरुंचे, पं. फिरोज दस्तूर यांचे गुरुबंधू होते. म्हणजे संगीताच्या दुनियेत जवळचं नातं होतं व दुसरं म्हणजे त्यांना पुण्याच्या कलाश्री बंगल्यात दोन महिन्यांपूर्वीच भेटायचं भाग्य मला लाभलं होतं. बंगल्यापर्यंत पोहोचायला मला उशीर झाला, परंतु एवढे थोर गवयी व्हीलचेअरवर बसून माझ्यासाठी थांबले होते. मला बोलले, “माफ करा. मला जास्त बोलवत नाही.” ही नम्रता त्यांच्या थोरपणाची साक्ष देत होती. मी त्यांच्या पायाला स्पर्श करून नमस्कार केला. त्यावेळी जयंत या त्यांच्या मोठ्या चिरंजीवांनी त्यांच्याबरोबर माझा फोटो काढला हे मी माझं परम भाग्य समजतो. अस्वस्थ प्रकृतीची चिन्हं स्पष्ट दिसत होती. पण इतक्या लवकर संगीताच्या दुनियेला सोडून जातील व जगातल्या त्यांच्या असंख्य चाहत्यांना हळहळत ठेवतील अशी पुसटशीसुद्धा कल्पना आली नाही. असो. गुरुच्या शोधार्थ वयाच्या १२/१३व्या वर्षी त्यांनी घर सोडलं. तासन्तास रियाझ केला. ह्या सर्व गोष्टी सर्वश्रुत आहेत. परंतु त्यांची गायकी का थोर होती याचा आढावा अशा वेळी घेण्याचा मोह टाळता येत नाही.

मी एक किराणा घराण्याचा गायक आहे आणि त्या दृष्टीने तरुण गाणाऱ्यांनी व शास्त्रीय संगीताच्या विद्यार्थ्यांनी अशावेळी पं. भीमसेन जोशींच्या गायकीकडे चिकित्सक व शिकण्याच्या दृष्टीने पहावं हाच या लेखाचा उद्देश आहे. किंबहुना पं. जोशींचं गाणं त्यांना मार्गदर्शक ठरावं हे मला प्रखरतेनं वाटतं. सर्वप्रथम त्यांच्या गाण्यात अशी आर्तता होती, की गाणं सुरू होताच ती श्रोत्यांच्या हृदयाचा ठाव घेई. श्रोत्यांचं मन अक्षरशः काबीज करून त्यांना दुसरा कुठलाही विचार करायला संधीच देत नसे. अगदी श्रोत्यांची एकाग्रता त्यांच्या गाण्यावर खिळवून टाकायची त्यांची ताकद होती. हा त्यांच्या गाण्याचा पहिला गुणधर्म व तो त्यांना कसा लाभला हे खचितच विचार करण्यासारखं आहे.

हिंदुस्थानी शास्त्रीय संगीतात खांसाहेब अब्दुल करीमखान यांच्यासारख्या अमर गवयांनी किराणा

गायकी हिंदुस्थानात घरोघरी पोहचवली. त्यांच्या हृदयस्पर्शी ध्वनिमुद्रिका 'गोपाला मेरी करुणा क्यूं नही आवे' (राग-सरपदा), 'पिया बिन नाही आवत चैन' (राग-झिझोटी), 'जमुनाके तीर' (राग-भैरवी) गेली ८० एक वर्ष अखंड भारतात लोक अजून ऐकतात. अशा करुणेनं भरलेल्या गायकीनं पं. भीमसेन जोशींना लहानपणापासून भारावलं. हीच करुणा भीमसेनजींच्या गाण्याच्या बुडाशी होती, ती त्यांना स्वस्थ बसू देत नव्हती. 'पिया बिन नाही आवत चैन' ही ध्वनिमुद्रिका लहानपणी एका दुकानात ऐकल्यापासून ती तळमळ त्यांच्या गाण्यात शेवटपर्यंत जणू काय प्रतिबिंबीत होत होती आणि तीच तळमळ श्रोत्यांना त्यांच्या गाण्याकडे अखेरपर्यंत खेचत होती. पं. भीमसेनजींच्या आर्ततेचा उगम खांसाहेबांच्या कारुण्यामध्येच आपल्याला सापडतो. ती आर्तता खांसाहेबांच्या मुख्य शिष्याकडून म्हणजे सवाई गंधर्वांच्याकडून अवगत केली.

सुरुवातीचा षड्ज (सा) लावतानासुद्धा त्या त्या रागातील मंद्र सप्तकातील मध्यम, पंचम, धैवत आणि निषाद किंवा मध्य सप्तकातील रिषभ आणि गंधार या सुरांची आस घेऊन ते त्यांचा 'सा' पक्का करत, असा अनुभव येतो. ते एकदम 'सा'वर आदळत नाहीत. इथेच ते श्रुतींना किती महत्त्व देत होते ते आपल्याला कळते. नुसत्या १२ सुरांनी (७ शुद्ध, ४ कोमल आणि १ तीव्र) राग बनत नाही. प्रत्येक रागात या श्रुतींना काही वेगळं स्थान आहे आणि त्याप्रमाणे एखादा राग गायला नाही तर तो राग हवा तसा कानाला लागत नाही. थोडक्यात जर एखादा राग त्या श्रुतींना चिकटून गायला नाही तर तो आपल्या मनाचा कब्जा घेऊ शकत नाही. इथेच आपल्याला भीमसेनजींच्या गाण्याचा दुसरा पैलू सापडतो आणि म्हणूनच त्यांचं गाणं येवढं प्रभावी होत होतं. केवळ पुस्तकात लिहिलेले सूर गाऊन राग होत नाही. त्या त्या रागांचा आत्मा त्यांच्या गाण्यात भिनला होता असं म्हणावं लागेल. अशा श्रुती सितार किंवा सारंगीसारख्या तंतुवाद्यात सापडतात. तेव्हा आलापीमध्ये श्रुतींना किती महत्त्व आहे हे लक्षात ठेवण्यासारखं आहे. थोडक्यात एखाद्या रागाचं स्वरूप उभं करायचं सामर्थ्य त्यांच्या गाण्यात होतं. कित्येकदा ते विलंबित चिजेचे शब्द पूर्ण न गाता तानेच्या आधारे श्रोत्यांच्या समोर रागाचं चित्र मांडायचे. इथे त्यांचं कौशल्य त्यांच्या समकालीन गवयांत दिसत नाही. अनेकदा ते चिजेचे शब्द स्पष्ट उच्चारत नसत. एकदा

तर त्यांनी चक्क आपला पत्ता गाऊन अस्थायी पूर्ण केली! असं असूनसुद्धा त्यांचं गाणं लक्षात रहायचं कारण ते त्या त्या रागातल्या सुरांना स्वतःला पूर्ण वाहून आपलं गाणं सादर करत असत.

भीमसेनजींच्या गाण्याचा तिसरा पैलू म्हणजे त्यांचा गंभीर व सुरेल आवाज. निसर्गाने बालगंधर्व व लता मंगेशकरांना गोड आवाज दिला व तो नाट्यसंगीताला आणि सिनेसंगीताला पोषक होता. परंतु हिंदुस्थानी शास्त्रीय संगीतासाठी आवाजात एक प्रकारचं वजन व जवार असावी लागते, नुसता गळ्यातून किंवा नाकातून आवाज काढून चालत नाही. मुस्लिम गवई म्हणतात त्याप्रमाणे "आवाज गले में रहना चाहिए।" बैठीकीच्या गाण्यात श्रोत्यांच्या मनावर गाणं चढवण्यासाठी धीरगंभीर आवाजाने सुरुवात करून हळुहळू तार सप्तकाच्या सुरांवर आघात करावा लागतो. ही किमया त्यांना चांगली साधली होती. अर्थात त्यांचा मुळातच आवाज बॅरिटोन होता, ही वेगळी बाजू आहे. पण त्यांनी अफाट मेहनत घेऊन तो तंबोच्यात कसा मिळवायचा यावर प्रभुत्व मिळवलं होतं. किराणा घराण्यात आवाज गोलाकाराने लावतात; पण केसरबाई केरकरांच्या गाण्याने प्रभावित होऊन आपला आवाज ते मोठ्याने व आकारात लावत.

त्यांच्या गाण्याची आणखीन एक बाजू म्हणजे त्यांनी शास्त्रोक्त संगीतापासून ते नाट्यसंगीत, भक्तीसंगीत व काही वेळा भावगीतापर्यंत आपलं गाणं समृद्ध केलं होतं. भक्तीसंगीतसुद्धा ते इतक्या तन्मयतेने गात असत, की ते हल्लीच्या तरुण गायकांना व शास्त्रीय संगीताच्या विद्यार्थ्यांना मार्गदर्शक व्हावं. 'इंद्रायणी काठी देवाची आळंदी', 'माझा भाव तुझे चरण' किंवा 'माझे माहेर पंढरी' ही भक्तीगीतं गाताना ते अक्षरशः आपल्या डोळ्यासमोर पंढरपूरचा विठोबा आणून

इलाज

कावळ्याच्या घरात कोकिळेचं बाळ
रडायचं आपलं तिन्ही त्रिकाळ
कावळी म्हणाली, "याचा बसलाय घसा,
गुळण्या केल्याशिवाय सुधारणार कसा?"
-डॉ. सुमन नवलकर





ठेवतात असं वाटायचं. 'कान्होबा तुझी घोंगडी चांगली' यात ते अगदी कळस गाठतात. 'जो भजे हरिको सदा वोही परम पद पायेगा' ही भैरवी गाऊन त्यांनी कित्येक बैठकी श्रोत्यांच्या मनात कायम केल्या आहेत. तेव्हा भक्तिसंगीत गाताना एकाग्रतेने व ईश्वराची मूर्ती डोळ्यासमोर आणूनच गाणाऱ्यांनी गायलं पाहिजे व ताल-मृदुंगाची साथ त्याला तेवढीच मजबूत असायला हवी; तरच ते श्रोत्यांपर्यंत पोहचते. भजनातले शब्द केवळ तालात गाऊन भजन यशस्वी होत नाही, त्यात गाणाऱ्याने त्याचा आत्मा ओतावा लागतो.

त्यांचा अखेरचा पैलू म्हणजे ते अत्यंत जिद्दीने व आत्मविश्वासाने गात असत. मला वाटते की जिद्द आणि आत्मविश्वास गाणाऱ्यात अतिशय महत्त्वाचा आहे, कारण त्याशिवाय त्यांचं गाणं लोकांपर्यंत पोहचत नाही. मी एक विशेष गवयी आहे व माझं गाणं लोकांना आवडणारच हा आत्मविश्वास आणि जिद्द त्यांच्यात कायमची जागरूक असायची. ह्या बाबतीत

त्यांचे कित्येक किस्से लोकांच्या परिचयाचे आहेत. त्यांच्या पेटीवादकाने, वालावलकरांनी सांगितलेला किस्सा मोठा गंमतीदार आहे. भारताच्या भूतपूर्व पंतप्रधान इंदिरा गांधी यांनी त्यांना जेवायचं आमंत्रण पाठवलं होतं. ते म्हणाले, "मी जरूर येईन, पण आपण जर स्वयंपाक कराल तर!" इंदिरा गांधींना त्यांच्यासाठी स्वयंपाक करणं भाग पडलं. यात गाणाऱ्याचा आत्मविश्वास व स्वाभिमान प्रखरतेनं जाणवतो. तसंच काही वर्षापूर्वी त्यांचं ठाण्याला गाणं होतं. तंबोरा जुळवायला त्यांना उशीर होत होता, त्यावर एक श्रोता मोठ्याने बोलला, "आम्ही कधी गाणं ऐकलं आहे की नाही?" भीमसेनजींनी हे ऐकल्यावर त्यांना तो अपमान सहन झाला नाही. त्यांनी आयोजकांना "त्या माणसाला हॉलच्या बाहेर ताबडतोब घालवलं तरच मी गाणं सुरू करीन" अशी अट घातली. तेव्हा त्या माणसाला हॉलच्या बाहेर घालवण्याशिवाय दुसरा मार्ग नव्हता. नक्की आठवत नाही, पण उस्ताद अमीरखाँचं आणि भीमसेनजींचं गाणं एकाच मंचावर कलकत्यात किंवा दुसऱ्या कुठल्यातरी शहरी होतं. अमीरखाँच्या शागीर्दानी काहीतरी युक्तिवाद करून त्यांचं गाणं भीमसेनजींच्या अगोदर ठेवलं. वास्तविक अमीरखाँ भीमसेनना ज्येष्ठ असल्यामुळे शिष्टाचाराच्या दृष्टीने त्यांचं गाणं नंतर ठेवायला हवं होतं. भीमसेनजींची फजिती करण्याचा त्यांचा हेतू होता. अमीरखाँंनी राग दरबारी कानडा अगदी जमून गायला व त्यांचं गाणं झाल्यानंतर भीमसेनना विंगेत विचारण्यात आले की ते काय गाणार? त्यावर ते म्हणाले की ते दरबारी कानडा पेश करणार. तेव्हा आयोजक एकमेकांकडे विस्मयाने बघायला लागले. भीमसेननी त्यांना कारण विचारल्यावर ते म्हणाले की अमीरखाँंनी तो राग नुकताच गायला. त्यावर भीमसेनजींचं प्रत्युत्तर होतं की म्हणून काय झालं? आता माझा दरबारी एका व ते दरबारी असे काही गायले की थोड्याच वेळात श्रोते अमीरखाँचा दरबारी पार विसरले. असा आत्मविश्वास गाणाऱ्याच्या यशाचा एक मुख्य घटक आहे. भीमसेनजीं जरी किराणा घराण्याचे गवई होते तरी त्यांनी आपली भीमसेनी गायकी तयार केली होती आणि ती ताकद, तीव्रता आणि त्वेष ह्या तीन गुणांवर आधारलेली होती असं शेवटी म्हणावं लागेल.

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Reincarnation A Reality? / Your Supernatural Experiences

INTRODUCTION

–Vaijayanti Kirtikar

Supernatural means beyond natural. Now who doesn't like to talk about mysterious supernatural occurrences? Talking of mysteries, I am sure all of us have at some point of time had some questions in our mind. Questions such as: is reincarnation a reality? Are personality traits and talents carried through from lifetime to lifetime? Do physical appearance and characteristics stay consistent from lifetime to lifetime? Do we reincarnate in groups with former spouses, family, friends and associates? Can one reincarnate into more than one person?

Questions and some more questions, but do we have the answers? Experiences such as déjà-vu are experienced by almost everyone. Our writers found these topics thrilling and interesting. We bring to you their experiences and personal opinions.

Our aim is to not find an answer to all questions, we simply love reading about mysteries and that is just what we bring to you.

Food for Thought: Should mysteries remain mysteries, or should we attempt to solve them, so that they are no longer mysteries?



Skeletons at 17000 ft.

- Dr. Kshiteesh Kirtikar

I sat down on the dried, flattened, yellow blades of grass, panting from a mixture of exhilaration and sheer exhaustion. The day had been long and hard. After a gentle ascent starting at 12,800 ft., we had stopped for lunch after 8 km. at Pathar Nachauni. And from there, we had climbed another 3000 ft. to the Kalu Vinayak pass within 2 very strenuous and back-breaking hours. It was no mean feat with a 20 kg rucksack strapped on our backs, fighting against the rapidly increasing hypoxia and thin mountain air. A couple of miles down the mountain trail then led to the sinister campsite, which would serve as the base for our final climb in the wee hours of the next day.

It was September 2009 and here I was, sitting at 15,500 ft at Camp Huniathar, somewhere deep in the undulating vales of the lofty Garhwal Himalayas. And I gazed in reverence at the towering ridge to the north of the campsite. Within the seemingly innocuous crescent of the ridge lay the mysterious lake of Roopkund.

Roopkund was the stuff of every experienced trekker's quest for the inexplicable secrets of the Himalayas. It's fearful stories, part myth part murky, were passed on through generations of mountain-folk huddled before a small fire over steaming cups of *chai*. It is a small lake situated at 16,500 ft in the Chamoli district of the Garhwal Himalayas. It was accidentally discovered by a Forest Ranger in 1942 when he chanced upon the ridge and the lake. The mystical allure around the lake emanated when he saw an enormous pile of bones scattered all around the lake, which was situated in an area considered to be hitherto uncharted. And there began the quest to demystify the arcane secrets of the enigmatic water body. The fact that the 800-odd skeletal remains were situated at such a dizzying, inhospitable height, at a place which was neither along any ancient trade route, nor the site of any primeval settlement, gave it's

hypothesized origins a phantom, supernatural aura. Was it an ancient burial ground? Was it the site of a bloody, prehistoric battle? Were these the condemned victims of a terrible epidemic, left to die a frigid, bleak, lonely death?

Scientists have labored and pondered over these bones. Numerous experiments have been conducted, which have dated the bones to about 800 AD. But 70 years of scientific and anthropological research and 2 documentaries, including 1 by the National Geographic Channel, have failed to conclusively map the origins of the bones. The only proven fact about the 1300 year old skeletons is that they belong to people who died of a sudden hailstorm.

But who were these unfortunate victims of nature's wrath? And what were they doing in such large numbers at that frosty, hostile height many centuries ago? These are questions that science failed to answer. And where science ceases to exist, spectral conjecture breathes to life. Thus was born the Legend of Roopkund!

The story of the origins of the skeletons at Roopkund is an inseparable, intimate blend of both facts and fiction. It is revered as well as feared, and serves as a tale of mortal weakness and divine rage. It speaks of a powerful king who perished at the hands of an infuriated Goddess.

So as I sat and started with hypnotized allure at the ridge concealing the lake, I tried to imagine what might have transpired at this very place 1300 years ago....

The old king haltingly put one weary step after another. The altitude was a dizzying 17,000 ft. The atmosphere was boding evil with the tense anticipation of impending doom. Dark grey clouds hung lifelessly, creeping up on the crown of the peak out of nowhere. The air was still, electric. No bird or beast ventured this far up the sinister slope. The king's breath came in smoky wisps in the rarified mountain air; his bones numb with fatigue, his soul shattered by shock and sorrow. He wept bitter, repentant tears



over his gargantuan loss. Yet, he did not have the luxury of believing that the worst was behind him now. He had heard stories of Goddess Nandadevi's wrath and had seen but an iota of it the previous evening. He had sinned and he knew that the Goddess knew no pardon or pity. Female presence was prohibited by the Goddess on this pilgrimage; but the king had defied this divine dictum. His entourage included his wives and courtesans- guilty pleasures that were forbidden on this sacred path. He had seen his dancers being swallowed by the earth at dusk, and he knew that Nandadevi had a far more apocalyptic plan for him. Something ominous beyond his imagination laid waiting for him over the snowy ridge.

But mortal imagination cannot fathom the boundless fury of divine wrath.

As he gently lowered himself and his followers in the cup of the mountain where the ancient temple of the Goddess stood, he was at once greeted by a sight more gruesome than the fear of death. And in the split second before his annihilation when one's whole life flashes before his eyes, he was subjected to a horror reserved only for those condemned to burn till eternity.

One moment there stood the mighty king and his loyal entourage of 800 before a shimmering silver temple at 17000 ft, the next there remained only a gigantic pile of bones scattered across the slopes of the mountain cup. And in the centre where the temple hitherto stood, now emerged a small, unearthly lake, its placid waters smoky green from its gloomy secrets. Its source, non-existent, its depths, uncharted.

And there the lake still stood, its existence a mixture of allegory, Himalayan folklore and divine fear. Its stories were passed on from generation to generation through hushed whispers on chilly nights before a crackling fire by wizened grayed elders who had in turn, heard these stories from their own elders all those decades ago. They speak of disembodied screams and unearthly lights. Only the bravest of the brave or the stupidest of fools ever ventured towards the mythical lake.

The final climb to the lake is in silence and

reverence. The air is lifeless, whispering it's phantom tales to all those who care to listen. The surrounding peaks of *Trishul* and *Chaukhamba* stand tall and reticent. They are the only witnesses to the ancient, celestial massacre, their paranormal secrets wrapped in their slopes, waiting to be unraveled.

I guess some doors are best left unopened...

CONGRATULATION

Avid photographer for a number of years now, Anand Vijayakar was presented with a choice in 2010 by a long time friend and fellow-photographer to collaborate as Production Designer and Stills Photographer on a short film. Anand accepted and "Grey" was shot over 4 days in Pune and the final, 20-minute long edit was selected for a screening at the Pune International Film Festival, 2011.

This first-attempt by a largely first-timer crew finally won a Special Mention from the festival jury.

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2010 saw the birth of "Child Labour Free", a proactive campaign conceptualised by Namrata Vijayakar while working as a Senior Art Director at McCann Erickson (now McCann World Group).

The concept which is basically an innovative method of publicising the plight of children being used as bonded labour in industries such as handicrafts, woodworking, silk, etc. through art and motifs used on the products themselves (wooden frames, carpets, etc with motifs of children at work) was executed in partnership with "Bachpan Bachao Andolan". One of the objectives of the campaign is also to be able to establish a mark or seal which can function as a certification for products being free of child-labour.

The campaign has won a Nomination at the "Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity 2010", a Gold at the "London International Awards 2010" and two Bronzes at the CLIO Awards, Chicago in 2011.



ती रात्र मी माझ्या आयुष्यात कधीही विसणार नाही...

-नितीन नवलकर

१९८३ चे ते वर्ष होते. आम्ही त्यावेळी गिरगावात राहायचो. मी त्यावेळी ८ वीत होतो. मी आणि माझ्याच बिल्डिंगमध्ये राहणारा माझा जिवलग मित्र (प्रसाद - माझ्यापेक्षा ३ वर्षांनी मोठा) त्याचे इस्त्रीला दिलेले कपडे आणायला गेलो होतो. तसे आम्ही दोघं शाळा सुटल्यावर नेहमीच एकत्र असायचो. अभ्यास एकत्र करायचो आणि खेळायचोसुद्धा एकत्र. संध्याकाळचे ८-८:३० वाजले होते. भरपूर पाऊस कोसळत होता. आमच्या बिल्डिंगमध्ये तळ मजल्याला एक खूप लांब निमुळता पॅसेज होता. निमुळता इतका होता की एका वेळेला दोघांना एकत्र बाजूबाजूला चालता येणे शक्य नव्हते. जवळ-जवळ ३० फूट लांबीचा तो पॅसेज होता. तो पॅसेज ओलांडल्यावर वरती जाण्यासाठी जिना होता. बांधकाम ब्रिटीशांच्या काळातले असल्यामुळे हा जिना 'स्पायरल' होता.

मी आणि माझा मित्र प्रसाद इस्त्रीला दिलेले कपडे घेऊन आमच्या बिल्डिंगमध्ये कसेबसे त्या जोरदार पावसातून पोहोचलो. बहुधा पावसामुळे रस्त्यावरचे दिवे गेले असल्याकारणाने संपूर्ण रस्त्यावर काळोख होता. छत्री बंद करून बिल्डिंगमध्ये शिरताच आम्हाला जाणवले की तळमजल्यावरचा दिवा गेला असल्या कारणाने तळमजल्यावर पूर्ण अंधार होता. पॅसेजमध्ये पहिलं पाउल टाकताच आम्हाला जाणवले की पूर्ण पॅसेजमध्ये पाणी साठले होते आणि त्यामुळे आम्हाला एकदम सावकाश सांभाळून चालावे लागणार होते. छत्री माझ्या हातात असल्याकारणाने मी पुढे होतो आणि माझा मित्र प्रसाद इस्त्रीचे कपडे हातात धरून माझ्या मागे.

दोन पावलं आम्ही पुढे जातोय न जातोय तोच माझ्या मित्राच्या हातातली त्याच्या घराची चावी खाली पडली. काळोख खूप असल्याकारणाने आणि पॅसेजमध्ये पाणी साठले असल्या कारणाने चावी कुठे पडली हे कळेना. त्यावेळी आतासारखे मोबाईल नव्हते ज्याने लगेच मोबाईल 'ऑन' करून आम्ही प्रकाश पाडून चावी शोधू शकलो असतो. चावी पडल्याचा फक्त थोडा आवाज आम्हाला आला होता आणि त्याच अंदाजावर आम्ही खाली वाकून चावीचा शोध घेऊ लागलो.

चाचपडत जमिनीवर हात फिरवून आम्ही कशीबशी चावी शोधली आणि नशीबाने चावी लगेचच आमच्या हाताला लागली. तेव्हा कुठे आमच्या जीवात जीव आला.

आमचे डोळे त्या अंधाराला सरावेपर्यंत आम्हाला जाणवले की पॅसेजच्या शेवटी जिथे बिल्डिंगमध्ये वरती जाण्यासाठी जिना सुरू होत होता तिथे कोणी तरी उभे होते. त्या अंधारात आम्हाला जाणवले की त्या व्यक्तीने पांढरा पोशाख घातला होता. पांढरा सफारी घातलेली ती व्यक्ती तिथेच उभी राहून जणू आम्ही काय करतोय ते नुसतेच पाहत होती. त्या काळी आमच्या घरी एक नामदेव नावाचा पुरुष घरकामाला होता. तो त्याच्या लहानपानापासूनच आमच्या घरी कामाला होता. नामदेव त्यावेळी नुसताच एका ऑफिसमध्ये ऑफिसबायच्या कामाला लागला होता. सफेद सफारी हा त्याचा ऑफिसचा गणवेश होता.

तो तिथेच उभा राहून आमच्याकडे नुसताच बघत होता, हे पाहून मला आश्चर्य वाटले, कारण नेहमी नामदेव तसा सगळ्यांना मदत करायला पुढे असायचा. हळू हळू पुढे जाऊन मी विचारले "काय रे नुसताच इथे उभा राहून आमची गंमत बघत होतास? जरा येऊन मदत तरी करायची, किती काळोख आहे आणि काहीच दिसत नाहीये." मी हे म्हणतच होतो तेव्हा त्याने स्वतः वर न जाता आम्हाला जिन्यावर पुढे जाण्यासाठी जागा दिली व तो स्वतः थोडासा बाजूला झाला. मी दोन पायऱ्या वरती गेलो आणि माझ्या मागोमाग प्रसाद आला. नामदेवने आम्हाला वरती जायला दिले हे बघताच प्रसादने पायऱ्या चढताना त्याला विचारले, "काय रे तुला यायचे नाही का? काळोखात कशाला थांबला आहेस?" इतके सर्व प्रश्न विचारले तरी नामदेव काहीच उत्तर देत नाही म्हटल्यावर आम्हाला दोघांनाही ती गोष्ट जरा विचित्र वाटली. एरवी बडबड करणारा नामदेव गप्प का आहे हा प्रश्न आम्हा दोघांच्याही मनात आला. त्याच वेळी आम्ही दोघेही एकत्र वळलो. मी तिसऱ्या पायरीवर आणि प्रसाद दुसऱ्या. मी त्याला विचारले "नामदेव गप्प का उभा आहेस? चल वर येतोयस न?" तरीही नामदेव गप्प



म्हटल्यावर प्रसादने विचारलं, “कोण आहेस तू? कोणाकडे आला आहेस?” तरी ती व्यक्ती गप्पच होती. शेवटी वैतागून प्रसादने त्याला खडसावून विचारले, “किसके पास आया है तू?” आणि त्याचा हात धरला... त्या क्षणी जो आवाज आला तो अजूनही मी हे लिहिताना माझ्या अंगावर काटा आणतोय. त्यानंतर मी तो: आवाज ऐकला असेन तो ‘रात’ पिकचरमध्ये. रेवती त्या पिकचरमध्ये लीड रोलमध्ये होती.

आआ:छछह...असा काहीतरी तो आवाज होता. तो आवाज लिहून समजावणे अशक्य आहे. एक क्षणभर प्रसाद आणि मी दोघेही स्तब्ध झालो. काहीच कळेना आणि लागलीच प्रसाद मागे वळून पळायला लागला आणि मीही पळालो. एक क्षणभर आम्हाला वाटले की ती व्यक्ती आमच्या पाठी येतेय आणि मनात आम्हाला फक्त एकच विचार येत होता...तो म्हणजे वरती पळून २ व्या मजल्यावर प्रसादच्या घरात जाणे. आमच्या जिऱ्यावर प्रत्येक मजल्यावर १७ पायऱ्या होत्या. आम्ही तळमजल्यावरून पहिल्या मजल्यावर आलो अजून वर पळणार, इतक्यात आम्हाला जाणवले की ती व्यक्ती आमचा पाठलाग करत नव्हती. १ मिनिट गेला असेल आम्ही दोघेही एकमेकांकडे थोड्याशा घाबरलेल्या, थोड्याशा आश्चर्यचकित नजरेने बघत राहिलो. मनात त्या १ मिनिटात हजार विचार येऊन गेले. आपण काय ऐकलं? आपण खरंच काहीतरी विचित्र ऐकलं का? ती व्यक्ती कोण होती? तिथे का उभी होती? तिने आम्हाला घाबरवण्याचा का प्रयत्न केला? ती आमच्या मागे येत आहे असे तिने का दर्शविले? मग ती आमच्या मागे का नाही आली? इतके सगळे विचार मझ्या मनात येत असतानाच, प्रसाद माझ्याकडे बघत होता. त्याच्याकडे बघून मला वाटले की हा काहीतरी विचित्र करणार आहे. हा विचार मनात येताच, प्रसाद मागे वळून पुन्हा खाली तळमजल्यावर गेला. मीही त्याच्या मागोमाग खाली गेलो. खाली जाऊन बघतो तर तिथे कुणीच नव्हते. जिऱ्याच्या डाव्या बाजूला इलेक्ट्रिक मीटरचा बोर्ड होता व तिथून बाजूच्या गटारात जायला एक दार होते. अजूनही तितकाच काळोख खाली होता. आम्ही हळुहळू थोडसं घाबरतच इलेक्ट्रिक मीटर बोर्डच्या बाजूला शोधले. तिथे आम्हाला एक टॉर्च सापडला. तो टॉर्च आम्ही लगेच लावला. टॉर्च लावल्यावर जरा जीवात जीव आला. आम्ही लगेच

गटारात जाण्यासाठी जे दार होते ते तपासून पाहिले. पण त्याला कुलूप होते. त्यामुळे तिथून तो बाहेर गेलेला नव्हता हे जाणवले. लगेच आम्ही पॅसेजमध्ये टॉर्च मारला. तिथे पाणी इतके साठले होते की तिथून कोणत्याही माणसाला पायाचा आवाज न करता बाहेर जाणे अशक्य होते. आम्ही बिल्डिंगच्या बाहेर जाऊन सुद्धा पाहिले. समोरच्या आणि बाजूच्या बिल्डिंगच्या दारांवर आणि बिल्डिंगच्या बाजूच्या दोन्ही गटारांमध्ये टॉर्च मारून बघितला, पण तिथे कुणीही नव्हते. हळुहळू आम्ही बिल्डिंगमध्ये परतलो. हे सर्व होईस्तोवर आम्ही दोघेही एकमेकांशी काहीच बोललो नव्हतो. बिल्डिंगच्या पॅसेजमध्ये आल्यावर जेव्हा टॉर्चचा प्रकाश त्या जागेवर परत पडला तेव्हा आमच्या अंगावर शहारा आला. मनात परत प्रश्नाचे जाळे विणले गेले. काहीसे घाबरत आम्ही त्या जागेवरून हळू-हळू प्रसादच्या घरी गेलो. इस्त्रीचे कपडे त्याच्या घरी ठेवले. तेव्हा पहिला शब्द प्रसाद म्हणाला, ‘जेली, बर्फाची जेली असल्यासारखा त्याचा हात होता रे. मला वाटले मी थंडगार जेली ला हात लावला.’ हे ऐकून काय बोलावे हेच मला कळेना. प्रसादच्या घरून आम्ही दोघेही माझ्या घरी गेलो. तिथे जाऊन बेल मारली. दरवाजा उघडला तो दारात नामदेव!!!

त्याला मी विचारले, “काय रे खाली अंधारात काय करत होतास?” मी प्रश्न विचारताच किचन मधून आईचा आवाज आला, “अरे नामदेव, चल कितीवेळ, गेले दोन तास तांदूळ निवडतोयेस, लौकर बाहेरचा पसारा आवर आणि जेवण्यासाठी टेबल घे.” हे ऐकून प्रसाद आणि मी एकमेकांकडे बघायला लागलो.

दोघेही हॉलमध्ये जाऊन सोफावर बसलो आणि टीव्ही बघून मन वळवण्याचा प्रयत्न करू लागलो. इतक्यात बाबा आईला म्हणाले, “अग आज बाजूच्या बिल्डिंगमधले दिक्षित भेटले होते सकाळी. ते म्हणाले त्यांचा तो भाऊ होता न वेडा झालेला, तो गेल्या आठवड्यात वेड्यांच्या इस्पितळात वारला.” आई म्हणाली, “कोण?” बाबांनी उत्तर दिले अग तो नाही का, त्या मंत्र्याच्या ऑफिसमध्ये होता, मंत्रालयात कामाला.” आई म्हणाली “ओह!!! तो जो आपल्या बिल्डिंगमधल्या पहिल्या मजल्यावरच्या आरोलकारांच्या बहिणीच्या प्रेमात वेडा झाला? नेहमी सफेद सफारी घालायचा तो? मी आणि प्रसाद एकमेकांकडे बघतच राहिलो...



My Supernatural Experience

–Raunaq Sameer Vijayakar

I was finally helped back to my feet, things started to gain clarity. I couldn't evaluate the situation as much as I would have liked to, with all the salwar clad men surrounding me trying to ask me questions which seemed so irrelevant then.

I felt a rush of adrenaline pumping through my system. It took me a minute to figure out the reason; it was fear, stress, and uncertainty.

Fear, stress, uncertainty, you might wonder why, because I was trying to find my shadow under me. I did! What a relief!

It meant, I was still alive...

Barely being able to see with my right eye, I kept scanning the area thinking about 'Is she OK'? Blood kept pouring from all openings in my face. I later discovered, it was worse than I had thought.

My heart sank, when I saw her laid down by the embankment. She was all scraped & unattractive. It felt untrue, I always considered us invincible, I guess not!

Next thought, how do I take her home? Can it be the same again? How long?

This time, time surely had bent my knees. I walked up to her and held her, while my blood stained her body.

For all of you wonderers, fortunately it was only my motorcycle. But let me tell you, it hurt the same.

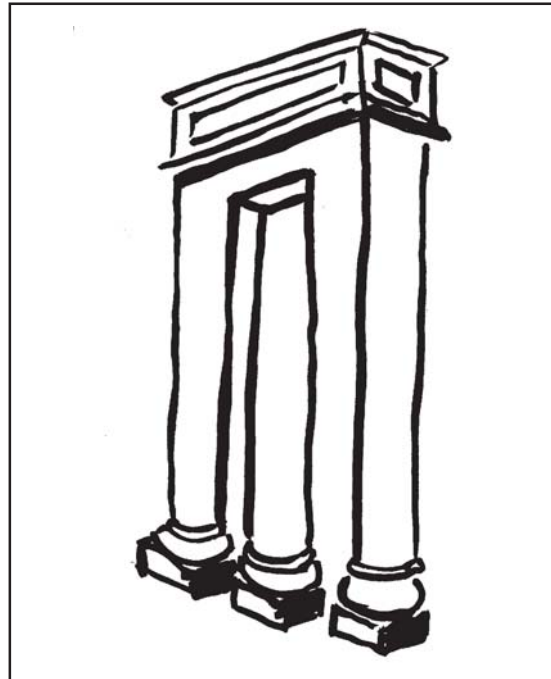
So here I was on National Highway 4 (NH4), on the outskirts of Khalapur, all bloody, scraped & disoriented trying to find my bearing. I stood at the side of the highway next to my motorcycle, thanking my stars that I wasn't run over by the vehicles trailing behind me as I fell, trying to gain composure but broke into fear every time blood gushed out of my nose and my brow. I didn't exactly know my extent of injury but knew it was bad. I wanted to pull out of this alive, but didn't know for sure that I would.

Soon after that, I rushed myself to the nearest hospital in a 'share-a-rickshaw'; the Cops certainly weren't of any help.

On the way to the hospital, I informed my folks, who eventually came to my rescue! While I was talking on the phone, I suddenly became aware of all those lacerations I had sustained, as the cold breeze pricked each gash..!

So what all did I break? Let's see, I fractured my forehead right under a few stitches. Crushed my cheek-bone, broke my nose, a swollen eye socket and a badly crushed ego, overall, I was pretty bruised up and definitely not presentable. I couldn't eat solid food for the next month or so as my teeth and jaw shot pain missiles with every crunch.

We limit supernatural experiences to Dark Entities, the Chupacabra, or UFO sightings. Supernatural experiences have a boundary-less interpretation. The above gory narration was only for you to realize that the experiences we carry have the power to shape our future. Personally, it all fell in place for me. Such a strong experience that may alter your attitude is no less than a supernatural experience for me!



Lucid Dream

–Dnyanada Pradhan

Whenever it's navratri season, my thoughts take me back in time when I had this lucid dream*(A lucid dream is a dream in which one is aware that one is dreaming. The term was coined by the Dutch psychiatrist and writer Frederik (Willem) van Eeden (1860–1932). Lucid dreams can seem real and vivid.).... At that time I was not aware, that anything like the concept of lucid dream existed...

It so happened that I was lying on my bed and I had this vivid picture in front of my eyes, or I would say that it more like I was actually in Kolhapur Mahalaxmi temple with my mom and other family members, and I was in front of the devi engrossed in devi's divine presence and praying, but from nowhere a typical kolhapuri old woman came in front of me in a bright pink 9yards saree. The next thing I notice about her is that she has some coins, in her front pallu of her saree(otee). She was trying to tell me something but I take her to be a beggar woman and try to ignore her, but she is not the type to be ignored by anyone, so she takes some coins from her pallu and pushes them in my hand and says take this money and don't come back ... I am totally flabbergasted, as I had not expected a beggar woman to hand me any money and then command me not to come back, in my total astonishment I get engrossed in checking in my hand, and notice that she has handed me 5 rupees. Till I realize that she has handed me the five rupees and I look up I see that she has vanished from the scene. I try to tell this to my family members but they are not at all bothered or find it be anything novel...

After this I grasp that it was a dream and I am not in the temple but in my own bedroom. When I am totally awake I realize that even though it was a dream it seemed more like a live experience and I am in the situation.

As I had never experienced this ever I don't understand what this is. So the first thing in the morning I narrate this to my mom. She was also

at loss of explanation as she herself has never experienced this before. We both were amazed that this should happen and also sad why that lady asked me not to come to Kolhapur again...

But within some days the puzzle why the lady had asked not to return to Kolhapur was solved. The guru that we followed was not worth following so it was like a warning the woman gave us not to come back to the guru. The puzzle of not going back was solved but that of 5 rupees was not solved. The only explanation my mom could give me was that lets go to Kolhapur and may be devi herself will resolve this puzzle.

So immediately we planned a trip to Kolhapur, thinking maybe we can find the answer once we go and pray in the Mahalaxmi temple. We reached Kolhapur, and as usual we went to the Mahalaxmi temple in the morning. We took flowers and other pooja items from the near by stalls and went to the temple. I hoped that the same old woman would come or I would come across some lady with a dark pink 9yard saree or if nothing else, then atleast Devi's saree will be dark pink, But nothing of this happened at all. Both mom and me felt the dream was nothing and we should just forget about it. As atleast the one half had saved us from any problems, so devi warned us, and that was the only meaning to the dream and nothing about the 5 rupees.

Our sole work of visiting the temple was done, travel back home was the next day, we had nothing to do in the evening, and sitting in the hotel room was getting claustrophobic. So we decided to take a short walk around. We came down and both of us thought the same thing that lets go to the temple as we were not very familiar with any other place. So we caught a rickshaw and went to the temple. We asked the same stall owner if we could keep our footwear near his shop as we were not buying any stuff now. He was a nice fellow and willingly allowed us. We again went to the temple had a



good peaceful darshan of the devi, as the crowd was minimal at this time of the day.

We came out to collect our footwear and the shop owner started talking to us and said, "Oh in the morning I forgot to give u Devi's pictures so take these and you won't believe it that he actually counted and gave me exact five pictures. You may say it was a coincidence that it was the same number...."

After almost some five to six years after this incident, we again had a chance to visit Kolhapur, for Devi darshan. This time I was with my husband and my mom. By now the incident was totally forgotten. The trip itself started late with some problem or the other but somehow we reached late but that was fortunately good as we could get the arati and good darshan with

the special Prasad. Now that I was married I took a saree for Devi. We had very good Devi darshan, but somehow or the other the minute we tried going towards the exit someone or the other would again direct us to the Devi and we would again and again take more and more pradikshana of Devi.

After all this, we came out to the stall we had taken the saree and other stuff and the shopkeeper was packing for us the flowers, Prasad and coconut and he said, "I've kept your 5 rupees in the bag" we were like which 5 rupees ? he said it was in the plate. I don't know how and from where these five rupees landed in our pooja plate!!!

*

Reincarnation – A Science, a reality or a myth ?

–Sanjana Deepak Kothare

Have we ever wondered why we come across only a few specific people in our life out of the millions across the world? Why do some people repel us at the first introduction itself while some make us feel as though we have known each other for years? Despite of being related to each other by birth why is there a distance and difficulty maintaining that relationship while at times a stranger would mean much more to you and stand by you through all the upheavals in your life. Haven't we all at some point of our life wondered as to why good things happen to bad people and vice versa? This plethora of queries have been crossing my mind for years together following the experience, circumstances, situations and challenges life has thrown at me. However the confusion has now been put to rest with all the pieces of this giant jigsaw puzzle having found its pieces in the right place and order from the most trustworthy and valid source of information, the 'Bhagvad Gita' as told by Shri Krishna himself. It was a blessing indeed with

the opportunity given by my closest friend, philosopher and guide who incidentally turned out to be the 'medium' Krishna chose, to enlighten me and provide the answers to all my queries.

Some might call Reincarnation a superstition; some might find it a subject worth discussing to the extent of it being just a supernatural entertainment or a paranormal activity. Some might even just ignore it thinking this to be a crazy thought not worthy of being considered. There is a deep fear down within them of the 'unknown' and as long as the unknown is not known to them, 'Ignorance is bliss'. Most of us would prefer to stay away from discussing this subject 'coz we are certain that there are certain revelation that life has to offer which we are not prepared to accept. We are worried that these revelations would make us feel responsible for every action that we take and every word that we speak. Life would be restricted and it is a normal human tendency that we do not like to be curbed or



told what to do and what not to do. Hence we prefer not to delve too much into the unknown and stay away from it by terming the truth to be 'superstition'.

Who am I? Who is God? What is our relationship with the power we call God? What is Life? Once we know the answers to these questions we know exactly how we are expected to live our life and all the mysteries of the term 'life' are resolved instantly. Every single human being we meet in our day to day life is associated with us transcendentally and our association with these human beings, whether you would like to believe it or not is actually a result of our past 'karmas'. Why else do we have to face good reactions and bad reactions from the people surrounding us? We might do no harm to others however we become victims to their feeling of wrath, jealousy, contempt etc towards us. If this thought has worried us for years, all that we need to realize is that this is the result of our past 'karmas' and the scores are merely being settled now and shall continue to do so in our future lives as well.

Have you ever wondered what happens after death? Where do we go? Our body which is a mixture of earth, water, fire, air and ether merges with the nature however what happens to our mind, intelligence and ego which add to make the human being that we are. The force that makes our mind to act in a particular fashion and think in a particular manner leaves this body which perishes in this life but it eventually attaches itself to another form of life however we do not remember what has transpired in our previous lives and hence most of us refuse to believe in reincarnation. If we were to remember all that has taken place in our previous births life would be so confusing. We have not been able to resolve the mysteries of this life, how are we supposed to deal with the complexities of the earlier life if we were to know what had transpired then?

It is so difficult to maintain our present relations with the people around us what would happen if we were to remember all our relations from the previous births as well? Life

would be chaotic. God has therefore been kind enough to let us forget the past and live in the present however whatever we have sown in our previous births shall be borne by us in our future births as well. Although we give up the body, the soul transmigrates to another living entity which is given to us by the virtue of our karmas. The kind of body our soul gets in the next life depends on what the soul is entitled for. For all the good that we do our good karmas are accounted for and vice versa. However our life is not a balance sheet where the bad can be balanced against our good actions. We will have to bear the fruits for our bad actions and we shall also bear the fruits of our good actions as our every word spoken and our every action taken has been accounted for and ultimately every birth that we shall take in future is the result of the good and bad actions that we have done in our past life.

When people scowl at the mention of the word 'reincarnation' associating it to 'superstition' and scorn any kind of discussion on this subject alleging it to be in support of 'Superstition', I wonder if they have any valid answer to the queries like 'What happens to us after death?' Do they even realize that we are not the body, we are the soul? What explanation would they give if they were to answer whether they believe that they have a soul is what I would like to know. Do they feel that we are the body and not the soul? If we are just the body then after we die why do we say that the person is no more when the body is very much before our eyes? So is reincarnation a reality or a myth???

When people show disbelief in reincarnation or rebirth it means that there is no soul and the body is driven automatically. Has one ever thought what makes the heart tick or what makes the mind think? Even a pace maker gives up working after a point of time. The fact is that our body is not immortal but our soul is until it is reunited with the super soul. When we say we are the soul then the soul must be going somewhere. It needs to occupy a body which could be in any form. There are numerous species of living entities in the form



of plants, insects, birds, animals and human beings. Being born as a human being itself brings us closer to the realization of Life and the supreme power of God since we are the only race to have the 'power to think' by the grace of God. A soul transmigrates from these body forms with respect to the 'karmas' performed by that particular soul. Our next birth depends upon the 'karmas' performed by us in our present birth and our interaction with other living entities also is in proportionate to our 'karmas'. However, how our good and bad deeds are calculated is the most complex calculation which can never be understood by mortals like us.

What we get out of life and whom we meet in our life is a master plan conceptualized and designed by the Almighty we call 'GOD' or the Super power to some who would not like to term the power as God. No matter how atheist a person is, he would surely believe deep in his heart that there is some power which rules over us and would probably believe in scientific explanations provided through research done by renowned scientist like Dr. Ian Stevenson, a medical doctor who is the former head of the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Virginia, and now is Director of the Division of Personality Studies at the University of Virginia. Dr. Stevenson has done rigorous scientific study to explain the existence of reincarnation. Through various cases that he has studied throughout the world, Dr. Stevenson has explained to the world the validity of this extensive study of reincarnation. There are things which happen beyond our control, certain situations suddenly arise without any explanation. What one needs to understand is that there is a difference between philosophical views and superstition. Now reincarnation has been finally realized by the scientific community and the world has accepted it to be the world's greatest scientific discoveries of all time.

When we talk about reincarnation, the study also involves studies related to our past life experiences. It has been proved time and again that past life regressions are evidence of reincarnation. There have been cases where the

story of a past life told through the eyes of a person regressed could be and were actually verified that the people whom these people under hypnosis claimed to be or had been. Those people had really existed in the past. This study is conducted on children who are able to recall in great detail the events, location, relations, and also speak the language in their past birth fluently when in their present life they are not remotely connected to what they have regressed.

The soul occupies a body at birth, lives its life by the virtue of its 'karma' and when the 'karma' of that life is over goes to occupy another body which in turn will be a result of the past 'karma' of the previous body. Thus we living entities have entangled ourselves in the continuous process of life and death till we are able to attain 'moksha' which is a near to impossible task in this era of 'kaliyug'. Although one might go onto the path of goodness to attain liberalization by being good to others, we will still be bound by our good karmas if not bad which will cause impediments on our path to 'moksha'. This is the most difficult aspect however we can atleast improve our life by being conscious of what we speak and what we do since our acts in our present birth shall be reflecting in our future births for sure.

We commit wrongs since we are unaware of our future. We do not think of the consequences we would be facing when we commit a wrong. This happens because we are presently reveling in the fruits of our good karma which has empowered us to such a position where we can do whatever we can and not fear the consequences. Although we can escape punishment in this birth are we sure that our actions are not accounted for? Even scientifically it has been proven that every action has a reaction. We shall all be bearing the fruits of every action that we take, if not in this birth, maybe in the next. So my dear friends, although most of us would believe Reincarnation to be a myth, maybe you would want to look at it as a science if not a reality and change your perception of life and upgrade yourself to a better position to enable your soul to get freed from this cycle of birth and death.



Is Reincarnation a Myth, Chance or Science?

–Pravin Mankar

* Savitribai's granddaughter delivered a baby boy on 19th September 2001 at 2:01 pm. Amazingly, this was the same date and time when Mrs. Parikh's daughter delivered a baby boy in Lilavati hospital. Savitribai had been working for Mrs. Parikh for the last 7 years as a maid in their posh flat on Pali Hill in Bandra. She lived in a slum on Ambedkar Road with her granddaughter who herself was a top-worker in several households and had separated from her husband who used to beat her regularly and relentlessly.

* Reflecting on these two uncanny births, which took place at precisely the same time, on the same day, in totally diverse socio-economic environs, made me wonder about justice. Here we have a boy born with a golden spoon in his mouth, to a wealthy business family with all the comforts that one can dream of, in a metropolitan city like Mumbai. And there we have another boy born in dingy, unhygienic, under-privileged circumstances at the same time in the same city.

* I wondered, then, if there was any justice in these two births. I wondered if there really is a God who is fair and just. I wondered if all creation happens by chance or is there some pattern. I questioned rhetorically what was the crime or fault or sin of the boy born in the slums. What were the great deeds of that rich boy of Pali Hill, to have deserved all the privileges he was born with.

* It is now ten years down the line and what had confused me so much in 2001, is not so confusing after all. But to understand the logic of the apparent illogical births that set me thinking ten years ago, we need to begin at the beginning. And the beginning is birth itself! And lest I digress from the subject, I shall stick to the human birth.

* A human baby is born, normally nine months after conception. On the day of birth a

miracle goes completely unnoticed by most of us and we don't give it much thought. The parents are overjoyed on becoming parents. The medical staff is relieved that a job is well done. The unrelated world goes about its mundane activities quite unconcerned. What has gone unnoticed is the emergence of an exquisitely packaged bundle of perfection. The tiny package comes with pre-installed systems that could amaze the most brilliant engineers. Even the Germans or the Japanese haven't come anywhere close to it. A tiny package of about three kilos has within it the Respiratory System, the Circulatory System, the Digestive System, the Excretory System, the Nervous System and other intricate systems and sub-systems.

* So, obviously there is some intelligence that is being installed in every human being by someone from somewhere. For want of the exact location from where this intelligence comes, let's say it comes from the universe. That someone, is the universal energy or power or intelligence, which operates, first, through the parents, then through the mother, and then through the baby itself.

* From the point of birth onwards, the conscious mind starts taking shape. Then he is fed ideas by the race or society in which the baby is born. Ideas begin to form in the conscious mind of the boy. You are a "hindu" or a "muslim" or a "Christian" plants the seeds of religious differences. You are a "boy" or a "girl" ensures gender distinction. You are "rich" or "poor" teaches economic disparity. You are "white" or "black" highlights colour discrimination. You are "Indian" or "American" or "Chinese" separates the boy on nationalistic grounds. As the child grows and becomes more and more "educated" he becomes more and more divided or fragmented from the "whole" human being that he was when he was



newly born.

* I perform various actions and express myself as I spend my time on earth. The sum total of all these actions is called living. And the way we live, determines what I get in return because Newton's third law operates perfectly. "Every Action Has An Equal And Opposite Reaction"! If I plant a mango seed, I will only get mangoes and not coconuts. "Reap As You Sow" is another perfect law of nature. Sometimes I sow but do not reap and wonder what happened. Why did the perfect law of nature not operate. The only reason is that I sowed in probably the wrong soil or the wrong season or did not take adequate precautions. In effect I sowed with inadequate knowledge and hence did not get the returns. Sometimes I get returns that are totally unexpected and grossly "unfair". We often say to ourselves, "God, what have I done to deserve this fate?" The problem is not with God or our fate. The problem is with our memory. We do not remember what we have sown in the past and hence we get surprised by the fruit that we reap. Do this small experiment with yourself! Try to remember the breakfast that you ate on 13th February 2011. Can you? Almost impossible! We perform so many small acts on a daily basis, that constitutes our living, but we cannot remember every detail that we have thought, said or done. And since we have "done" something, the fruit is inevitable. When we do get the fruit, we wonder "God, what have I done to deserve this fate?"

* In our mind, two consciousnesses dwell. The divine consciousness that took care of us hundred percent up to the point we were born. As we started growing up under human guidance, the human consciousness started

taking root in us. With each passing year our human consciousness strengthened and the divine consciousness receded into the background.

* Take the example of a father and his two sons. One son is dad's favourite and the other is not so. Slowly the neglected son develops resentment and a careless attitude towards the dad and eventually the house. One fine morning he wakes up and says "Enough is enough!" and he leaves the house to make his own life.

* What is true of the unwelcome son is also true of the divine spirit within us. In our consciousness, the divine spirit had the highest position when we were born. With each passing year we gave so much prominence to the human spirit, that the divine spirit took a back seat silently as long as it could tolerate the neglect. One fine morning, the divine spirit says "Enough is enough!" and decides to leave the house – the body. This is death! What is the divine spirit trying to do? It is trying to look for an environment that will permit it to express itself.

* What happens to the actions performed by the human being? They get recorded in the ethereal register of the universe in the ledger account of the spirit that is embodied in our form. When the spirit leaves our body the only material it carries with it are the ethereal records. When it manages to acquire a new embodiment, a new birth, it brings with it the 'burden of the previous records. For all the good records, the new embodiment will have good returns. For all the bad records, the new embodiment will have sufferings.

* Sometimes we feel that we are working hard and honest and should be rewarded. But we don't see appropriate returns and become sad and say that "God is unfair". What we do not remember is the number of occasions when we have been bad, ungrateful, dishonest, mean, cruel, selfish, petty, jealous, greedy, and prey to many negative thoughts, words and deeds. While the circumstances of this birth is an effect of the causes shrouded in the previous life, our performance in this life is

Remember

Nothing is simple in life
Everything has a price.
Creatures lose their skin
Butterflies gain their wings

–Kalpana Subhash Kothare



sowing the seeds of causes, the effect of which will be reaped in future, which may be in this life itself or the next life. This is reincarnation! Our ancient scriptures keep guiding us on how to avoid the cycle of birth and death.

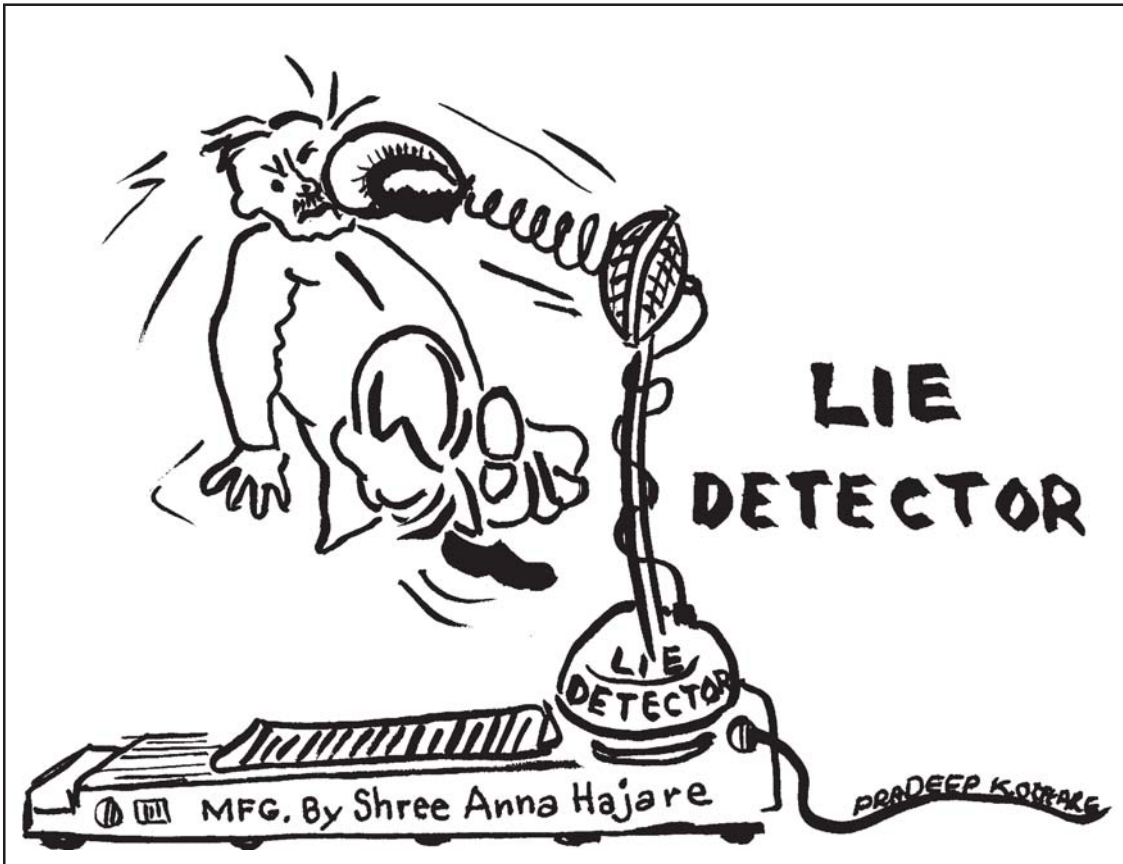
* After a fresh birth, once again the human desires start building up and defeat the spirit. The spirit never gives up and keeps appearing in new births one after the other. Till such time that the human being, in one of the birth, realizes his folly and then pursues the path of spirituality. In this way every soul reaches atonement, moksha or nirvana, maybe after millions of years of birth and rebirth. Up to such time, birth and death keep playing the game incessantly, each trying to outdo the

other. As long as the human consciousness prevails, death will succeed. When the divine consciousness prevails, death will be defeated.

* Reincarnation or rebirth is the attempt of the indomitable spirit to give itself one more chance to express itself in its full glory. The spirit will keep trying through millions of rebirths. Each birth is one step ahead in progress.

* Reincarnation is not merely a function of death and rebirth. One can reincarnate oneself in this live itself. Get born again! How? Rebuild your consciousness along spiritual lines. How? That is another story for another day. Those who are really keen, may contact the author.

* Happy Diwali!



Now enjoy Pollution free

DIWALI





कनकाई देव्यै नमोनमः ।

कीर्तिकरांची कुलदेवी कनकाई. गीरवासिनी. गीरच्या जंगलात पोहोचणे सगळ्यांना कसे शक्य? मग देवीच्याच मनात आले आणि गेली काही वर्षे ती विलेपार्ल्यातील राजपुरिया बागेत आपले नवरात्र साजरे करते. 'कनकाई देवी ट्रस्ट' द्वारे हा महोत्सव साजरा होतो. बाकीचे विश्वस्त गुजराती. श्री. तुषार कीर्तिकर आणि उमेश कीर्तिकर हे दोन सदस्य मराठी. प्रभु ज्ञातीचे. देवीच्या भक्तांना जात, पात काही नसते याचा उत्तम आदर्श.

याही वर्षी नवरात्रोत्सव दणक्यात साजरा झाला. साज, सजावट देखणी होती. व्यवस्थापन उत्तम होतं. हॉलमध्ये एकावेळी जवळजवळ शंभर भक्तांना वैयक्तिक पूजनाचा लाभ होतो... अगदी शास्त्रशुद्ध पद्धतीने. दोन ऑक्टोबरच्या रविवारी तर खास नवदुर्गा प्रगट झाल्या होत्या. महालक्ष्मी, महासरस्वती, महाकाली, महादुर्गा, कामाक्षी, मीनाक्षी आदी नऊ देवीरूपे तेथे बालरूपात सादर झाली. गीरच्या जंगलातील वाघ, हरण, मोर असे देवीचे वाहन-सवंगडीही तेथे आले. छोट्या बालक-बालिकांनी साकारलेली ही अवतारदृश्ये इतकी जीवंत, मनोरम होती की साऱ्या भक्तांना आनंदाचे भरते आले. 'कनकाई मातकी जय!' असा उत्स्फूर्त जयजयकार झाला. देवीरूप किती साक्षात्कारी होते त्याची सोबतचा फोटो साक्ष देईल. आपणही म्हणू या, 'उदयोस्तु! उदयोस्तु!!'



रात्र वैऱ्याची, जागे व्हा!

– सौ. अलका मिनलकुमार तळपदे

२६ नोव्हेंबरची ती रात्र मुंबईकरांच्या जीवनात मृत्यूचे भयंकर तांडव घेऊन आली, मुंबापुरी हादरून निघाली. एका क्षणात होत्याचे नव्हते झाले. कित्येक निष्पाप लोकांना प्राणास मुकावे लागले. मुंबईकरांना आणि परदेशी पाहुण्यांना वाचवता वाचवता काही सुरक्षा-शिपाई व पोलीस अधिकाऱ्यांना वीरगती प्राप्त झाली. सारी दुनिया हळहळली. दूरदर्शनच्या बातम्यांच्या वहिन्यांवरून दहशतवाद्यांचा हा अमानुष आतंक आपण सर्व हतबल होऊन पहात होतो. मृत्यूचे हे तांडव तीन दिवस चालले होते. ए.टी.एस्.एन्.एस्.जी आणि मरीन कमांडोनी पराक्रमाची पराकाष्ठा केली आणि सरते शेवटी एकाला जीवंत पकडून व बाकींना कंठस्नान घालून हा संग्राम थांबला.

त्यानंतर रोजच्या नवनवीन बातम्या कानावर येत होत्या. शहिदांना सन्मानाने श्रद्धांजली बाहिली जात होती. शहीद व लक्ष्य बनलेल्यांना, तसेच जखमींना भरपाई जाहीर होत होती. जनजीवन पुन्हा चालू झाले तरी संहार डोळ्यासमोरून हलत नव्हता. प्रत्येक मुंबईकर आतून पेटला होता. त्याचे प्रतिक म्हणून शाळाशाळांतून मेणबत्या पेटवल्या जात होत्या. आपसातले वैर विसरून सर्वांनी आतंकाला सामोरे जाण्यासाठी हातात हात घालून साखळी तयार केली. प्रत्येकाच्या मनात अन्यायाविरुद्ध पेटून उठवणारी मशाल पेटली गेली. त्या मेणबत्या थोड्याच वेळात विझून गेल्या. कालांतराने मुंबईकर तो महाभयंकर संहारही विसरले. पण केवळ दहा आतंकवाद्यांनी कोट्यावधी मुंबईकरांना वेठीला धरून जो धडा गिरवला आहे त्यातून जर आज आपण शहाणे झालो नाही तर आपल्यासारखे दुर्दैवी आपणच.

आज डोळ्यावर झापडं ओढून व कानांत मोबाईलचे इअर फोन घालून फिरणारा सामान्य माणूस जर डोळे व कान उघडून आजुबाजूला पाहील, व थोडं तोंड उघडायला शिकेल तरी अर्धी लढाई आपण जिंकू. गरज आहे ती थोड्याशा जागृकतेची. थोडे अंतर्मुख होऊन आपण सर्वांनी

विचार केला तर प्रत्येकाला कबूल करावे लागेल की आजच्या भ्रष्टाचाराला, अन्यायाला तसेच रस्त्यावरचे खड्डे, घाण व अतिक्रमण ह्या सर्वांला जबाबदार कुठेतरी आपणच आहोत. रोजच्या व्यवहारातून आपणच ह्याला खतपाणी घालत गेलो आणि आपल्याला कळलेच नाही.

आता साधी गोष्टच घ्या. बसमधून उतरल्यावर आपण अगदी सहजपणे हातातील बसतिकीट रस्त्यावर टाकतोच की नाही? रस्त्यात थुंकताना किंवा खाद्यपदार्थांची रॅपर्स चालत्या गाडीतून फेकताना आपल्याला थोडीही लाज वाटत नाही. आपल्या घराजवळ साचलेला कचरा, फुटलेला पाण्याचा पाइप, वहाणारे गटार किंवा दिवसा जळणारे दिवे ह्या सर्व गैर प्रकाराबद्दल आपल्यापैकी कितीजण संबधित अधिकाऱ्याला तक्रार करतात? (तशी ती केल्यास त्याची दखल ताबडतोब घेतली जाते हा माझा अनुभव.) दीनदयाळू होऊन रस्त्यावर धडधाकट भिकाऱ्याला किंवा एखाद्या अपंग मुलाला भीक घालताना आपण फार मोठ्या गुन्हेगारी प्रवृत्तीला प्रोत्साहन देत आहोत हा विचार आपल्या मनाला कधी शिवतही नाही.

बिनधास्तपणे सिग्नल तोडताना आणि पकडले गेल्यावर चिरीमिरी देऊन स्वतःची सुटका करून घेताना आपण वेगळे काय करतो? मुलांच्या अॅडमिशनसाठी डोनेशनची तयारी तर आपण मुलांच्या जन्मापासूनच करत असतो.

‘पर्यावरणास घातक ठरलेली ‘प्लॅस्टिक पिशवी’ मी माझ्या घरात आणणार नाही’, एवढा साधा निर्धारही आपण एकजुटीने करू शकत नाही. मग अशा लोकांना ‘लोकशाही’ कशी काय पेलणार?

रिक्षावाला किंवा टॅक्सीवाला तोंडावर सरळ येणार नाही सांगतो आणि आपण मुकाट्याने दुसऱ्या रिक्षाला हात दाखवतो. तोही नाही बोलला तर तिसरा नाहीतर चौथा...पाचवा. पण असे करताना आपण आपल्याला अन्याय सोसायची वाईट, चुकीची सवय लावून घेतोय हे आपल्या लक्षातही येत



नाही. सामान्य माणसाची नेमकी हीच नाडी भ्रष्ट राज्यकारण्यांनी बरोबर ओळखली आहे.

‘दहा खेडे घालण्यापेक्षा थोडे पैसे गेलेले परबडले’ ही ‘दिव्य’ सामान्य विचारसरणीच लाच घेण्याच्या पथ्यावर पडली आणि त्यांची भूक वाढत जाऊन हजारतून लाखाच्या घरात व लाखातून कोटींच्या घरात पोहोचली.

घोट्याळ्यांचे ‘आदर्श’ च आपल्या पुढल्या पिढीपुढे ठेवावे लागणार. अशा हताश व हतबल अवस्थेत सामान्य माणूस असतानाच अण्णा हजारे पुढे झाले आणि त्यांनी भ्रष्टाचाराविरुद्ध आवाज उठवला. धुमसत असलेला सामान्य माणूस त्यांच्या पाठीशी सर्वशक्तीनिशी उभा राहिला. सामान्य जनशक्ती आणि तिची ताकद काय असते हे परत एकदा जगाला दाखवून दिले. पण हजार कोटींच्या ह्या देशाला एक अण्णा कुठवर पुरणार? गरज आहे कोट्यावधी अण्णांची.

म्हणूनच म्हणते आता ही आग विझू देऊ नका. खास करून युवापिढीला कळकळीची विनंती आहे की टी.व्ही चॅनलच्या नाच-गाण्यांच्या ‘रिअॅलिटी शो’ मधून बाहेर पडा. एका खेळासाठी कोट्यावधीची उधळण करणाऱ्यांनाही हेच सांगणे आहे. सिलीब्रेटी व्हायचेच असेल तर अण्णांचा वारसा चालवा.

अन्यायाविरुद्ध व गैरकृत्याबद्दल निष्क्रीय राज्यकर्त्यांना ठणकावून जाब विचाराल तेव्हाच खरी लोकशाही येईल. मनामनात धगधगणारी ही आग जेव्हा देशातील खऱ्या देशद्रोह्यांना नष्ट करेल तेव्हाच बाहेरचा आतंक आपल्याकडे डोळे वर करण्याचे धाडस करणार नाही.

हीच अतिरेकी हल्ल्यात शहीद झालेल्या वीरांना खरी श्रद्धांजली असेल.

अनाम वीरा जागा हो!

*



WE HAVE NO TIME TO STAND AND STARE

–Ketaki Rajan Jayakar

My Dear young friends,

Diwali Greetings to all of you my dear young friends. The youngsters who know me and even those who don't know me, I really, genuinely wish all of you a very Healthy, Happy, Joyful and of course a very prosperous Diwali 2011 and every successive Diwali.

Since I have grown up in a joint family, was married into a joint family, lived with elders and extended family I have garnered so much valuable experience which I feel I should share with all of you youngsters, who are in your prime, taking off into the unknown, or have already taken off for newer horizons. My constant interactions with my clients, may they be the Family Court ones, or any other litigants, has taught me a lot of things.

Having been taught from childhood that service before self is the greatest good, I was shocked to read in an American book about the concept of Self Love. As I read more about this I gradually realised that there was sense in it. Self love is different from selfishness. Self love is respecting your own self and a gratitude for the miracle of our bodies and minds. Selfishness is being self centered with total disregard to others and their wellbeing. Self love is respecting your own body, your needs, and being able to say no if you feel that you are being overstretched. In my career as a Family lawyer I came across many women who could never say no. They would suffer in silence and do whatever was asked of them even if it meant great hardships to them physically and mentally, they never had any time for themselves. By the time they reached me for help, they were exhausted both physically and emotionally with very little energy to look after their own needs and even at times leading to depression and break up of matrimonial life.

This is the other end of the spectrum, today I see youngsters who are so busy with their professional lives that they have no time for proper meals, no time for rest, no breaks, no

time for family functions, all the time meeting deadlines, climbing the corporate ladder whilst living in the confines of an air conditioned car, air conditioned office, air conditioned restaurants, air conditioned gyms and you name all the other air conditioned facilities. I wonder whether you youngsters have heard of the word Ozone which is supposed to be freely available in sea side Bombay.

Today people are suffering from vitamin D deficiency in a city full of sunshine! Have you read the poem "What is this world if full of care, we have no time to stand and stare!" I admire the heights which you youngsters have already achieved or are on the way up there, but friends what about your body clocks? How long will they go against nature trying to keep up with the late nights, no proper eating times, no proper diet, no rest? Did you know that it has been a proved fact that a particular hormone is secreted in your body only during the day because it is activated only by sunlight. It is responsible for making you feel happy and contented. A very important factor like sunlight if is missing from your daily life you are bound to suffer from hormone deficiency which will definitely effect your performance, coupled with hours and hours before a computer, your body bones and muscles are bound to start creaking much before you cross thirty-five. By taking care of the miracle which is your body you are laying the foundation for a very successful life. Your body condition is directly related to your emotional condition. Lack of sleep, proper nutrition, proper exercise definitely draws on your reserves. You being young now, are able to pull off the stress caused by the competitive life, but not for a long time. Persistent headaches, acidity, tiredness, loss of interest in sex-life, irritability etc will soon catch up with you. If you do not have a healthy physical condition, it is bound to affect your interpersonal relationships, at home with family members, or at the work place with your



colleagues. In my counseling sessions I find women who have been skipping breakfast over a period of time trying to multitask with household duties, office work, children's school demands etc end up with feeling overwhelmed, suffer from low self esteem and are not able to handle simple problems of life which affect their matrimonial lives as well as their relationships in the office.

One of my clients is an unmarried women of thirty-five who is drawing a salary of Rs. Two Lakhs per month. She leaves home at 8 a.m. and returns after 10p.m. or even later. She has the office car and driver to take her and bring her back home. She has to travel abroad extensively, when she is at home on Sundays she is so exhausted that she can barely get up before 12 noon. She sends her parents abroad for holidays, spends for her younger brother's education, but she has no life of her own. Her family is having a very comfortable life at her expense, but she herself is missing out on all the beautiful things in life, no time for family get together, no time to interact with family and friends which is so needed to get the proper hormones released to keep your brain chemistry in proper balance, no time to cook a favourite dish or just sit by the sea-shore, or stroll barefoot in the park. When I see this modern trend of climbing the corporate ladder I wonder whether you youngsters have the time to smell the roses on the way and bask in its fragrance?

It is extremely fine to be an achiever, to do brilliantly in life, work hard, earn pots and pots of money, but can you forget that you are a human being, a social animal, who is a package of so many needs and emotions? The divorce rates have increased alarmingly. Youngsters communicate more with their Blackberry network than with their family members. Lack of communication with immediate family is leading to breakdown in relationships. I get extremely upset when at family gatherings youngsters who rarely put up an appearance, are seen constantly focusing their attention on their BBs. Today our youngsters have ventured into professional

territories unheard by us, they are earning amounts we could never have dreamt of at such a young age, but my question is, is this all leading to a healthy, satisfying life which is adding to social welfare, do the youngsters have quality time for themselves, the luxury of reading a good novel, sharing their aspirations and anguishes with their parents, talking with their spouses, playing with their children, having fun with their neighbours, doing something for their society or even to pursue their own hobbies? It is only when you are satisfied with yourself, lovingly taking care of yourself and all your needs it is then that you are able to give to others, to a purpose greater than ourselves and I promise you that it is this deep sense of fulfillment that will never leave you but will actually increase with the passage of time

*

विश्वामित्री...

रोजच पहाटणाच्या प्राचीला, वेगळी मी म्हणतो
आहे.. झापडलेल्या आठवणींनी तुझ्या, आगळ्या
म्हणून जगतो आहे. पण खरं सांगू.
निर्माल्य तुझे करायला हात माझे एकदा शिवशिवले
होते. वासनेचा फडा तुझ्याविषयी, मनात माझ्या
डोलला होता तेव्हाचे हरवलेले समाधान माझे.
वसंतातही फुलले नव्हते,
शिशिरातही हसले नव्हते
आणि वर्षाऋतूतही न्हाले नव्हते.
आज सौभाग्याची रोखली नजर तुझी
आतल्या आत मला जाळते आहे
समर्थन माझ्या चुकल्या मनाचे
पांगळ्या शब्दांनी, अडखळताना,
म्हणतो आहे मी इतरासारखाच...
अरे! विश्वामित्र सुद्धा ढळला होता!!!

-इना तळपदे



An ode to Her

–Anuradha Simit Desai

Many of us grow up with one...and she is a part of our earliest memories. She is the one who spent the most time with us...the one who held us through our booboos, hid our misdeeds, protected us from wrath, and took care of all our needs and wants. Yet we never realised her importance then.

And we don't realise the role she plays in all our lives, do we, at least not until we ourselves become mothers. And then suddenly, realization dawns, we are all appreciation for what she has done, and continues to do, for us and our children. We recognise the support system that she is, without whom we couldn't run our homes nor function in office. This recognition brings along with it a deep sense of gratitude. As time passes, we watch painfully as she moves more slowly, she gets up later every day, and doesn't do very much around the house. But still she can do no wrong and everything that she says is right, we will tolerate no bad talk about her, not even from our husbands. Yes, unfortunately it may be true that she is more appreciated by the female of the

species than the male; after all, we know her value. Not only on major occasions, we also plan our daily activities in consultation with her; her convenience and comfort is of paramount importance. We share our daily pressures with her, after all who would understand better?

Yet, yet...there are many amongst us who do not realize her worth, do not appreciate her enough, do not look after her, and even mistreat her sometimes. How unfortunate these people are, not to recognise the blessing they have in the form of her presence in their lives, forcing her to seek legal recourse, file police complaints, seek maintenance, and all after having spent years just looking after their well being.

Sappy e-mails extolling her virtues or a day dedicated to her, an fb page maybe, don't seem enough to thank her even symbolically. No card can ever capture the feelings she evokes in our hearts and the dread that we feel on imagining her absence. And hence, my endeavour here in the form of an ode to Her, to acknowledge the most important woman in our lives....our maid.

Look Who's Watching!

–Mrs. Shubhada S. Agaskar

(neè Ms. Vaishali M. Jayakar)

Dilip Raghunath Talpade sighed and switched off the Times Now News channel. He had just been viewing a segment on yesteryear Bombay. Dilip gave another sigh and his thoughts drifted back to his childhood days. His father Raghunath Vinayak Talpade was a strict parent and had ensured that his son got a good education and had instilled in him a strong sense of right and wrong. But life had been far simpler in those days. And much cheaper too! He recalled visiting the fish market along with his mother and hearing "Aanyaladhigra, khaanaraphuglaa". He remembered the happiness on his father's face when he had come home with the precious envelope containing his first salary-Rs.250/- and

laid it in his father's hands.

Dilip hurriedly came back to the present as Madhur tapped him on the shoulder. Madhur was his son and had just got his first job. He also had a daughter-Mrunal, who was studying in college. His wife Vrinda was currently out, shopping with her. What is it with women and shopping? They seem to have inbuilt radar when it comes to sales and whenever they spot an advert in the newspaper, they rush in droves to buy something that has had its price already inflated and then shown to be reduced during these so-called sales.

It was Saturday afternoon and Madhur informed him that he was going out with friends



and would not be back for dinner and would he please inform Mom as she couldn't be contacted on the mobile phone? Dilip nodded, waved him goodbye and turned back towards the side table to retrieve the remote control so that he could watch some cricket before his wife and daughter came back and switched on some boring daily soap.

Was it his imagination or did it really happen? He had been facing his father's portrait- his father had been painted sitting in a chair- a common pose in those days- and it seemed to him that he had just seen his father's hand beckon to him from the portrait. Dilip shook his head- no doubt, it was the indigestion caused by Vrinda's heavy lunch that was making him see things. But then it happened again. He distinctly saw his father raise his hand and make a sign for him to come closer towards the portrait.

Dilip moved in a daze towards it and as if by magic, his father's hand reached out through the glass, caught hold of him and yanked him inside. As he was being pulled inside, he heard a sharp gasp and simultaneously he felt his foot being dragged in the opposite direction i.e. outside the portrait. He turned to see who was pulling him by his foot and saw Madhur pulling him with all his might. But it seemed that his father was winning- after all, in his day, he had been a bodybuilder. With one sharp tug, first Dilip and then Madhur tumbled into the portrait.

Both fell with a thud on the mosaic floor. Madhur was the first one to recover. "Dad, what's going on? Where are we? I came back to get my cellphone, saw you being pulled inside and ran to help". Dilip picked himself up with a wince- he had landed on his rump- and looked around. It seemed to be the home of his childhood. "Madhur, I don't know what's happening either. I saw Pappa beckon me towards his portrait and the next thing I knew, I was being pulled inside. I think however, that we have just been dragged back to your grandfather's time". All this time, the man sitting in the chair had been listening to their conversation, but now, he stood up.

Raghunath Vinayak Talpade straightened the folds of his crisp, white dhoti, adjusted his pagadi and then cleared his throat.

"Arre Dilipya, I couldn't bear to see what was happening in your world so I called you inside to see if you still remembered how life was, back in the good, old days. It seems that I am also meeting Madhur now after a really long time. The last time I saw him was when he was a toddler and was just learning to walk. I passed away soon after that. Hyaporache kulle saaf kele aahetho"

Madhur, still pondering over his strange journey, nevertheless protested "Kay ho Aajoba. I am not a kukula baal now". His grandfather peered at him from under his shaggy eyebrows and said "For me, you are still a small child. Come see how we lived in your past." He led the duo out from the anteroom into the living room and waved at it. "This is our sadar. Since it is afternoon, I am sure that you will sit with me and have some tea." He then called out towards the kitchen "Aaho, will you please send some tea? Use the good kaasla-bashi. We have some visitors". He whispered to his son "Let us give your mother a surprise". Within a few minutes, a tall, regal lady wearing a nine-yard sari emerged from the kitchen. Madhur, who had never seen his grandmother, drank in the sight. She was decked out from top to toe in traditional jewellery. He had heard from his father that women, in those days, wore this kind of apparel and worked in the kitchen like this too.

"Aaho, see who has come to meet us?" Madhur whispered in his father's ear "Dad, why is he calling Aaji aaho all the time? Isn't her name Champu?". Dilip whispered back "In those days, a man would refer to his wife as aaho and she would also refer to her husband as aaho, since between husband and wife, names were never blatantly called out". In the meantime, his grandmother was delightedly exclaiming "Dilip, arre kasa aahes tu? I am meeting you after so many years. And this is Madhur, right? I watched him grow up from my portrait. Now that you have surprised me, I have a surprise for you too." Turning towards the kitchen, she called out "You can bring out the tea and snacks now".

Within a few moments, two ladies emerged from the kitchen- one carrying the tea tray and the other carrying plates piled with pangoji and bhanavla. When Dilip & Madhur



caught sight of them, they were flabbergasted. For those two ladies, who were garbed in traditional nine-yard saris and wearing traditional jewellery-right down to the Pathare Prabhu nath, were none other than Vrinda & Mrunal. Seeing their stunned faces, all the ladies burst out laughing. Dilip managed to gasp out "But how? Vrinda, hadn't you two gone out shopping?" Madhur just stood there with his mouth open like a goldfish.

Mrunal giggled and explained "Dada, close your mouth before flies enter it. I was passing Aaji's portrait in the hall & checking out her sari border- I wanted to get something like that for our College Traditional Day. As I passed by, she waved at me. At first I thought that I was seeing things....you know, I was chatting on the Net really late last night & initially, I thought that the lack of sleep was beginning to tell. But then, she did it again and even called out to me. So, I went closer and she pulled me in. Aie was just coming from the bedroom passage, saw me being pulled in and she ran to help. But Aaji was pretty strong-maybe, it's because she is used to lifting such heavy utensils in the kitchen-and Aie got pulled in too".

Vrinda added "Aaho, when I saw sasubai pulling her in, my heart almost stopped. She told us that she had wanted to chat with us for quite sometime now, and couldn't resist the temptation to do so today. We had always wanted to try out nine-yard saris but didn't know anyone who knew how to wear them nowadays. So, sasubai was gracious enough to lend us her nine-yard saris. But how is it that the two of you are here too?"

Dilip started laughing "It seems that your saasrebu had the same thought and pulled us in too. It's just that Aie thought of it first. Baykanchya dokyat hya supeek kalpana pahilyanda kashya yetat? Aaho Pappa, how do these modern ladies look in this avatar?" Raghunathrao cleared his throat and said "They look really nice. I used to wince every time when I used to see Mrunal walk past my portrait, wearing those tiny shorts. At least soonbai wore saris, but a woman wearing a nine-yard sari definitely looks grand. So, I am loving it".

Everyone burst out laughing. Madhur

exclaimed "So Aajoba, it seems that you have been watching TV too. See, everything modern is not bad!" His grandfather grinned sheepishly and said "Guilty! Now finish your tea and we'll get you two changed into more suitable attire. Then, we can explore the streets at leisure."

Mrunal excitedly said "Aajoba, can we ride on the tram? I have heard about it from Dad and had always wanted to ride one. But they were all gone by the time I was born".

Her father affectionately pulled her plait and said "Mrunal, do you know how cheap it was back then? Or rather, in the year we are in, a tram ticket from the Prince of Wales museum to Dadar costs about 1 anna. For your information, an anna is 1/16th of a rupee".

Mrunal was astonished. "Dad, surely, you are pulling my leg? In our age, a single rupee will get you hardly anything."

Her grandfather laughed and said "Here, we can live comfortably off very little. An egg costs about 2 annas, mutton is about 3 rupees a rattal-that's one pound for you and it costs about 8 annas for fish-4 annas for prawns and 4 annas for ghol fish."

Madhur couldn't believe his ears. "Aajoba, you know, if we want to have prawns, Mom has to shell out at least 50 rupees to the fisherwoman for a wata. And, the other day, I had gone with Dad to the fish-market to buy ghol. A patta costs about 500 rupees. This means that over the years, prices have increased astronomically. No wonder people are turning vegetarian; they just can't afford to shell out so much for non-vegetarian food".

Vrinda exclaimed "But Madhur, it's not just food prices that have gone up. For example, take servant salaries-we pay Radha Bai about 1000 rupees a month and she's not even a live-in servant. Do you know that here, a servant boy is paid about 10 rupees a month, inclusive of meals and tea and an adult servant's salary is about 25 rupees? And to cite another example, let's take school and college fees- here, the school fee is 5 rupees a month while college fees for a term would be about 120 rupees. Do you remember how much we had to shell out for donation when you took admission in Engineering College?"



Even though you were a top ranker, they had the audacity to ask for a bribe in the form of donation to the college. Here, it works solely on the marks and the hard work that a student has put into his or her studies. No bribery at all!"

Champu Aaji remarked "But everyone, you have to remember that here, salaries are also less. A graduate gets roughly 100 rupees a month while someone with an engineering degree gets around 250 rupees with an expected increment of 10 rupees a year. However, since things cost less, we can afford to buy more if we are well educated and holding a good job."

Mrunal was fidgeting a bit. She was thinking about trams and exploring olden time Bombay in general. Finally, everyone finished their tea and got up. Dilip and Madhur changed into dhotis and coats while Champu aaji got out 3 shelas from the trunk. Mrunal wondered aloud "Aaji, it's not winter time, so why are you taking out these shawls?" Her aaji explained "Here, whenever a woman from a good family goes out, she first drapes herself in a shela. Soonbai, take these and drape them around your and Mrunal's shoulders. Then, we can go out".

The Talpade family set off for the nearest tram stop. Mrunal & Madhur looked around with interest. There were a lot of bungalows and even the bigger houses seemed to be only 4-5 storeys high. Greenery was abundant and each courtyard had lots of trees. The roads seemed to be very clean as compared to the roads that they were used to. When Mrunal wondered about it aloud, her grandmother told her that the roads and gutters were hosed down every Sunday morning with water from the fire hydrants. Her grandfather chuckled "Bara ka, do you know that while the gutters are being cleaned, one person has to stand near the fire hydrant to release the valve for the water to start. The person inside the gutter, holding the water pipe screams out 'Ehhhh Choooodddd' as a signal to start the water. If one didn't know what it meant, one could easily arrive at the wrong conclusion." Madhur and Mrunal found this too funny for words and were soon giggling away.

Suddenly, Mrunal tripped over something. As she stopped giggling and looked down, she

noticed that there were rails embedded in the road. Dilip pointed them out to his children and said "Do you see these? They are for the trams." Soon enough, they heard the tram bell clanging as it came down the street. Madhur remarked "It moves so slowly. At this rate, our car would have reached Metro cinema by now." His parents and grandparents exchanged smiles as they all thought 'Today's generation is always in a hurry'.

The tram came to a stop and everyone got in. As they all sat down, Mrunal thought to herself 'What quaint wooden seats.' Her aajoba asked her "Mrunal, did you see the seats? The backrest of these seats can be changed in such a way that at any given time, the passenger is always facing the front, unlike train seats." Mrunal was intrigued. "How is this possible, aajoba?" she asked. Raghunath Rao pointed out the slots at either end of the wooden seats. "Do you see the backrest? It is supported by bars that pass through these slots. When the tram reaches its last stop, the backs are just moved to the other side." Mrunal was most impressed. "Hey! What a wonderful idea! So, no one has to face backwards while traveling."

The tram started moving and Madhur and Mrunal peered out the windows to check out olden time Bombay and its many inhabitants. Mrunal whispered to her mother "Mom, look, that woman seems to be wearing the entire contents of her jewellery box. And come to think of it, most women that I see walking here are wearing more ornaments on a routine basis, than we would ever wear, back in our modern age, except for family weddings. How can they afford it? And aren't they scared of chain-snatchers?" Vrinda gave her a wry smile and explained "Mrunal, do you know what the gold price is in the year we are in? It's about 16 rupees a tola. And here, generally, people are honest. The crime rate is low and robberies are rare. Your Mama used to go out with his friends to watch the late night movie at the Majestic cinema. He used to leave the back door unlatched, so that he could sneak in at 12:45 a.m. after the show got over."

Madhur was listening intently to their conversation and immediately voiced an opinion "Mom, 12:45 a.m. is not late. Nowadays, shows



get over at 2:30 a.m. His father added "Yes, and nowadays sons add to their parents blood pressure by coming home at 4:00 in the morning." Madhur protested "But Dad, that happened just once! My friends wanted a party to celebrate me getting my first job."

His father retorted "Yes, I know. Your grandparents were extremely strict during my growing up years! Once, I came home really late from school because my friends took me kite-flying in the maidan, after school was let out for the day. When I reached home, I told my parents that my teacher had kept me back for some extra coaching. I would never have been caught, but for our next-door neighbour. She was passing by the maidan and saw me. She came home later that evening for haldi-kunku and casually mentioned to Aie that she had seen me in the maidan that afternoon, flying kites. I still remember the walloping that I got when the truth came out."

Madhur and Mrunal started laughing when they heard this. Vrinda complained "Sasubai, they think it's a big joke! When they become parents themselves, they will know how worried we get, when kids don't come home on time. Madhur coming home after midnight is bad enough, now Mrunal wants her coming home time extended too. I have told her that while she is in her father's home, she will have to abide by his rules!" Her mother-in-law nodded in agreement and added "Here, no respectable woman will be seen venturing outside the house alone, after dark".

By now, the tram had slowly trundled past the Princess Street Fire Temple. In a few minutes, it would reach Metro cinema, where they were to get off. Madhur and Mrunal looked out of the windows with interest. Hawkers plied their wares by screaming at the top of their voices. A sitafal walapassed them, shouting "Sitapal Sitapal" and Mrunal suddenly envisioned Sita running round a track, wearing sports shoes, while Ram timed her with a stopwatch. She giggled to herself and that caught her mother's attention. Vrinda too laughed when Mrunal told her what she was thinking and said "We used to have a Kalaiwala visiting our street. He used to scream at the top of his voice 'Eh Kale Khalee Ye' and when we were

young, we always thought that he was calling out to Kala Kaku, who lived next door to us, to come down." Mrunal giggled and exclaimed "Poor thing, she must be experiencing what girls named Munni and Shiela go through in our time".

By now, they had passed through streets lined with chawls with tiled roofs. Since there were no skyscrapers, one could easily see the sky. Air pollution too seemed to be less, as there were hardly any cars to be seen. By the time the tram conductor shouted "Dhobi Talao", the family was ready to get off and explore some more on foot.

Raghunathrao claimed his grandchildren's attention. "See here, the tram tracks bifurcate at this point. A set of tracks go towards Victoria Terminus, while the other set head towards Flora Fountain, onwards to the Museum and further on towards Sassoon Docks. We are now near Metro Cinema. This area has a lot of offices and also Irani Restaurants like Kyanis and Bastanis. Bombay is like a melting pot of cultures - Apart from Hindus, you will find other flavours like Irani, Parsee, Muslim and Christian. Let's go to Chowpatty now". Saying this, he now led them towards the road leading to Marine Lines Station.

Suddenly, they heard the noise of a huge commotion. Police whistles started blowing, people started running helter-skelter and they heard some people shouting "Danga suru zaalare". Raghunathrao and Dilip quickly realized what was happening and soon herded the ladies and Madhur towards a less conspicuous spot. The roads soon emptied of pedestrians and shop shutters started being abruptly pulled down. The Talpade family huddled together, thinking of a way out of this situation.

Raghunathrao looked around. There was hardly any traffic on the road. But wait! Was that a Dodge coming towards them? The driver of the car drew up alongside them and shouted "Quickly get in, I am going towards Zaoba Wadi and can drop you at Chira Bazaar." As Raghunathrao hesitated, the man added "Aho, don't worry! I am Dr. Joshi and have a lot of friends among your community. I recognized you from a medical charity function where someone had pointed you



out as a person with great physique. Come now, there is no time to dally! The rioters are heading this way."

Everyone scrambled to get seated inside the Dodge. Dilip couldn't help thinking "If riots were to break out in our time, I am sure that even known people would not stop to help and would just flee in blind panic. And here is a complete stranger, helping us all out." He closed his eyes and prayed for his family's safety as the car rushed towards Zaoba Wadi and safety.

Gradually, he realized that someone was shaking his shoulder. "Vrinda, don't worry! We

shall reach home safely" he murmured. "What are you saying? We are home." said Vrinda and Mrunal together. Opening his eyes, he spied Vrinda wearing jeans and a kurti while Mrunal wore shorts and a red top. Shopping bags lay around them on the floor and both women wore puzzled frowns. "Baba, what is this? You were dozing in front of the TV again!" accused Mrunal. She couldn't understand it when Dilip stood up abruptly, walked across to his father's portrait and knocked on the glass. But, we certainly do!

*

Friendship

–Swapneel Bramhandkar

A Friend is a person capable of loving irrespective of whether he is being loved or not. Unconditional love is the real base for true friendship. Friendship transcends the barriers of age, caste, creed. friendship can exist with pet animals like dogs, cats, birds and even in familial relations like cousins, brother, sister and their spouses. Yet, more than friendship, love is the binding force in familial relationships. In a deeper sense, friendship involves choice and volition. The concept of friendship needs to be carefully handled because often a man is known by the company he keeps and knowing the company helps one to know himself and develop his personality to the fullest. Each of our friends mirrors a rejected or acknowledged trait in us. They happen to be our friends because it is ourselves in different forms and a unified vision of them constitutes to the Sameness of our identity.

Friendship exists for many reasons like Virtue, Usefulness and pleasure. when virtue is the reason, friendship exists for the Sake of friendship. where both like each other and cherish each other for some creditable values in the other's personality. You wish to be the friend of that person for the sheer personality that he/she has. It has a magic in itself. It attracts you and is mutual. You know that you would even die

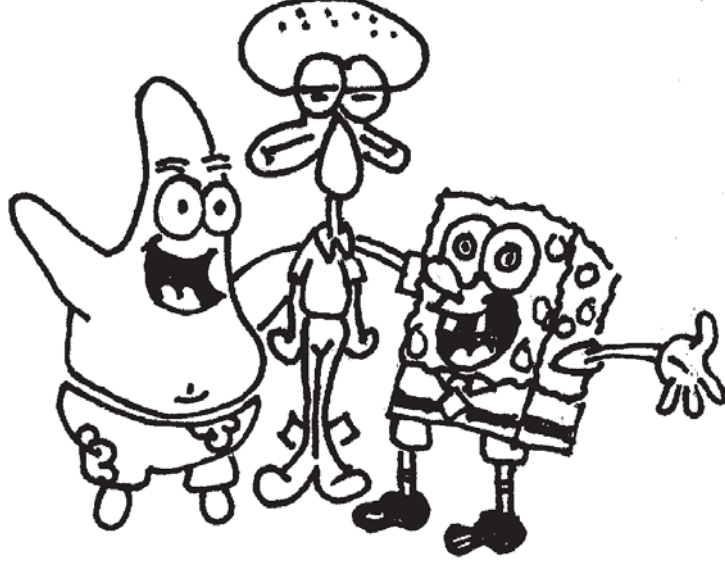
for that person. But you also know that your friend would make you live rather than die for him/her. A platonic concept indeed.

A friendship for usefulness is formed for the utilitarian value of it. How useful is that person for me? What can I benefit from him? can I use his car? Will he use his reputation and influence to fetch me a good job? Will he lend me money in need? Thus, a person may maintain friendship for practical, professional and political reasons. This type of friendship is useful but lasts so long as the need for utility persists. Once we do away with the utility need, the friendship eventually dies.

Now friendship for pleasure is formed essentially on account of the pleasure the relationship is capable of giving. He is a joker. The moment he enters, you forget all your worries. you cannot but wonder what new joke he has got up his sleeve. you are on cloud nine. The point is how much pleasure you derive from this friendship.

Practically speaking, all types of friendships overlap each other. A relationship started on the basis of usefulness may get elevated to the status of virtue in due course. Similarly a virtuous friendship may also give usefulness and pleasure. It would be an ideal package to have all the three together. But you see, my friend, how difficult it is to form relationships?





KIDS-SECTION

Introduction

–Shilpa S. Jayakar

"The child is God's gift to the family", a simple yet thought provoking statement made by Mother Teresa. Children are a great source of joy to be with and I am sure anyone who has spent time with or around kids will definitely agree to this. They are described as innocent, sweet, cute, loving, caring, full-of-life, funny, smart, loud, happy, bright, crazy and many a times even silly. We often develop notions that a kid knows nothing. Seldom do we realize and appreciate their ability to communicate. Right from birth these little angels interact and tell us their perspective, if not in words but through smiles, tears, and cuddles. In fact, while we try to teach children all about life, children teach us what life is all about! Spending time and listening closely to them will justify what I write. For the past few years we have seen children expressing their deep desires and feelings about their parents through their writings. To make it a bit more interesting, this year we have a fascinating tete-a-tete with the children, where they speak their heart out. Go on and enjoy every word of what each child has to say..



Anish Neel Kirtikar

Std 2

1. What is the one thing that makes your family special?
Because my family gets lots of games for me, I get to eat cakes and celebrate birthdays
2. If you could change one rule that your family has regulated, what would you change?
To take a bath
3. If you could be invisible for a day, what would you do?
I will go to all the chocolate shops and eat all the chocolates
4. If you could give one gift to every single child in the world, what gift would you give?
I will give all broken games to all children
5. If you could make one rule that everyone in the world had to follow, what rule would you make? Why?
Don't drink and drive
6. Tell us the five best things about you...?
I am well behaved, I write many exams, I get 12/12 in some exams and in some exams I get 10/10, I wake up early in the morning only on holidays, I complete my homework on time
7. Which of the following choices do you think would be best, and why?
 - ✓ a. Dinner with everyone at the table and the TV switched on with your favorite program
 - b. Dinner in which everybody took what they wanted from the fridge and no one ate the same thing
 - c. Dinner with the whole family together and no TV switched on
8. If a genie would give you only one wish, which one would you pick, and why?
 - ✓ a. being world-class attractive
 - b. being a genius
 - c. being famous for doing something great
9. What kinds of lies do your friends tell their parents?
Lie about bad remarks received in school
10. If you could decorate your place, what would it look like?
It will look very nice



Neeshka Kothare

Age: 8 years

25. What is the one thing that makes your family special?
Ans: I love my family because they help me everywhere and even when I have problems.
26. If you could change one rule that your family has regulated, what would you change?
Ans: I wish I would not have to eat vegetables.
27. If you could be invisible for a day, what would you do?
Ans: I would watch TV and eat lots of ice cream



28. If you could give one gift to every single child in the world, what gift would you give?

Ans: I would give them Toys.

29. If you could make one rule that everyone in the world had to follow, what rule would you make? Why?

Ans: Don't make too much noise because I don't like too much noise.

30. Tell us the five best things about you...?

Ans: 1. I love to make friends.

2. I sing.

3. I like to help my family and my friends.

4. I speak nicely with everybody.

5. I don't like to hit anyone.

7. Which of the following choices do you think would be best, and why?

j. Dinner with everyone at the table and the TV switched on with your favorite program

k. Dinner in which everybody took what they wanted from the fridge and no one ate the same thing

✓ l. Dinner with the whole family together and no TV switched on because my mother does not like the TV on.

8. If a genie would give you only one wish, which one would you pick, and why?

m. being world-class attractive

n. being a genius because I want to study.

✓ o. being famous for doing something great

17. What kinds of lies do your friends tell their parents?

Ans: My friend told her parents that she will not watch TV and she did.

18. If you could decorate your place, what would it look like?

Ans: It would look like a beautiful garden.

Aditi Simit Desai

Std 1



13. What is the one thing that makes your family special?

Because they buy me new, new toys and gifts, that's why I like them

14. If you could change one rule that your family has regulated, what would you change?

I want to change the rule of using mouth wash given by my dentist every night before sleeping

15. If you could be invisible for a day, what would you do?

I will sit and watch TV all day and eat biscuits and Khakra, and also study

16. If you could give one gift to every single child in the world, what gift would you give?

One big inflatable swimming pool, the size of my living room



17. If you could make one rule that everyone in the world had to follow, what rule would you make? Why
Don't throw plastic bags because then Mother Earth will feel sad
18. Tell us the five best things about you...?
I like to play with my friends, I am so sweet, I give my Aai one kiss everyday, I am a good girl, My handwriting is very nice
7. Which of the following choices do you think would be best, and why?
- ✓ g. Dinner with everyone at the table and the TV switched on with your favorite program
 - h. Dinner in which everybody took what they wanted from the fridge and no one ate the same thing
 - i. Dinner with the whole family together and no TV switched on
8. If a genie would give you only one wish, which one would you pick, and why?
- ✓ g. being world-class attractive
 - h. being a genius
 - i. being famous for doing something great
13. What kinds of lies do your friends tell their parents?
They lie about completing their homework
14. If you could decorate your place, what would it look like?
Birthday party at a hotel
-

Shriya Kaushik Jaykar

Std: 3rd



1. What is the one thing that makes your family special?
ans : The one thing that makes my family special is the love they share.
2. If you could change one rule that your family has regulated, what would you change?
ans : Sleeping early at night.
3. If you could be invisible for a day, what would you do?
ans : I would play a lot and I would sleeeeeep.
4. If you could give one gift to every single child in the world, what gift would you give?
ans : I would give them toys.
5. If you could make one rule that everyone in the world had to follow, what rule would you make? Why?
ans : According to me, 1 rule that I would like to make is studying compulsory for every child.
Because by studying.....we get FULL MARKS!!
6. Tell us the five best things about you...?
- ans :
- 1. I am good.
 - 2. I am clever, intelligent and smart.
 - 3. I am very nice.
 - 4. I help others.



5. I care for others.
7. Which of the following choices do you think would be best, and why?
- Dinner with everyone at the table and the TV switched on with your favorite program
 - Dinner in which everybody took what they wanted from the fridge and no one ate the same thing
 - ✓ c. Dinner with the whole family together and no TV switched on
8. If a genie would give you only one wish, which one would you pick, and why?
- being world-class attractive
 - ✓ b. being a genius
 - being famous for doing something great
9. What kinds of lies do your friends tell their parents?
- ans : 1. They say that last year they were 7 yrs old and this year they say they are 9 yrs old!!
2. They tell that they will play outside the classroom but they play on the ground!!
10. If you could decorate your place, what would it look like?
- ans : If I could decorate my place, it would look like a palace..
-



Ishaan Kothare

Age: 11 years

19. What is the one thing that makes your family special?
- Ans 1: The one thing that makes my family special is that we don't fight we each other and we love each other.
20. If you could change one rule that your family has regulated, what would you change?
- Ans 2: I do not wish to change any rule.
21. If you could be invisible for a day, what would you do?
- Ans 3: I will go and drive a limozine or I will go to the cricket stadium with my friends and play on the ground.
22. If you could give one gift to every single child in the world, what gift would you give?
- Ans 4: I would give every child money to buy whatever they want.
23. If you could make one rule that everyone in the world had to follow, what rule would you make? Why?
- Ans 5: I would not make any rule. I would like people to live their life the way they want.
24. Tell us the five best things about you...?
- Ans 6: 1. I don't like to fight with anyone.
2. I am kind.
3. I don't interfere in other's life.
4. I can play cricket.
5. People call me a sincere and cute child.



7. Which of the following choices do you think would be best, and why?
- ✓ a. Dinner with everyone at the table and the TV switched on with your favorite program because I like to watch TV and I also like to have dinner with my family.
 - b. Dinner in which everybody took what they wanted from the fridge and no one ate the same thing
 - c. Dinner with the whole family together and no TV switched on
8. If a genie would give you only one wish, which one would you pick, and why?
- j. being world-class attractive
 - ✓ k. being a genius so that I would get the best job available.
 - l. being famous for doing something great
15. What kinds of lies do your friends tell their parents?
- Ans 9: A friend told his mother that he had got 4 out of 10 in a test but actually he had got 9 out of 10.
16. If you could decorate your place, what would it look like?
- Ans 10: A palace.

Leena Neel Kirtikar

Std 5



7. What is the one thing that makes your family special?
Because we care for each other, my entire family is very kind
8. If you could change one rule that your family has regulated, what would you change?
Rule regulated by Teacher and not by family, no homework should be given everyday
9. If you could be invisible for a day, what would you do?
I would go to McDonalds and eat Burger and French Fries
10. If you could give one gift to every single child in the world, what gift would you give?
Toys and clothes
11. If you could make one rule that everyone in the world had to follow, what rule would you make? Why?
Not to waste paper so that the trees will not be cut, so we will get fresh air and oxygen
12. Tell us the five best things about you...?
Fair, Short Hair, Kind, Intelligent, Beautiful
7. Which of the following choices do you think would be best, and why?
- ✓ d. Dinner with everyone at the table and the TV switched on with your favorite program
 - e. Dinner in which everybody took what they wanted from the fridge and no one ate the same thing
 - f. Dinner with the whole family together and no TV switched on



- 8 If a genie would give you only one wish, which one would you pick, and why?
d. being world-class attractive
✓ e. being a genius
f. being famous for doing something great
- 11 What kinds of lies do your friends tell their parents?
I don't know
- 12 If you could decorate your place, what would it look like?
Fairy's House
-



Aditi Sachin Vijaykar

1. What is the one thing that makes your family special?
My grandparent's discipline.
My Father's strong but silent love.
My mother's omnipresence.
2. If you could change one rule that your family has regulated, what would you change?
Not letting me watch T.V the whole day!
3. If you could be invisible for a day, what would you do?
like MR. INDIA i would make all the wrongs in the world right.
4. If you could give one gift to every single child in the world, what gift would you give?
A Smile!
5. If you could make one rule that everyone in the world had to follow, what rule would you make? Why?
NO one should disturb the world peace so that everyone can live happily.
6. Tell us the five best things about you...?
I am good at drawing, I am good at singing, I am good at dancing, I am helpful, n I love my family!!
7. Which of the following choices do you think would be best, and why?
 - a. Dinner with everyone at the table and the TV switched on with your favorite program
 - b. Dinner in which everybody took what they wanted from the fridge and no one ate the same thing
 - ✓ c. Dinner with the whole family together and no TV switched on, So that we can discuss things, tell jokes,talk with one another.
- 8 If a genie would give you only one wish, which one would you pick, and why?
 - a. being world-class attractive
 - ✓ b. being a genius, Because with my genius i can do something good for myself and others.
 - c. being famous for doing something great
- 9 What kinds of lies do your friends tell their parents?
Dont know.



- 10 If you could decorate your place, what would it look like?
I would decorate it like people decorate their houses in christmas.
-

KRUTARTH M. SHETE



1. What is something that makes your family special?

ans :Because we have celebration on all occasion whether it is birthday, Ganapati , Navaratri , Diwali or New year.

2. If could change one rule that your family has, what would you change?

ans : I want to change that we must get freedom for playing.

3. If you could be invisible for a day, what would you do?

ans : I will play PSP,PC,X-BOX etc. After playing I would do my studies& All other things.

4. If you could give one gift to every single child in the world, what gift would you give?.

ans : I would give them happiness, joy & love.

5.If you could make one rule that everyone in the world had to follow, what rule would you make? Why?

ans : One must end the corruption out & all crimes because if it happens then the country will be safe.

6. Tell me the five best things about you...?

1. I obey all instructions
2. I have a liking for cricket.
3. I have a sharing nature
4. I am very caring boy
5. & I am also helpful boy

7. Which of the following choices do you think would be best, and why?

- ✓ a. Dinner with everyone at the table and the TV on with your favorite program
- b. Dinner in which everybody took what they wanted from the fridge and no one had the same thing
- c. Dinner with the whole family together and no TV on

8 If a genie would give you only one wish, which would you pick, and why?

- a. being world-class attractive
- b. being a genius
- ✓ c. being famous for doing something great

9 What kinds of lies do your friends tell their parents?

Ans. I really don't know I am sorry.

10 If you could decorate our place, what would it look like?

Ans. House like BIG BOSS .

Minnesota Diwali Jatra- The state fair through the eyes of a 7 year old

**-Anika Jaideep Vijayakar
Age: 7.5 years**

Today we went to the MN state fair. My father says it's the American version of our Mahim-chi jatra. It was at the St Paul State Fairgrounds about half an hour away from our house. This is held every year here before the summer holidays end. The first thing we saw as we entered the state fair was a 'Miracle of Birth Centre'. Here there were a lot of animals who were giving birth to their young babies. Cows, sheep, goats, rabbits, pigs and even turkeys.

We saw a cow give birth to a calf. It took about half an hour and they showed it on the TV screens everywhere in the center. There was an animal doctor who was explaining everything to us. I really liked it. Even my brother Ayaan enjoyed seeing it. He is only four years old.

Then we went and saw the horses in another big barn. There were horses of all colors and sizes. Black, brown, grey and white. There was one horse that was so big that its behind was taller than my father's head!! Its feet were also very big. There was a lady who was polishing his feet (hoofs). We even got to touch some horses on their head. It was fun.

There were also many rides and fun games. Me and my brother Ayaan entered into a maze of mirrors. There were also some funny mirrors in which we looked very tall or very thin or very fat. It was very funny. Both of us laughed a lot

There was a man who tried to guess my weight and he lost. So I got a dolphin as a prize. We also played a fishing game in which we had to fish for some rubber sharks using a toy fishing rod. Both of us got a fish and a prize. I got a bouncy ball and Ayaan got a sword .He was very thrilled. We also sat in a merry go round.

After roaming for more than four hours all of us were very hungry. There were many different things to eat and drink. Chips, sausages, ice creams, lemonade, hot dogs, oysters etc

We spent two more hours at the fair and we were really tired at the end of the day. I really enjoyed myself. It was the best day of summer....



भाषा

– शौनक जयकर
(इ. ९वी, इंग्रजी माध्यम)

आपल्या सर्वांना माहितच आहे की आपल्या देशात अनेक भाषा बोलल्या जातात. त्यातील आपण बोलतो की 'हिंदी' ही आपली राष्ट्रभाषा आहे. आपण महाराष्ट्रात राहतो. आपली इकडची भाषा मराठी आहे. आता तुम्ही म्हणाल की यात काय? हे तर सर्वांना माहित आहे. पण मी म्हणून की यातील एक गमतीशीर गोष्ट आहे ती म्हणजे... आपण सर्व एका काळी शाळेत तर गेलाच असाल. त्यातील सर्वांचा अनुभव असेलच की प्रत्येक विषयाची शिक्षिका आप-आपल्या विषयात त्या-त्या विषयाच्या भाषेत बोलायला सांगत असते. याचे उदा. म्हणजे की मराठीची शिक्षिका आपल्याला मराठीत बोलण्यास सांगते. हिंदीची शिक्षिका हिंदी भाषेत बोलायला सांगते. पण तुम्हीच सांगा की गणिताचा विषय किंवा भूगोल, इतिहाससारखा विषय असेल तर तुम्ही कोणत्या भाषेचा प्रयोग कराल? आपल्या पूर्वजांनी ० ते १० आकड्यांचा शोध लावला. वेग-वेगळ्या भाषा शोधून काढल्या; पण अशा विषयांच्या भाषा शोधता आल्या नाहीत. पण त्यांना दोष देण्याने काही फरक पडणार नाही आहे. खरेतर आपणही तेवढेच दोषी आहोत. भाषा आपल्या जीवनातल्या एका आधारासारखे आहे. त्या आपल्या भावनांना व्यक्त करण्यात सहाय्यता करतात. ज्या भावना आपल्याला दाखवून किंवा करून दाखवता येत नाहीत, त्या भावना आपल्याला भाषेच्या माध्यमातून व्यक्त करता येतात. भाषा व्यक्त करण्यावरून आठवले की शाळेत जर 'भाषा'

नसती, तर माझ्यासारखी कितीतरी मुले अत्यंत प्रसन्न झाली असती. मुले नव्हे तर शिक्षक पण आपल्या एवढेच खूश असते. या मागचे कारण असे... शाळेत आमच्या श्रवण, लेखन व भाषण संवाद अशा अनेक परीक्षा नसत्या. याने मुले ही खूश कारण अभ्यास कमी झाला असता व शिक्षकांना ही टेंशन नसतं की मुलांना गुण द्यायचे आहेत. पण जर भाषा नसती, तर आपला 'वेळ ही कसा घालवावा' हा प्रश्न पडला असता. आपल्यापैकी सर्वांना आवड असते की काम करता-करता गाणी म्हणायची. ती सुरात असो-नसो ती दुसरी गोष्ट. गाणं म्हणायला फार आवडते. पण जर भाषा नसती तर कोणाला ही गाणी गाता आली नसती व कोणाचा वेळही घालवता आला नसता. तसे बघावे तर खूप काही विचित्र वाटलं असतं. क्रिकेटची कॉमेंट्री नसती व क्रिकेट बघायला काही मज्जा नसती आली. पण ज्या माणसाला आपल्या बायकोची बोलणी रोज-रोज ऐकावी लागतात, बॉसची बोलणी व आईच्या म्हणी ऐकाव्या लागतात, त्या माणसाना मात्र खूप बरे वाटले असते. तर या सगळ्यांनो, आपल्याला कळलंच असेल की भाषा माणसाकरता किती आवश्यक आहे व अनेक माणसांकरता वाईट आहे. अशा पद्धतीने आपल्या देशात विविध भाषा असूनही आपण एक-दुसऱ्याशी एकदम चांगल्या तऱ्हेने वागतो व भाषा ही चांगली वापरतो.

आता मी तुमच्याशी संवाद साधतो आहे. तो कशामुळे? भाषेमुळे!

MURDER MAYHEM

Mithil Velkar
(Age 14)

The sun began to set, as I was following the impeccably dressed mafia leader. The criminal underhand had begun rising in Mumbai, so I decided to do something. I figured following the leader would provide me clues, but disaster struck. My phone rang.

My cover was blown. I ran for it, barely making it into an alley. I then picked up my phone. "Yes, Detective Mithil speaking..." A man had called me for a murder mystery! Later at the scene of crime, Dr. K. K. Modi told me that his tycoon brother B. K. Modi had been murdered. Apparently the previous night B. K. Modi went to bed early and for the last few days his behavior was very disturbed. "I thought B. K. had stress", talked K. K. "He's been like that ever since he visited the Wimbledon opener match." I decided to check out Wimbledon as my next clue hunting place, bid goodbye to K. K. and fed his number into my phone. At Wimbledon I went undercover as a bellboy. There are advantages of being a 14 year old detective. I had 12 shifts a day, 15 minutes each. 3 shifts for 4 matches each. As I finished my shift, I went to explore. At the main building I saw something awkward. I was staring at the cooler and saw a packet inside. Quickly taking a sample I ran back in time for my last shift. At home I discovered the packet contained Librium, an untraceable drug (liquid form). The next day I found a man loitering around near the cooler with a phone to his ear. The strange thing was he wasn't talking. I figured this was my man. I followed him till he was in an empty lane and confronted him. He took a fighting pose, but a roundhouse kick to the nose made him talk. He told me that the man who paid him talked with a voice changer. Then from behind someone hit me with a shovel. As I blacked out the master mind said, "You lose." Before I could catch a glimpse of his face, everything went black... I woke up in a box with no light. I took out my height reader and realized I was half a foot below ground. After that I began panicking. Then I thought, "Fool you have limited oxygen, don't panic!" I slowed down and took a deep breath and held it. Then using the hardest object, my head, I broke the box and burst through the sand. I gasped for air and struggled out. I thought, "Too close, but I now know the criminal."

I caught K. K. Modi at the airport and lugged him home. I called B. K.'s wife and K. K.'s wife at the bureau. "Alright I killed B. K." confessed K. K. "The old fool was already senile. He found out about Librium." "You planned to make millions betting on a newbie by feeding Librium to his opponents." I said. "Yes, but I gave him a dose too and then killed him." "I knew you had a voice changer. That is why I caught you." There folks, I solved the mystery that way.

साता जन्माची खरेदी

— नंदकुमार कृ विजयकर

चिटू 'सकाळ' सोडून लोकसत्तेत गेला. चिटूला बघायची जी एक सवय लागली होती ती आता खंडीत झाली. मी सकाळी पेपर वाचायला घेतला रे घेतला की आमचा पिटुकला धावत येई. शेवटच्या पानावरील चिटू बघायची त्याची धडपड चालू असे. आता त्या जागी 'गप्पाटप्पा' हे सदर येतं. मी ते फारसं नियमित वाचत नाही. पण अलिकडेच त्यात आलेला एक किस्सा मला फारच भावला. एक माणूस एका रशियन घरात जाऊन तिथलं दार ठोठावतो. 'कोणी पुरुष माणूस आहे का घरात?' एक चिमुरडी पोरगी दार उघडते. "बाबा घरी नाहीत, बाहेर गेलायत" "कधी परत येणार तुझे बाबा?" "बरोबर २४ तास ३० मिनिट आणि १५ सेकंदांनी" त्या माणसाला मोठं नवल वाटतं. तो विचारतो, "बाळ, तू हे कसं काय सांगू शकतेस?" "कारण माझे बाबा अंतराळवीर आहेत." "बरं! मग तुझी आई आहे का घरात आई?" "आई ना? ती मार्केटींगला गेलीय" "परत कधी येणार?" "ते माहीत नाही."

पाहिलंत? अंतराळात गेलेला माणूस वेळेवर परत येतो; पण खरेदीला गेलेली बाई परत कधी येणार हे ब्रह्मदेवाच्या बापालापण सांगता येणार नाही. जगाच्या पाठीवर कुठेही जा, महिलावर्गाचा हा गुणधर्म सर्व ठिकाणी सारखाच. खरेदी म्हटलं की, या महिलांच्या अंगात बारा हत्तीचं (का हत्तीणीचं?) बळ अंगात शिरतं. या काय आणि किती खरेदी करतील याचा अंदाज बांधणं कठीण. परवाच कुठेतरी वाचलं, जपानमध्ये एक गृहिणी बागकामाला लागणारा छोटासा पाण्याचा पाईप आणण्यासाठी बाजारात गेली आणि येताना एक मोठा हत्तीच विकत घेऊन आली. पुढे असंही कळण्यात आलं की, ती बाई हत्तीच्या साफसफाईसाठी, होज् पाईप आणण्याच्या विचारात आहे आणि त्या बाईचा पती मात्र चिंताक्रांत आहे.

आमच्या घरची परिस्थिती काही वेगळी नाही. पण त्यात थोडासा फरक आहे. आमची सौ. 'किचन स्पेशालिस्ट' आहे. म्हणजे असं की, स्वयंपाकघरात

उपयोगी येणारी यंत्रं, उपकरणं, अवजारं आणि त्या अनुषंगाने येणाऱ्या अनेक गृहोपयोगी वस्तू यांच्या खरेदीचा जबरदस्त शोक आम्ही बाळगून आहोत. बाजारात जे जे काही नवीन असेल ते प्रथम आपल्या घरात असायला पाहिजे हा अट्टाहास. वर्तमानपत्रांत एखाद्या नवीन उपकरणाची जाहिरात आली रे आली की बायको खरेदीला गेली. ही खरेदी म्हणजे मोठी डोकेदुखी असते. वर्षांचे बाराही महिने कुठे ना कुठे सेल, व्यापारीपेठ यांचा रतीब चालूच असतो. पाल्याला टिळक मंदिर, दादरला डी. सिल्वा हायस्कूलचं पटांगण, शिवाजी पार्कला ब्राह्मणसेवा संघ, पुण्याला टिळकस्मारक मंदिर या ठिकाणी 'भव्य विक्री व प्रदर्शन' कायम वस्तीला असतं. पुण्याला तर जिकडे मोकळी जागा सापडेल त्यावर या 'फेस्टीवल शॉपी' कुत्र्याच्या छत्रीसारख्या उगवत असतात. ह्या ग्राहकपेठांचं काही कळत नाही. दरवर्षी तेच ते स्टॉल्स, तोच तो माल आणि तीच ती माणसं पुन्हा पुन्हा जाऊन काय खरेदी करतात, ते त्याचं त्यानांच ठाऊक. काय तर म्हणे मराठी व्यापारीपेठ आणि शिरल्या शिरल्या चपलांचं दुकान. या दुकानांच्या जागादेखील ठरलेल्या. सुवासिक अत्तरं, सुगंधी उटणं, पावडरी, तेलं असल्या स्टॉल्ला लागून झुरळं मारण्याच्या औषधाचा स्टॉल. आता हा परफ्युम स्प्रे आणि तो बेगानस्प्रे याचं काय नातं आहे हे परमेश्वरच जाणो. अशा प्रदर्शनात आमची सौ. मात्र इकडे तिकडे न बघता थेट गृहोपयोगी वस्तुच्या विभागाकडे, एखाद्या लोहचुंबकाने खेचावं ना तशी चाललेली असते. आता वाटेल मॅग्नेटीक् थेरपी म्हणजे चुंबकीय चिकिस्सा असा एक गाळा असतो. पण तिथले लाल, निळ्या रंगाचे, छोटे मोठे लोहचुंबक तिला आकर्षू शकत नाही. ती आपल्या आवडत्या दुकानासमोर येऊन उभी रहाते आणि मागून आम्ही, खांद्यावर पिशव्या वागवत. अहो त्या दुकानात कसलीतरी रद्द उपकरणं असतात. लहान लहान चाकू काय, सुन्या काय, चिमटे काय. बॉटल

ओपनर! त्या दुकानातला माणूस बाटल्यांची बुचं फटाफट उडवत असतो; पण घरी आल्यावर त्या ओपनरने एक बाटली खोलेल तर शपथ. लोणी काप्या सुन्या काय, लेमन क्रशर काय, काय विचारू नका. आमच्या घरात दोन अल्युमिनीयमचे, तीन प्लॅस्टिकचे आणि एक स्टेनलेसस्टीलचा लेमनक्रशर असे रांगेत लटकवलेले दिसतील. साधारण आकाराची लिंबाची फोड त्यात व्यवस्थित बसत नाही. दाबायला गेलं की, 'चल रे लिंब्या टुणूक टुणूक'. कोठे उडी मारेल सांगता येत नाही. एकदा हवाबंद डबा उघडण्यासाठी एक टीनकटर आणला. डबा उघडण्यासाठी एकाला त्याचं हॅन्डल पकडावं लागलं. दुसऱ्याने त्याची कळ फिरवावी लागली आणि तिसऱ्याने खुद्द तो डबा घट्ट धरून ठेवावा लागला. एवढं करून तो कटर ढिम्म जागेवरून हलला नाही. मग हातोडा, स्कू ड्राईव्हर, सुरी जे हाताला सापडेल त्याचा प्रयोग करावा लागला आणि शेवटी त्या डब्यातल्या पदार्थाचा सत्यानाश झाला तो वेगळाच. या प्रदर्शनात 'अजिंक्य ब्रदर्स'चा स्टॉल हटकून सापडतो. हे लोक वेगवेगळ्या पिशव्या, हॅडबॅगा बनवतात. यांच्या या बॅगा मात्र खूपच टिकाऊ असतात. फाटता फाटत नाही, आणि दर वेळेला एक नवीन फॅशनची बॅग आमच्या घरात येते. आतापर्यंत एवढ्या बॅगा जमलायत की त्याचंच एक प्रदर्शन भरवावं या विचारात मी आहे.

मला स्वतःला तो भाज्या कापण्याचा स्लाईसर बघायला फार आवडतो. तिथला पोरगा त्या स्लाईसरने सटासट काकडी, टोमॅटो, गाजर, बीट यांची कापं काढत असतो. कांदा काय किसतो, कोबी काय चिरतो, आणि मग त्या हिरव्या, पिवळ्या, लाल चकत्यांची रचलेली ती सुंदर आरास अगदी बघण्यासारखी असते. त्या पोऱ्याचा हात जेवढा भरभर चालतो ना, त्याच्या दसपट त्याची जीभ. मग काय बायकोच्या खरेदीत आणखी एक भर पडते. घरी गेल्यावर त्या स्लाईसरने हाताशिवाय दुसरं काहीही कापलं जात नाही. विचार केला, हे हजार बाराशेचं उपकरण विकत घेण्यापेक्षा, गरज भासेल तेव्हा त्या दुकानातल्या पोऱ्याला स्लाईसर घेऊन घरी बोलवावं, काय कापायचं ते कापून घ्यावं आणि काम झाल्यावर पाठवून द्यावं. पाहिजे कशाला नसती झंजट?. इलेक्ट्रीक पॉपअप टोस्टर घरात दोन

पडलायत. हा तिसरा. यात टोस्ट झाला की, तो आपोआप अप् होतो. पण आमचा टोस्टर, टोस्ट असा काही भिरकावून देतो की, स्लिपमध्ये उभं रहावं तशी फिल्डींग लावावी लागते. या उपकरणांत बरं का; दोन प्रकार असतात. वीजेवर चालणारी त्याचप्रमाणे तशीच हाताने चालवण्याची. कोथिंबीर कापण्याचं एक लहान यंत्र, मिरच्यांसाठी दुसरं. आल्यासाठी वेगळं आणि लसणासाठी तिसरं. दाण्याच्या कुटासाठी आणखी एक वेगळं यंत्र. आता घरी फूड प्रोसेसर नावाचं भलं मोठं यंत्र असतं. पण सोबतीला ही चिल्लीपिल्ली. 'काय गं? आपल्याकडे एवढामोठा फूड प्रोसेसर आहे. मग ह्या छोट्या छोट्या यंत्रांची गरज काय?' 'तुम्ही गप्प बसा हो. काही कळत नाही तुम्हाला. अहो छोट्या कामासाठी छोटी यंत्रं आणि मोठ्या कामासाठी मोठी.' हे छोट्या मोठ्याचं गणित मोठं अजबच. चपातीचं पीठ मळण्याचं हॅन्ड ऑपरेटेड मशीन. ५ मिनिटांत कणीक तिंबून तयार. पहिल्याच प्रयत्नात त्याचं हॅन्डल तुटतं. मग तो मोडका हात घेऊन दुकानापर्यंत पायपीट करण्याची पाळी अस्मादिकावरच येते. अरे हो! त्या घरघंटीचा आणखी एक प्रकार. दुकानात शांत वाटणारी ही पिठाची चक्की घरी आल्यावर अंमळ जास्तच आवाज करतेय असं वाटतं. कारण सोसायटीतला प्रत्येकजण विचारून जातो. 'काय हो कसला आवाज येतो?' 'काहो काय चाललाय काय?' 'तुमच्याकडे टाईलस् पॉलिशींगचं काम चाललाय वाटतं?' कमाल आहे या लोकांची. अहो सोसायटीचा पाण्याचा पंप गेले कित्येक महिने भयानक आवाज करतो. तो चालू केला रे केला, साऱ्या बिल्डींगला हादरे बसतात. पण त्याचं कुणाला काही वाटत नाही. पण आमच्या घरात घरघंटी सुरू झाली रे झाली की दरवाज्यावरती घंटी वाजते.

या बायकांचं काय मानसशास्त्र आहे कोणास ठाऊक? सरळ चांगल्या दुकानांत जाऊन रीतसर माल खरेदी करावा तर ते नाही. असल्या ग्राहकपेठा आणि प्रदर्शनातून खरेदी करण्याची एक वेगळी नशाच त्यांना चढते. बरं हा माल कुठे बनवतात कोण जाणे पण असला स्वस्त्यातला कुचकामी माल बाहेर कोठे पहायला सापडत नाही. तो खरेदी करायला असल्या 'सेल कमएक्झिबीशन' 'भव्य विक्री आणि प्रदर्शन' मध्येच फिरावं लागतं. माझा एक मित्र एकदा

मला म्हणाला, 'अरे या बायकांना खरेदीला जाताना नवरा बरोबर का लागतो माहीत आहे?' 'का?' 'अरे हक्काचा हमाल म्हणून' मी म्हणतो ही फुकटची हमाली परबडली. पण भर प्रदर्शनांत 'तुम्ही गप्प बसा हो' 'तुम्हाला काही कळत नाही' 'अहो तिकडे कुठे चाललात वेधळ्यासारखे, अजून ही बाजू पहायची आहे' असं जेव्हा चारचौघांत एकावं लागतं ना तेव्हा ही शॉपींगबॅग आपल्याला पोटात का घेत नाही असं वाटतं. काही बोलायची सोय नाही. आपण काही सुचवलं तर त्याला वाटाण्याच्या अक्षता लावल्या जातात. एकदा असंच 'स्पाऊट मेकर' खरेदी करू या असं म्हटलं तर 'इश्य अहो ओल्या फडक्यात एक रात्र कडधान्य ठेवलं तर दुसऱ्या दिवशी मोड तयार.' बघा म्हणजे माझा हा मोडाचा प्रस्ताव लगेच मोडीत निघाला.

ती रुसीमाता नवऱ्याला अंतराळात सोडून एकटीच खरेदीला गेली होती. काय भाग्य असतं एकेकाचं. नाहीतर आम्ही. बायको खरेदीला निघाली

की, पिशव्या घेऊन तिच्या मागोमाग निघायचं. लग्नात एकदाच या बायका नवऱ्याच्या मागे सात पावलं चालतात. पण नंतर मात्र उभं आयुष्य त्याला तिच्या मागे वणवण फिरावं लागतं. या बायका मोठ्या चतुर. सात पावलांच्या मोबदल्यात साता जन्माची खरेदी करून ठेवतात. 'अहो हे पाहिलंत का?' ही सकाळचा पेपर, संध्याकाळच्या सुमारास माझ्यासमोर फडकावीत होती. मी ओळखलं, कुठल्यातरी प्रदर्शनाची जाहिरात आली होती. त्यात पुरणपोळ्या बनवण्याच्या सेमी ऑटोमॅटीक मशीनची माहिती होती. सेमी ऑटोमॅटीक म्हणजे त्यातलं पुरण आहे ना ते हातानं मळायचं. अर्थात हे काम नवऱ्याचं आणि पोळ्या लाटण्याचं काम यंत्राचं. त्या यंत्राचं वजन साधारण ५/६ किलो व आकारमान २४'-१८''-१०'' असं त्या जाहिरातीत नमूद केलं होतं. मी मुकाट्याने मोठासा गोणपाट शोधण्याच्या कामगिरीला लागलो.

*



‘गेट. नं. ७’

— सौ. अपर्णा समीर विजयकर

प्रवास!!! प्रवास म्हटले की सर्व खूष! हो, म्हणजे जे जाणार आहेत ते, किंवा जे जाऊन आले आहेत ते.

ज्यांना (दुसऱ्यांच्या) प्रवासाचे नुसते फोटो बघायचे असतील, (तो, तो, बघ, तो खांदा माझा...) त्यांना मात्र प्रवास (दुसऱ्यांचा) म्हणजे घातक!!

बरे, प्रवास म्हटले, म्हणजे तऱ्हेतऱ्हेचे प्रवास!

सुखदायक प्रवास, कामानिमित्त प्रवास, आरामदायक प्रवास, अविस्मरणीय प्रवास, वळणदार प्रवास...

वळणदार प्रवास म्हणजे मला आठवतो तो उत्तरांचल मधला!! रानीखेत ते कॉरबेट पार्कचा वळणदार, नागमोडी, अरुंद प्रवास...!

विचार करा हं, कुमाऊंचे उँच उँच पहाड, एक बाजू खोलच खोल दरी व ती मधून नागमोडी चढणारी ती वाट... नागमोडी म्हणजे खरोखरच नागा एवढीच रुंद (की अरुंद?) पण ‘टू-वे’ वापरला जाणारा घाट!!

‘बेताल घाट’ सुरू होण्यापूर्वीच किंचित डोळा लागला होता. शांतपणे आमची छोटी-१५ seater बस एकामागे एक असे घाट चढत नी उतरत होती....नी एवढ्यात ‘‘आँख खुल गई’’ व जीव उडाला!!!

डाव्या बाजूला, म्हणजे माझ्याच बाजूला खोल खोल दरी!! खालची नदी नुसती जाणविणारी चमचम...व आजुबाजूला उँच उँच कडेकपार, ओके बोके, गगनचुंबी कुमाऊंचे क्रूर सौंदर्य झळकवणारे दगडी पहाड!! डोंगर नाहीच ते...डोंगर म्हणाल तर खंडाळालोणावळ्याचे वाघनखी डोंगर, फारच लांबचे घ्याल तर माथेरानचे...

आणि हे क्रूर सौंदर्य थोडेसे भयभीत होऊनच बघत होते, तेवढ्यात... तेवढ्यात आमच्या ड्रायव्हरने ब्रेक दाबला हो खूप जोरात नाही हं, नाहीतर बसची चाके सरकून आमचाच कडेलोट!!

दुसरी मोठी Tempo Traveller समोर दत्त म्हणून उभी!! आता आली की पंचाईत! Corbett Park मध्ये सगळ्यांची इच्छा असते तो एखादा मस्त चित्ता

(ते सहा पाहिले नंतर) किंवा वाघोबा, निदान एक कोल्हा तरी अचानक सामोरा यावा, तर हे काय? ह्या भयंकर अशा अरुंद घाटमाथ्यावर ही Tempo Traveller कुठे?

येथे विषयाला किंचित कलाटणी देतेय बघा... आयुष्यात जे होते ते चांगल्याच करिता होते असे माझ्या वडिलांचे धोरण व ते मी सदैव मानीत आले आहे.

आम्हाला मोठी २७ माणशी बस न मिळाल्यामुळे ही १५- Seater Bus आम्ही केली होती. व आता ह्या अरुंद रस्त्यावर ह्या दोन बकऱ्या सामोऱ्या आल्या होत्या.

आधी तू का मी?!!

पण नाही हं, येथे, या नितांत सुंदर पण ६००० Ft. height वर इकडच्या drivers vee ego तो काय माहितच नाही!

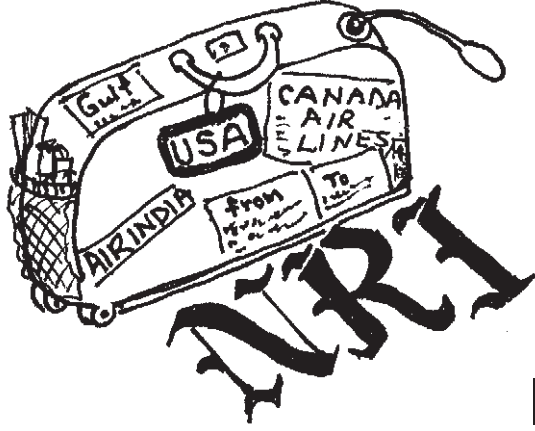
फक्त Basic Instinct for Survival आणि वर येणारी गाडी इंच इंच खाली सरकते, डोंगरकपारीमध्ये विरघळण्याचे नाटक करते व आमची बस किंचित अधांतरी डावी चाके घेऊन त्या घाटात पुढची वाटचाल करते.

अहो, जेव्हा आमच्या टूरगाईड, श्री. नितीन ह्यांनी Driverला शांत स्वरात बजावले, ‘‘नीचे मत लेके जरा भी उतारो...!’’, तेव्हा खरं म्हणजे बस मधून आमचे पाय पायरीवरून सरळ हवेतच पडले असते, कारण खरोखरीच घाटाची जमीन बसच्या चाकाबरोबरच संपली होती! उरली होती ती फक्त खोल दरी जिथे चकचकीत ‘‘कोसी’’ नामक दोरी दिसत होती!!!

तर मंडळी, असेही असतात भितीदायक, चित्तथरारक प्रवास! हो, पण येथे तुम्ही विचाराल की ही ‘गेट नं ७’ काय बुवा भानगड आहे?

काहीही नाही, अहो, कॉरबेट पार्कला शिरण्याचे सात रस्ते आहे.

त्यापैकी मी वर्णन केलेला ‘बेतालघाट’ हा गेट नं ७ होय!!



Introduction

–Kashmira Swapnil Vyavaharkar

This section is especially for our Pathare Prabhu members who have been residing in countries other than India. NRIs live an interesting life. Living away from our motherland, they seek to keep their tradition and culture alive. They find ways to celebrate their festivals with full enthusiasm. At the same time they try to mould themselves into the lifestyle of the country they reside. Understanding and adapting yourself into the culture and lifestyle of another country is the essence of staying there. The question everybody seems to have is 'If the 'NRIs' do miss their own Motherland?' Oh, of course. Atleast our PPs do, all the time! Aai chya haath cha jevan, our traditions, typical Indian delicacies, cultures, social life, Pathare Prabhu functions, etc.!

In this section the writers have chosen a topic among few ones and have decided to write on it. Few members have written a shopping list, as in what they would like to order from their motherland. There are some others who have happily written a letter to someone in their homeland. Some others have tried to express their views on how different is their own Motherland from the country they are residing in. As our members have their say on these topics, let us all have a quick read of the same!! Happy Reading!

Lost in Translation

–Nikhil V. Dhurandhar

HELLO ! Happy Diwali ! A voice behind me was trying to draw my attention - I turned around to see who could possibly greet me at the Washington DC airport that evening. I noticed an elderly gentleman, with a very kind face, and kinder eyes, wearing a graying moustache that ended into a smile on both sides. His clothes, Stag brand umbrella and the purple pull-on told the rest of the story. He was en route from Bombay to Dallas, to visit his son. It took us, mostly him, a mere minute of conversation to figure out that like him, I too, was a "parbhu". The transformation in him at this news was evident. All of a sudden, the number of prabhus in that DC airport had doubled for him. Let's just call him Aajoba. It was clear that Aajoba wanted to talk, and lots of it. I was returning home from a conference accompanied by my boss and Alex, his 13 year old son. We had nothing much to do till our flight in about 90 minutes. I introduced Aajoba to them and that's when it started... The following is a verbatim reproduction to the extent I can recall of this event that happened several years ago on the eve of Diwali.

Aajoba to my boss and Alex: Hello, Happy Diwali to you both!

Boss; Thank you... I guess, what does that mean?

Aajoba: Oh, that is our festival of lights

Alex: Oh yes, I learned that in school, Indian Christmas.

Alex was a regular boy, exhibiting normal obnoxiousness, as many teenagers do. But, importantly for me, he was my boss's son.

Aajoba: No, not Christmas, Diwali, which by the way, we (he was pointing at me at this time – I was pulled in) celebrate differently compared to the rest of India.

Boss: Really? How and why?

Aajoba: Because Nikhil and I belong to a very different caste.

Alex: Caste? Oh ya! Are you Brahmin?

Aajoba: No that's the highest caste.

Alex – matter of factly: Cool, so you guys are the untouchables?

I suspected Aajoba was a little taken aback at this time. He started saying, "Nikhil and I have blue blood"! At that moment I did not want to see or hear Alex's reaction to blue blood, so I went away to check the flight monitor..

When I returned, Aajoba had started telling them how Diwali celebration of the Pathare Prabhus is gloriously different.

Aajoba ... continuing: So, on the first day, which we call the first bath, womenfolks rub uttana on men. Uttana means a type of mud.. but scented.

Alex: yew.... You use mud? why?

Boss: Instead of soap?

Aajoba: No, this is before the bath. It cleanses the body. We use it only once a year. Then we go in the bathroom to kill the demon Narkasur.

No response from Alex or my boss. At this point, they were holding their breath, just like we do when a magician is opening his trunk, which is supposedly holding some strange creatures never seen before ... Aajoba of course, had no intention to stop.

Aajoba: Means, it is not really a demon, but a fruit that looks somewhat like a watermelon (here he forgets to mention the small size compared to a melon). We stomp on it to celebrate the victory over the demon in ancient times.

Here, Boss, Alex and I start breathing normally, but for different reasons.

It soon was apparent that Aajoba was nostalgically reminiscing his Diwali celebrations, and was really not concerned about the effect of his inexact English translations or the lack of providing any context.

I was reminded of the famous sentence from C.V. Joshi's Chimanrao, where he writes a note to boss to describe that he has conjunctivitis. Chimanrao writes, "My eyes have come. I will come to office when they go".

``In the evening we celebrate Sons in Law."

Aajoba pressed on. We cut cactus and turn



them into sons in law by putting a wick into them and lighting them. They really look very pleasant when all lit up. The funniest is when a neighbour's servant comes to rob our sons in law, we throw water on that servant.

One would imagine that my boss and Alex would run out of questions at this point. No such luck.

Boss: You throw water on sons in law?

Alex: How much ? Cold or hot ?

Aajoba (his train had left that station already.....): then we light crackers on fire

Boss: Wait, you mean crackers as in what we eat or a 'crazy person' ?

I could see the confusion. In the US, a cracker is a 'biscuit' or a 'crazy guy', and a 'fire cracker' is what Aajoba implied.

Aajoba: Why would we light a person on fire ? That's a different festival you are referring to – mostly observed in Northern India, where at the end of a 10 day festival, they shoot a burning arrow to light Ravan on fire.

Boss: So, you light someone on fire ? Is that allowed ?

Alex: How can one arrow light someone on fire ?

Aajoba: Because, Ravan is already stuffed with crackers.

At this point, I started suspecting if Aajoba specialized in creating confusion. He was describing Ram-lila, but was omitting to mention the crucial details.

It is an effigy of a demon that is burned – that symbolizes the victory of good over evil. I tried to pipe in to gain back some ground with my boss.

Aajoba: Yes, yes. And, we light Atom Bombs.. When the bombs go off.....

At this point, I had to step in. I was already concerned about my boss's impression about me – Aajoba had declared that 'WE' both belonged to the same 'caste' and now, he was busy describing how 'WE' light sons in law on fire and stuff Ravana with firecrackers. I suppose that I was guilty by association. But, I knew that clearly, Aajoba was completely oblivious to how his narration appeared in an American context, and the effect he was having on my boss. Although Aajoba was oblivious, I could not help but think how I could provide the

context. But, that was for some other time. My most urgent problem was to get Aajoba to stop talking aloud about 'bombs' in an airport.

"Lets not talk about that ... they are sensitive to such words here at the airport", I said, avoiding the mention of the word.

Aajoba's talk and hand gestures stopped midway. With a puzzled look, he asked, "lets not talk about what ? Bombs ? Oh, they are not real bombs. In fact, I know how to make those bombs. I have been making bombs from the time....." I don't remember what all I did at this point to stop him from going on about bomb-making at the airport. I may have put my hand on his mouth. I just did not want him pulled over by the heightened security we had since 9/11...and us as well – guilt by association.

Aajoba stopped his bomb-making description. I started breathing again. Suddenly, he reached in his bag, pulled out a plastic bag and offered us Shingdis he was carrying for his son's family.

Aajoba to Boss and Alex: Try some. These are not fried. They are baked.

Boss: Not fried? Great. Makes sense. Lower calories. Right?

I was seeing possibilities here. Perhaps, I could score a point in my Boss's eyes by talking about good nutrition sense shingdis made. Of course, he did not need to know about all the sugar and ghee that goes in, even if they are baked. But, I was too late....

Aajoba (proudly): Our caste people don't believe in frying shingdis unlike those other castes. They don't know how to live life. We fry a lot, but the right stuff. Fish, bhajee -cabbage balls, brinjal, sliced lady fingers...

I should mention that in the US, bhendi is called Okra, not lady fingers. I remembered Alex asking me once about food practices in India after watching the Indiana Jones movie. He wanted to know what a monkey brain tasted like. They show Indians eating it in the movie. I had told him to not believe everything he watched in that movie. And, here we were, talking about fried sliced Lady fingers..

Aajoba continued: In fact, on one of the days of Diwali, we eat lots of such fried stuff after Bali

Raja is removed.

Alex: What ?

Boss: Baali.... What ?

Me (not openly): Removed ?

Aajoba sensed the "intrigue" factor going !
He cleared his throat and I braced myself..

Aajoba: Well, you see, since the ancient times,
Bali is a king, we worship him.

Alex: Is he still around ?

Aajoba: Yes. Underground. Means down in
the underworld – he is going to come up soon –
they say

My boss's eyes were saying what Alex said
aloud

Alex: So, you are a devil worshipper ? Is this
devil underground?

Aajoba: No, No... Bali Raja is a great king, he
is not the devil...

At this point, the only thing I could do was to
leave the conversation. I mentioned that I
would go get some coffee for all and slipped
away.

I was now thinking of my future, perhaps,

my boss was going to get rid of me ? I needed a
plan for getting a new job...Where should I
apply ? Perhaps, 'Devil worshipper' is what my
boss would write in the reference letter they may
ask from my new job....

I should speak up for myself, I decided. But
again, Aajoba was really so kind and genuine.
And, he was not even lying. Just speaking out
of context, exactly how one would talk in
Mumbai. In India, no one needs to explain that
'burning of Ravan' meant burning an effigy, or
that fried lady finger is fried vegetables. Here, in
the US, these concepts needed proper
translation –lots of it. But, is my boss going to
believe me?

I bought coffee. Even though I did not want
to return, I had to. I tried walking slow, but
reached them anyway. I could see Aajoba's
animated description. That's it. I had an
epiphany. I should simply jump in and stop
Aajoba. Ask, him questions and make him say
the right things in the right manner. That way,
my boss would believe it.... That's it.



When I approached, Aajoba was completing his sentence.

Aajoba: That's right, we are a warrior race. In fact, even in our weddings, we stand with a sword between the bride and the groom. And, I will be happy to show you the sword we have in our family.

Alex to me: You did not tell us that you guys fought wars and all. That's so cool. He (pointing at Aajoba) is going to show us his weapons.

"Show ? How ?", I asked. Was he carrying a sword with him? A weapon at an airport just will not go well with the security guys.

Boss to me: I did not realize that your relatives made the first airplane even before the Wright brothers did ? That is really awesome. You know how much I love this stuff. I would love to know more about your caste... In fact, I was thinking of planning a trip somewhere during Christmas break and we could just easily make it to India and stop for a day or two in Mumbai. Alex will enjoy that and my wife would absolutely love to see the art-talent that your folks have.

Wait, what? Did I hear it right ? All I had to do was to go away to get coffee and Aajoba could turn things around and make the right impression ? With both of them ? Is this real ?

Clearly my boss and Alex were impressed. Were they serious about planning a visit to Mumbai?

Just then our flight was announced, I jumped up and wanted to leave right away. 'Quit while you are ahead', I had heard somewhere. This was the perfect time to quit. Aajoba finally and unexpectedly made a great last and lasting impression. Just in time to depart. I can keep my job after all.

I wished Aajoba well on his onward journey, and promised to get in touch.

Then Aajoba turned to Boss and Alex: It was very nice meeting you. I will definitely show you my sword and also the airplane. I will also show you our lifestyle. In fact, people from our caste are fish eaters. You will love it. I will also take you to our fish market, the Chira Bazar – a must go for every member of our caste. Its like a temple for us. Right Nikhil?

Chira Bazar ? When I went to Chira Bazar, indeed I worshiped the ghole or the kolambi we got there or for that matter, any other fish market in Mumbai. But, I pictured Aajoba and the parade of my boss, his wife and Alex wading through Chira Bazar.

No chance to quit while you are ahead, I suppose. Just quit.

Kay sangu tula Rajaram -A tribute to our very dear Man-Friday !!!

–Akshay Kothare

Our association started since my 4th grade at St. Xavier's Fort. Initially, Baba (my grandfather) used to get my lunch in the long breaks. However, it used to get very hectic for him. So, my parents decided to hire a dabbawala for me. His name was Rajaram. It still seems as recent as yesterday. How I used to wait for his familiar face in the school Quadrangle, so I could have my lunch. In the next couple of years, Rajaram had made an impression on our hearts and minds with his loyalty, honesty, earnestness, punctuality and

soon he assumed responsibilities of our full-time Man-Friday.

Its been 26 years till date and I must admit we are fortunate enough that Rajaram continues to still reign as the King in our house. His duties, responsibilities, skills and capabilities have increased over the years but the qualities which stood out then continue to remain intact to this day. Infact, if ever he is to go for a vacation to his village, we really anxiously look forward to the day when he'll get back. Though, he's good enough to provide us

with an interim 'badli' (replacement) for him....No one has really come close to being an ideal replacement. Rajaram is unparalleled.

I came to the US to pursue my M.S in 1999 and have since been residing / working here. I got married in 2002 and ever since, Anu's been here with me. Today Armaan, our 5 yr old is about to go to Kindergarten. Life here in the US has its benefits and struggles for folks like us, who've been pampered with the presence of a 'Rajaram' in our household. I say so for many reasons.

We moved residences from South Bombay to Kandivali and gave him the option of honoring his other commitments in South Bombay with his 'gao-wallah's' or come and stay with us. He happily preferred to give up his work in the other households and be with us full-time, irrespective of where we moved.

We'd most recently visited Mumbai in 2010 and were there for close to a month. Right from getting out of the terminal at Chhatrapati Shivaji International Airport, through our whole trip and right till we crossed the gates to the airport beyond which only ticket holders and officials go, we could feel Rajaram's presence in everything that was happening.

We are pretty much used to lugging our own luggage in the US. In Mumbai, as I was about to do the same... I heard a familiar voice 'Akshay dada rahu dya... me baghto....'. As Anu tried to pick up something, she heard something similar 'Anu Vahini rahu dya aho... me hai na...'. This was just the start. We got home and were treated to a *Rajaram special cup of tea*, right as we sat plonked on the sofa, recounting our journey from Boston to Mumbai. We don't experience such treatment in Boston. Its either Anu or me making the tea or coffee at home...

The next morning, right from tea, through a lovely omelette, through cutting vegetables, through freshly made chapattis... Rajaram was all over the place... I sat there thinking, we miss all this while in the US. Then as we sat down for lunch, Armaan got around to playing with Rajaram Kaka... and for the next month or so... it was almost a mutual thing between the

two of them, that he'd feed Armaan and play with him... while we sat for dinners / lunches. Also, this was a gesture which Rajaram came forward with himself... as though he loved Armaan's company as well.

Over the period of the next few weeks, whether it be doing groceries before the parties, or other household chores.... Rajaram was at his sprightliest best.... I mentioned before that he's the King of our household. Well, when we'd have stuff delivered to our home from the grocer, chemist or anyone else... Rajaram would in Mummy or Daddy's absence know exactly what was to be said and done and he'd do it with as much authority as well.... Be it dropping off stuff at my in-laws place, my sister-in-laws place or picking up stuff from Lekha aunty or Vasu aunty's, you guessed it right... Rajaram was always there. Its through these things and countless others, that I have come to respect Rajaram for what he does for us, what he means to us.

We got back to the US in a month's time... The very next morning, both Anu and I got up and sat at the dining table expectantly. I happened to mumble: '*Rajaram jara masta peki chaha detos ka ?*' To this Anu replied: '*Are to gaadi dhooala gela asel...*' Suddenly the harsh reality struck both of us hard. We were back in the US and needed to do it ourselves. The following day, an interesting incident happened in office. A colleague of mine (Jurgen) noticed that I was drinking water and/or coffee in paper-cups and filling up my trash can afterwards with them. He came to me and said, why don't you get your own mug (as quite a few American's in US do....). To this my reply was: who's gonna clean it up afterwards. If I can use and dispose paper cups, its very much convenient for me... Over the course of our chat, I happened to discuss Rajaram with him.... He shot back: If you live like Kings back home, then why the heck do you come to the US and struggle with the 'do it yourself' paradigm.

That repartee from Jurgen really got me thinking '*Kay Sangu Tula Rajaram – tujhi kitti athvan yete.....*'



A LETTER TO MY MOTHER-IN-LAW

–Monica Ravikant Iyer (nee Monica Sujan Rane)

When I was just a little girl
I asked my mother, what will I be
Will I be pretty, will I be rich
Here's what she said to me.
Que Sera, Sera,
Whatever will be, will be
The future's not ours, to see
Que Sera, Sera
What will be, will be.

What is life going to be like after marriage?
Does any girl ever know for sure until she has
left her own home to go live with her husband
and family? I am no different and I too had very
little idea of what to expect. Luckily, along with a
new home, I found heaven on earth! That's why
this letter is to the angel who made it all
happen.

My Dearest Amma,

These wonderful folks at Prabhu Tarun
requested an article from me. One of the topics
was a letter to someone in India. There was no
question in my mind. I knew I would be writing
to my most favorite person in India. My Amma.
It's unbelievable that after all these years I have
been given this excellent platform to tell you
exactly what I think of you and what you mean
to me.

Back in 1994, like every girl on the
threshold of marriage, I was very nervous
about how my mother-in-law would be. We did
know each other for a few years before, but that
was when you were just 'auntie'.

I was scared. Once you became my
mother-in-law and turned into Amma, would all
that change? You were now my husband's
mother, we would have to live together and see
each other every day. Would you even think of
offering me coffee and a million yummy
goodies on a tray like when I used to visit as
Ravi's friend or fiancée?

Well, things did change.

I came from a typical Pathare Prabhu
family. We have such a large extended family.

My life was centered on classical music
evenings, regular visits to see Marathi plays,
weekends watching old Hollywood movies,
regular family gatherings, and in general lots of
laughter and bonhomie with all our near and
dear ones. You know we are called Sokajis.
Live life King Size! That's our motto and that is
what I was used to. Now here I was
marrying into a Tamil Brahmin Iyer family. Was
there any common ground? That's why my
folks were so skeptical. My entire life was going
to be completely different or so they thought.
How would I survive? I was blissfully in love,
inexperienced and ready to marry my Ravi.

Today I want to tell you Amma that you
played the greatest part during this very
challenging transition period. Sure your Ravi
has been the most loving and caring husband a
girl would ever want, but it was through you and
your love that I was formally accepted and
showered with love by the entire Iyer family.
Although I missed my parents and sister
terribly during those first months, I never
missed anything else!

Now I want to take the opportunity to tell
you all the things you have ever done
throughout the past 17 years that have so
touched my heart.

You took my mother's place and started
loving and looking after me from day one. You
always say 'My Monica'. I made this for 'My
Monica', I have got this for 'My Monica', and I
need to tell this to 'My Monica'. You have never
treated me any different from your own
daughter.

Do you remember that first time you and I
went to Chennai before the wedding? For me it
was a new place full of unknown strange faces.
Their customs were new. Their food was
different from what I was used. Everything was
so new to me. With you by my side however it
was a breeze! You made it known to everyone
how much you loved and cared for me. The



people there, my new family must have surely wondered how this non Tamil girl was going to fit in. You did not care or if you did you did not show. You were busy making sure Monica was comfortable right? You wanted to take me to everyone's house, wanted to feed me at all the favorite places to eat. You wanted to show me off to everyone. You never ever sat on that high mother -in-law pedestal. You could have easily told me to dress this way, talk this way, serve food this way and follow all those customs that the society over there demands of its youth.

Nope. Instead, you made coffee for me, you made fresh breakfast for me, you explained the customs of the households over there and you were so patient while we shopped and chose my saris. Everything fell into place like magic. I was openly embraced by all whom I met. From that trip on, I have come to love Chennai and our family over there.

My dearest Amma, you cried so much when we left for the United States. I just hate remembering those tears and your woebegone face. Yet I am so proud of you. You had never touched a computer before we left, but just so we can keep in touch, you learned all about the internet, about emails and online chat almost as soon as the internet became popular so many years ago. Whether I login everyday or not, I know that my Amma will be online and waiting to chat with me every single day. In fact it has become such a habit, that if you are not, I know you are either out of town, or the computer is not working! Otherwise nothing can keep you away.

When you and Appa visit us here in the US, it is beyond amazing. My friends have such horrid stories to tell me. They dread their in-laws' visits and actually look forward to when they will leave. Our story is different is it not? When was the last time you left on the decided date? We have always made you postpone your departure. Do you know why? It's because your visit is like a breath of fresh air for us.

Never ever have you come and taken over my home or kitchen. You appreciate my home décor; you always notice new things around and applaud it immediately. Every morning you

ask me in that sweet voice of yours- "Aaj kya khana banayenge? Should I cut the vegetables? Should I make the chapatti dough? If I make this will Ravi like it? Will children eat this?" "Oh my God Amma, you even tolerate all the non vegetarian cutting and cooking!

I was not brought up to be very ritualistic. You are so religious. That was one of my major concerns.

What will my in-laws expect from me? Of course if you had insisted, I would have tried to do all those poojas that you do in a year, just to make you happy. Needless to say, you never ever expected anything of that sort from me from the get go. It has always been. "Monica you do it if you feel like it, and only if you want to."

Amma have you heard how some mothers –in- law and daughters- in- law compete in their cooking? It must be so hard on the men folk in the house. I find it so ridiculous and a little funny too. Look at our situation. I just love your cooking and especially the traditional Tamil dishes you make. You know I am your number one fan and you know those exact dishes that I just lap up whenever you make them. In fact so many times you make that extra dish only for me! What people from my family may not know is that if I cook something that everyone likes, you are ever so gracious. In fact, you spread the word and tell the whole world how great I make this dish. You are just too sweet.

Why are you like this? Why don't you ever just sit and watch TV and ask me to get you water or tea or coffee? Why don't you tell me to do a pooja, or learn Tamil or make dosas just exactly how you like them? Why don't you criticize my dress sense or the way I am bringing up my children? Why don't you buy things that you would like for me of your choice, instead of asking me how I would like them? Why don't you take me to temples and pilgrimages and even kitty parties? How do you know what makes me happy?

How?

I can go on and on and write a book on you and our beautiful relationship, but then why

write so much?

We are living it right now! Touchwood!

Thank you is just not enough for all that you have done for me. I wish I could shout from rooftops, "Look at my Amma. Look at our relationship. All you mothers –in- law and daughters- in- law out there, let God bless you with our kind of love! I wish every girl gets an Amma like mine." I only hope I have learnt something from you that I may use when I get a daughter-in-law someday.

Now is also my chance to say sorry to you if I have ever hurt you or if I have ever said something that has upset you. I am sure there have been occasions where we have disagreed on issues. I have never meant to be

rude or disrespectful. Please forgive me if I ever have.

Amma, come here soon. I am eagerly waiting to catch up on so much news, eagerly waiting for our long talks, our crazy shopping trips, our cookathons and those lazy Hindi movie afternoons at the theatre.

There is so much to do when you are here and life becomes so much more exciting.

We miss you and Appa very much and the children are eagerly awaiting the arrival of their Patti and

Taatha!!

Yours ...Sincerely? Yours Truly?...NO

Only yours with love,

Monica

Letter to Wonderful Parents,

–Anuprita Bhomick

To Mayur and Sarita, my wonderful parents,

I remember every little thing about Opera house. You probably think that because I was just 12 years old when we moved out, my memories are fuzzy. But you have given me such a wonderful childhood that I connect with that house more than any other house that I have lived in.

I am sure as adults you made a lot of adjustments but you have no idea what a party it was for us little kids. You sometimes apologized for the lack of space, but I have never lived in a bigger house than the hearts of all the wonderful family that you thrust upon us.

I remember the correct address is 482, S.V.P Road, 1st floor, Nair (& Powell) Building, Bombay – 400004. It's the first postal address that I learned and I was so proud of living at Opera House as we called it. We had 6 large rooms, 5 of which had a partition and were made into 2. But Papa had decided to keep ours intact.

I loved our large airy room. There was a gigantic fan which gave us the coolest air imaginable. This fan still resides in your Amboli home and it still beats any air conditioner hands

down. We had a giant fridge in our room and a double bed. Papa had made a study desk for me that I used to sit at to read and do my homework. There was a large window which housed a fish tank with the most amazing variety of fish in it. One of the walls was completely covered with floor to ceiling wardrobes. To the right was Papa's cupboard and I loved opening it and smelling the various perfumes and colognes and aftershaves that he kept in there. He also had the most awesome coats in there. Mummy's cupboard was full of lovely sarees. She had a full length mirror too and oh how I loved prancing around in front of it.

To the left was a fake cupboard which was really a doorway which lead to a little sitting area where there was a large table with important files and a stamp collection which belonged to aajoba (Madhav B. Nayak). We loved poring over those stamps and helping stick the loose ones back in the albums. Papa played Monopoly and Scrabble with us at that table. It was also the place that Ganpatibappa's murti was installed every year. For 10 days, we'd all do aarti and puja and then



तुळस

तुळस मी या घरची ।
कृपा माझ्या माहेरची ॥
चौसोपी वाडा माझ्या सासरचा ।
जाई जुई चमेली वेल मोगन्याचा ॥
राधा-कृष्ण असती वृंदावनी ।
पूजा करूनी फुले वाहूनी ॥
शाम सावळा वाजव पावा ।
करू दे तुझी चरण सेवा ॥
अंगणात फुलला पारिजात ।
किती वाट पाहू हार गुंफित ॥
कंठ दाटे, नयनी पाणी ।
तुळस मी उभी अंगणी ॥

— सौ. इना तळपदे

there was a grand celebration on AnantChaturdashi, when everyone we collectively knew would land up at our house to get the best views of the Ganpativisarjan.

Fortunately there was a huge balcony which we used to call "gallery" which ran across the length of the 3 rooms. Ours was the middle room. Papa's oldest brother's family lived in the room next to ours. Their son Unmesh was my best friend most of the time but I also quarreled with him on a daily basis. Kaka used to take us both to participate in elocution and debating competitions held at the PatharePrabhu Social samaj. He would always tease me about the "Kiristao" English that I had picked up at St. Teresa's because it was a convent. Kaki would fondly call me "Jhipri" because of my tangled mess of curls which I could never keep neatly combed or plaited. She used to teach me how to draw rangoli patterns during festive occasions. I would love these times because she would ask Unmesh to stay away and tell me that she had always wanted a daughter.

In the other adjoining room, lived my favourite aunts Dulu and Leena. They had a brother too Babukaka. Although I always called him Babukaka, I never got around to saying Duluatya and Leenaatya. Their mother Kanchankaki (she was Papa's kaki, but I never got around to calling her aaji) used to bestow

upon us the latest board games every birthday. Kanchankaki and later Babukaka worked at Kwalityicecream. To me, that was the coolest place to work at. A few times Leena took us kids to the Kwality restaurant and we ate icecreams there. Dulu used to teach me cross stitch. I loved sitting and watching her make cross stitch patterns for hours together. Leena used to always have a ready smile for everyone but she called Atul "chaar cha bhonga" because he would promptly start wailing when we got home from school upon discovering that Mummy is not at home. She was at work and got back by 6 pm every day. I always wondered why my silly little brother could never figure that out.

There were 3 other rooms. One belonged to Sudhakaki and Vishnukaka 3 other kakas lived with us. Vidhyut kaka was a talented tabla player. He was a devotee of Saibaba and regularly brought us Prasad from the temple.

Vihangkaka lived in a small room adjoining the kitchen with Madhurikaki and their son Gunjarav. Gunjarav was my brother's age. We kids were so inspired by Vihangkaka's acting in plays and by all his actor friends, that we put up a production of our own, in which I starred as "BavlatSheela"

Shripadkaka was Papa's bachelor uncle. He had never married and looked after the accounts for our family's property. I was a little scared of him because he always frowned at us noisy kids. He used to subscribe to the Times of India, so I had to sneak into his room when he wasn't around and read the newspaper from cover to cover and then neatly fold it up so that he wouldn't notice that anyone had touched it.

There was a giant dining table and next to it was a prayer area. I ate my breakfast at the table everyday. Atul and me drank the chocolate drink Boost and I'd sing at the top of my voice "Boost mein hai Shakti, boost mein mazaa" perhaps to get a reaction out of Shripadkaka.

The kitchen was a wonderful place especially in the festive season. Tantalizing smells emanated from in there. Tilacheyladoo at Sankrant, pooran polis for Holi, an assortment of chaklis, fried peanuts, shingdya,



besanladoo for Diwali. Even on regular days, there was always something cooking, batatyacheypohe, sabudanyachikhichdi, bhusna, khadkhadla, chutneycheysarangey, the list goes on.

Atul and I welcomed our sister Aditi when I was 6 and he was 3. Her naming ceremony is very firmly entrenched in my mind. Vrindaatya asked me what we should name her. Freshly armed with the knowledge that "Aditi" meant the Mother of Gods, courtesy the latest Amar Chitra Katha that I had read, I whispered into her ear "Aditi" I hadn't really thought that she'd humor me and name my sister Aditi, and when she did, my joy knew no bounds.

Of all the celebrations at Opera House, I miss the birthday celebrations the most. We had many July birthdays, including mine. The guests would be served wafers, samosas, sometimes batatawadas and of course the glorious birthday cake. Both of you always made a great big deal of my birthday and I always got a new dress and new shoes on this day. I could call all my friends and the house

would be decorated with colorful paper streamers and balloons. The house would reverberate with joy and laughter and the sweet melodies of "Happy Birthday to you" would fill the air.

I feel fortunate to have been born into so much love and the gift of this huge gigantic family that you have bestowed upon me. I live so many miles away in a foreign land but I never feel alone. I think of Opera House and instantly conjure up images of happy memories, smiling faces, many of whom are not with us anymore. But as for the rest, they are right here, all invading my personal space (what personal space?) via facebook and asking me who, what, where, when, how until I threaten to log out. It feels great to be connected and to read about and see pictures of us as grownups, and the next generation, our kids, your grandkids growing up albeit with a twinge of sadness that they will never know the joy that was Opera House.

Love you,
Prita

Letters from an Uncle to a Niece

Jaideep Vijayakar

My Dear Tanmayee,

You are growing up to be a young woman who is soon going to go out into the world as an independent person. No longer will you be dependent on your mother or father or grandparents to guide you through life. And there will be times when you will actually resent either of them trying to tell you what to do. You are the new generation of a confident India. Most of you know already what you want to do in life and are willing to try out different things which we would not even have considered when we were getting out of college.

Your generation is blessed with a lot more facilities and outlets to express yourselves than we ever were. The exposure is tremendous and helps to make you a more rounded personality than we could try to be. Make sure you make optimum use of this to contribute to

the improvement of our society. You are part of a generation which can do a lot more right now.

I have been away for far too long to have any great influence on you anymore but for me you will still be that little baby girl who I held in my arms the day you were born in the hospital. The little girl whom I would come rushing home from college to just to sit beside while you were sleeping.

Since you and I were the closest to each other in age as compared to others in the family we had great times together behaving as small children rather than the adults with great responsibility that your parents and mine had to. That bond only grew stronger as you grew older and we could talk about and discuss more and more things. I remember when you had come to visit me in the US you had already grown to be a teen ager (a far cry from the 7



year old I left behind when I moved out of Bombay). In those days you were probably going through a phase in life and I remember you not smiling or enjoying yourself as much as you should have. However those brief moments when you really got excited or enjoyed something that we did together and actually showed it on your face or in your words were the real highlights. I still treasure those moments.

You know, staying away though I have come to appreciate so many things that I wouldn't have if I would have continued to stay in India. As you come up to your 18th birthday I thought I would share those with you.

With our culture getting more and more Westernized you will recognize these two extremely dichotomous views that people have about the West.

On the one side it is looked at as this BIG BAD WORLD which is very materialistic and is run purely on how much money can be made as fast as possible to the detriment of human values and relations. The other side looks at it as this utopia where everything is so comfortable and super luxurious. You can have big cars, big houses, buy all the latest electronics, huge amusement parks and public attractions and nothing can ever go wrong anywhere!!

The truth lies, as in all such cases, somewhere in the middle. There is a little bit of both here and its true for any country in the world. However one thing I can say with certainty. There is definitely a greater availability of facilities to people at lower levels of society than is possible in India. You can afford a car and a home by doing jobs which in India would doom you to depend on public transport and a small flat in the far flung suburbs. You also have access to free public libraries, which have good quality of books, CDs and DVDs, public parks with well maintained outdoor facilities and excellent public schools (barring the ghettos).

However this has not happened purely because the country has been blessed with really benevolent political leaders throughout

their history. It's because the citizens of the country have actively demanded this of their country. It also is because the citizens have taken a deep interest in how their country is run and contributed in a large part to getting it to where we are right now.

There is no reason why the same cannot happen in India. However it has to come from the citizens and the youth. You are the future that your country is going to have 20 years from now. You are the state your country is going to be in 20 years from now. The power is in your hands to make the difference. We did not really do a lot to improve the lot of society with the opportunities provided to us. But I am hoping as most of our generation reaches the middle ages we will be able to utilize our experience and exploit existing opportunities to give back.

From my experience here I feel that a country is not called developed just because it has the latest technology, industry and its citizens make oodles of money. I feel a country becomes a developed nation when it learns to respect its own citizens. When it attaches a significant value (monetary or otherwise) to its most destitute constituents.

A country becomes developed when each of us treats the other on merit and not based on criteria like caste, religion, education or money. In most developed nations you can see that people who are not very high in the social strata like sweepers, bus drivers, security guards are treated politely by others. It's a very common feature here to say good morning or good evening to your office security guard or the cleaning lady. It's very common to say Thank You to bus driver or cab driver while getting off. These are common courtesies and don't take too much effort. We don't do a lot of that back in India. These small things if you incorporate into your day-to-day life and also encourage others around you to do the same would make a big difference to our civil lives.

Another important aspect of public life is community participation. Community participation is one of the key aspects of improving any society. The government can only do so much for its citizens. Beyond that it's



for the citizens to start contributing to the upliftment of society.

As John F Kennedy famously stated "Ask not what your country can do for you. Ask what you can do for your country"

Of late there has been a lot of hue and cry about the corruption in India and the increasing discomfort that regular citizens are facing due to rising prices, overcrowding and general degradation of infrastructure. However none of this ever comes to fruition because most people give up the call for change after the initial 'tamasha' is over. Common people like you and me will be more interested in getting back to our day to day life rather than make a concerted effort to actually make a change. This allows for the powers to be to pander to the lowest common denominator among us and get away with making superficial concessions

Community participation and citizen activism are two important initiatives which we can take up which can help tackle many of these problems..

Community participation can take on multiple forms.

Keeping the locality or public parks and lakes clean by organizing awareness drives or actual cleanups, raising funds for local services like the police, fire department, schools, libraries etc, collecting books, food, toys and other essentials for the less fortunate denizens in our society, organizing medical camps for those who cannot afford these services raising funds for essential research on medical conditions which afflict everybody, I would even go so far as to say obeying civic rules and

paying your taxes honestly falls in this bucket. One amazing thing I have seen here is that if the traffic lights are out at any major junction, then all the cars will come to a complete stop at the intersection (without the need of having a traffic constable) and then follow the right of way rules to ensure that there are no traffic jams. Contrast that with what we see at functioning traffic lights at home and you can immediately understand the impact this would have on our daily commutes.

All this provides a mechanism for society to function without waiting for the government to intervene. It also ensures that we as members of the society have a larger stake in its running and can point fewer fingers when things go wrong. In the last few years there has been a general economic depression in the US, leading to great cuts in funding for many of the services that the government normally provides. However this has led to increased community participation on behalf of the people who have not been affected as badly as others.

On a regular basis there are advertisements for food drives for people who cannot afford two square meals a day or "Back to School supplies" for children from poor homes who cannot afford to buy the latest school materials or in winter for winter clothes and supplies. Young and Old, Rich and Poor alike everybody participates in these initiatives. People don't just get together and complain. They actually get together and act on it to ensure that something is done. Even the government-funded schools for which we pay no fees ask the students to bring their own school supplies for the year to bridge the funding gap. This is better than not providing facilities to the students due to insufficient funding from the government.

Some of the different fund raising techniques that I have seen in the past are

Holding a 5K or 10K run for everybody. People pay to run in this event and all the money from this and sponsorship goes to the denoted charity.

Holding a hot dog/ lemonade/cookie sale- All proceeds from the sale go to the charity. .

सुगरण

सुगरण बनवायची रोज भात-वरण
तिच्या छान फिगरचं तेच होतं कारण
मग ती बनवायला शिकली शिकरण
तेव्हापासून 'जिम'चं दळतेय दळण.

-डॉ. सुमन नवलकर



Summer Car wash- young children with their friends will get together in any open space like a parking lot of a church or a shopping plaza and provide Hand Car Wash services for a fee.

Clothes or food collection drives to provide to poorer people.

An important aspect about the above fund raisers is that the people who participate in these fund raisers do not actually get any real value out of these. People don't really want to eat the hot dogs or drink lemonade or even get their cars washed by a bunch of small children. However once they know that it's for a good cause they will want to participate by buying those services and thus contribute to a good cause.

Involving young children in these activities also builds up good moral fiber and ensures the health of future society.

I hope i did not bore you to death with all

this "preachy" stuff. I just wanted to share my experiences with you and hoped they would start you thinking along paths you may not have considered letting your mind wander. I would love to continue this conversation with you when I am down there to pick your brains and get your view on these matters.

Bye Love you

Your loving mamu

पतंग

पतंगाने मांजाची घेतली फिरकी
पतंगाने हवेत मारली गिरकी
फिरकीने मांजाचा केला गुंता
पतंग मग वाचला गुल होता-होता.

-डॉ.सुमन नवलकर



माकडाची जात

—उज्वला गोविंदराव भगवंतराव आगासकर

“अमर्याद” या एकाच शब्दात ज्याच्या विस्ताराचे वर्णन करता येईल, अशा विश्वामधल्या एका सूर्यमालेमधल्या अनेक ग्रहांपैकी पृथ्वी नावाच्या ग्रहावर आपण सारे राहातो. हा ग्रह इतर साऱ्या ग्रहांसारखाच चेंडूप्रमाणे वाटोळा आहे. त्याच्या एकूण पृष्ठभागापैकी जवळजवळ पाऊण भाग पाण्याने व्यापला आहे, आणि जेमतेम पाव भाग जमीन आहे. या पाव भाग जमिनीवर किडा-मुंग्यांपासून हत्ती-उंट-जिराफ-शहामृगापर्यंत असंख्य जीव राहातात. अर्थातच आपण दोन पायांची माणसेपण राहातो. शारीरिक ठेवणीमुळे इतर जीवांना करता येत नाहीत अशी बरीच कामे माणूसप्राण्याला करता येतात, आणि शिवाय प्रचंड बुद्धिमत्तेची जोड. त्यामुळे पृथ्वीवर राज्य एकंदरीत माणूस प्राण्याचेच.

या श्रेष्ठपणाची जाणीव माणसाला बऱ्याच वेळा “ग”ची बाधा घेऊन येते. आपण तेवढे सुपीरियर, आणि बाकी सगळे तुच्छ, अशा थाटात तो इतरांबद्दल बोलत राहातो. त्यातूनच मग पटकन इतरांबद्दल शेर मारले जातात. आणि इतर म्हणजे कोण? प्राणी-पक्षी नाहीत. मानव समाजामधलेच बाकीचे! कुणाला सांगितलेले पटकन समजत नसेल, तर ती “गाढवाची जात”, अगदी मंदबुद्धी असेल तर “बैलाची जात”, कामाचा उरक नसेल तर “म्हशीची जात”, कुणी किती टीका केली तरी त्यावर उत्तर न देता मख्खपणाने आपले काम चालू ठेवले तर “गेंड्याची जात”, स्वच्छता पाळण्याबद्दल अगदीच उदासीन असेल तर “डुकराची जात” वगैरे. मुळीच आवाज न करणाऱ्या आणि मुकाट्याने चोवीस तास काम करणाऱ्या जीवावरून कुणाला “मुंगीची जात” म्हटल्याचे मात्र कधी एकले नाही!

आज या साऱ्या जातींची आठवण येण्याचे कारण म्हणजे “माकडाची जात”. एकीकडे जीवशास्त्रीय संशोधनाच्या निष्कर्षातून माकडाला आपले पूर्वज मानायचे. मात्र तरीदेखील उगीच उड्या मारल्या की “माकड उड्या”, आचरटपणा केला तर

“माकडचाळे” किंवा “मर्कटचेष्टा”, आणि ज्याचा कार्यकारणभाव लावता येत नाही असे उद्योग कुणी केले तर “माकडाची जात” असे शेर पटकन मारले जातात. बादशहा अकबर आणि बिरबल यांच्या एका गाजलेल्या गोष्टीमधल्या लेकुरवाळ्या माकडिणीचे उदाहरण पटकन दिले जाते की, रिकाम्या हौदामध्ये तिला सोडले आणि हौद भरायला पाण्याचा नळ सुरू केला. तेव्हा आधी तिने पिलाला उचलून डोक्यावर धरले, आणि गळ्यापर्यंत पाणी आल्यावर पिलाला पायांखाली ठेवून त्यावर उभी राहिली— बिरबलाच्या नावाखाली ज्या गोष्टी सांगितल्या जातात त्यापैकी या गोष्टीवर विश्वास ठेवणे मला जरा कठीण जाते. त्याला कारण असे की, फार वर्षापूर्वी माझ्या वडिलांची बदली कारवार येथे झाली असतांना त्यांचे जिल्हाभर सतत दौरे सुरू असत. सारे रस्ते जंगलामधून, आणि जंगलामधले इतर सर्व प्राणी तसेच काळतोड्या वानरांचे कळप रस्त्यामध्ये धुडगूस घालीत असत. एकदा वडील दौऱ्यावर असताना, त्यांच्या पुढच्या गाडीची धडक बसून हुप्या वानर रस्त्यातच गतप्राण झाला. त्याच्या भोवती कळपामधल्या माद्यांनी इतकी गर्दी, इतका आक्रोश सुरू केला की सगळा ट्रॅफिक जाम झाला. शेवटी लोकांनी उतरून त्यांना हाकलण्याचा प्रयत्न केला. तेव्हा इतर सर्व माद्या पळाल्या. पण त्याच्याशेजारी दुःखी माणसासारखी डोक्याला हात लावून त्याच्याकडे एकटक पहात बसलेली एक मादी होती ती हलेना. एकाने धीर करून जवळ जाऊन तिला हात लावला तेव्हा ती तिथल्या तिथे कोलमडली. बसल्या जागी तिचा जीव गेला होता. आपल्या भाषेत हार्टफेल. किती तीव्र असतील तिच्या भावना! माझ्या वडिलांना अजून हा प्रसंग आठवत असे.

तर, या “माकडाच्या जाती”ची आठवण करून देणाऱ्या दोन घटना नुकत्याच वर्तमानपत्रामध्ये वाचनात आल्या. एका घटनेमध्ये कोकणातल्या एका शहरामध्ये पानाच्या ठेल्याजवळ आलेल्या एका माकडाला पानवाल्याने पानाचा विडा करून दिला.



सैनिका प्रणाम आमुचा तुला

सिमेवरच्या सैनिका प्रणाम आमुचा तुला ।
शिवरायाचा देश हा दरी कपारीचा ॥
रात्रंदिनी स्वप्नी येते कारगिलची भूमी ।
का द्यायची आम्ही आमुची भूमी ॥
वीर जवाना उडव चिधड्या पाक सोजिराच्या ।
कर वर्षाव गोळ्यांचा छातीवर त्याच्या ॥
लढता लढता मिळाली वीरगती ।
तिरंग्यावर पडले अश्रूचे माणिक मोती ॥
अंधाराने गिळले घर घराघरातून अश्रूचे पूर ।
कुणास हाक मारू अर्ध्यावर सोडून गेलास दूर ॥
पाक सोजिरा कीव येते तुझी मला ।
मृत्यु नंतर ही मिळेना मूठमाती तुला ॥
हीच कारे तुम्हांवरी पाकची प्रीती ।
कां उपरे म्हणूनी सैन्यातच केली भरती ॥
मृत्युनंतर दफनहि केले आम्हीच ।
सलाम करूनी वीर गती ही दिली आम्हीच ॥
मैत्रीचे नाते आमुचे असे पाक माणसा ।
घुसखोरानो परतूनी जा आपल्या देशा ॥
शेवटी शेजार आहे शेजार आहे आमचा ।
जयहिंद भारता जयहिंद भारत माता ॥

— सौ. इना तळपदे

माकडाने तो लगेच मटकावला. नंतर ते माकड चीत्कारत, उड्या मारत तेथून पळून गेले आणि मग त्याने शहरभर धिंगाणा घातला. लोकांच्या टोप्या खेचल्या, घराची कौले उपटून फेकली, भाजी बाजारात जाऊन फळांची आणि भाज्यांची नासधूस केली, मोठ्याने चीत्कारणे सुरूच होते. नंतर उघडकीला असे आले की, पानावाल्याने विड्यामध्ये चक्क तंबाखू घातला होता! आता त्या मुक्या प्राण्याला तंबाखू खाऊ घालणाऱ्या त्या पानवाल्यालाच “माकडछाप” म्हटले तर काय बिघडेल?

दुसरी घटनादेखील कोकणामधलीच आहे. जंगलामधून गावाच्या किंवा शहराच्या वस्तीमध्ये यायचे, जमेल तेवढे खायचे आणि परत जंगलात पळून जायचे असा तिथल्या माकडांचा नेहेमीचा उद्योग असतो. असा उद्योग कळपाचा सुरू असताना नेमके एका माकडाने एका हंड्यामध्ये तोंड घातले आणि मग ते तोंड बाहेर निघेना. त्यामुळे डोक्यावर

तो हंडा घेऊनच ते माकड सगळीकडे फिरू लागले. लोकांची थोडी करमणूक झाली पण त्या हंड्यापासून माकडाची सुटका करण्याचे त्यांनी आपल्या परीने प्रयत्नदेखील करून पाहिले. हंडा काही निघेना. नंतर लोकांनी वनखात्याला कळवले. वनखाते म्हणजे काय, शासकीय कारभार! त्यांनी आलेल्या तक्रारीची नोंद करून घेऊन रिपोर्ट तयार केला. या प्रकरणावर काय कार्यवाही करता येईल याचा रीतसर अहवाल तयार केला. निष्पन्न असे झाले की त्या माकडाला पकडले पाहिजे आणि त्याच्या डोक्यावर (की डोक्याभोवती) अडकलेला हंडा काढून घेऊन त्याला पुन्हा जंगलात सोडले पाहिजे. त्यानुसार माकडाला पकडण्याचा वनखात्याने प्रयत्न करून पाहिला. पण माकड काही हाती लागेना. तेव्हा वरिष्ठांच्या आदेशानुसार या कामासाठी पारधी किंवा तत्सम लोकांची नेमणूक करण्याचे प्रयत्न झाले. (त्यासाठी टेंडर्स काढली होती किंवा काय, कळले नाही!) गंमत म्हणजे कोकणातल्या किंवा महाराष्ट्रामधल्या म्हणू या, पारधी लोकांनी हे काम करण्यास स्वच्छ नकार दिला. तेव्हा शेजारच्या कर्नाटक राज्यामध्ये चौकशी केली गेली. तिथल्या एका पारध्याने तयारी दाखवली, आणि महाराष्ट्रात येऊन ते माकड पकडून दिले. हंडा काढून माकडाला जंगलात सोडून दिले. या कामाचे वनखात्याचे (अर्थातच नियमानुसार) त्याला चक्क एकवीस हजार रुपये कबूल केले होते. काम पूर्ण झाल्यावर त्याने ती रक्कम मागितली.

खरी गंमत पुढेच आहे. केलेल्या कामाचे वनखात्याच्या अधिकाऱ्यांनी त्या कर्नाटकी पारध्याला दोन हजार रुपये हातावर टेकवले (की तोंडावर फेकले?) बाकीची रक्कम “देत नाही जा” असे मगरूर आणि कोडगे उत्तर दिले. नाइलाजाने बिचारा पारधी कोर्टात गेला आहे. पुढे काय होते ते यथावकाश कळेलच. मला मात्र काही मजेदार शंका येत आहेत. जितके दिवस ते माकड डोक्यावर हंडा घेऊन फिरत होते तितके दिवस ते उपाशीच राहिले असणार, नाही का? इथल्या अधिकाऱ्यांनी स्वतःची अडचण दूर करण्यासाठी वाटेल तितके पैसे कबूल करून कर्नाटकातल्या पारध्याला निमंत्रण दिले आणि काम पूर्ण झाल्यावर चक्क पलटी मारली. म्हणजे त्या पारध्याच्या नजरेमधून “माकडाची जात” कोणाची?



गणपती बाप्पा मोरया

प्रास्ताविक

— मिनाक्षी जयकर

श्रावण महिना संपता संपता वेध लागतात ते भाद्रपदातल्या शुद्ध चतुर्थीचे. श्री गजाननाच्या आगमनाचे. केवळ महाराष्ट्रात नव्हे; तर भारताबाहेरही गणेशोत्सव उत्साहाने साजरा केला जातो. मराठी माणूस जगाच्या कानाकोपऱ्यात पोहोचला आहे आणि त्याने आपल्याबरोबर आपला गणेशोत्सवही तेथे नेला आहे. हल्लीच्या globalisation च्या काळात अमराठी लोकही तेवढ्याच उत्साहाने या उत्सवात सामील होताना दिसतात. तर उत्सवप्रिय सोकाजीही याला कसे अपवाद असतील? सर्व सामान्यतः पूजेचा गणपती सर्वत्र असतो. पण “खेळातला गणपती” ही संकल्पना फक्त पाठारे प्रभुचीच. गणपती खेळातला असो वा पूजेचा; मांडणी मात्र खास परभी पद्धतीची.चौरंगांची उतरंड मांडून त्यावर आरास केलेली. कधी झाडांच्या कुंड्या दुतर्फा ठेऊन जंगलाचा आभास निर्माण केलेला; तर कधी फुलांची आरास करून फूलबागेचा देखावा दाखवलेला. कुठे LED च्या दिव्यांची आरास; तर पार स्पेनसारख्या देशात स्वतःच्या हातांनी बनवलेला eco-friendly गणपती! काही काही गणपती तर ७०,८० वर्षांच्या, तर काही शंभर वर्षांच्या परंपरेचे साक्षीदार! चांदीच्या बाजवटावर (हाही खास परभी शब्द) विराजमान झालेली गणेशमूर्ती; आजुबाजूला चांदीचीच पूजेची भांडी विखुरलेली हे परभी घरातील प्रतिनिधीक दृष्य आहे. अशा खास परभी गणपतीची दखल यंदा “लोकसत्ता”ने अतुल राव आणि सौ. स्मिता राव-पानवलकर यांच्या घरातील ३ इंची गणपतीवर लेख लिहून घेतली. एवढंच नाही; तर “Times Now” या वाहिनीवर कुणाल विजयकरांच्या एका कार्यक्रमात राजन जयकरांकडील मोत्याचा गणपती (तांदळाने काढलेला गणपती-ही सुद्धा एक खास परभी संकल्पना) दाखवला. तसेच सौ. केतकी जयकरांनी खास परभी पद्धतीचे अप्पे, पातवड इ. गणपतीत केले जाणारे पदार्थ करून दाखवले.

अशा या परभी गणपतीची एक झलक आम्ही या दिवाळी अंकाद्वारे आपल्यासमोर सादर करित आहोत.



—Anirudh Malhari Kirtikar

Our (Khelatla) Ganapati has completed 70 years, since my Father Late Mr.Malhari Khanderao Kirtikar who was born in the year 1941 from that year my Aaji Late Smt.Bhanumati Khanderao Kirtikar & Ajoba Late Mr.Khanderao Narayan Kirtikar has started this Ganesh utsav for 10 days at (Old Address) 10th Road Khar (W) opp.Laxminagar Pavilion and now we have still continued the tradition.





Deepak Kothare

Our family has been celebrating 'Gauri Ganpati' since the childhood of Mr. Vishnupant Kothare the founder and first editor of Prabhu Tarun and the father of our ex-editor Mr. Suhas Kothare. We have been following the tradition for the third generation now which has long ago crossed over 100 years. The Gauri poojan has been followed traditionally in our household however the Ganpati is our Pathare Prabhu special 'Khelaatla Ganpati'. The significant features of our Ganpati is that its a 'Baal murti' (having no crown on his head) and who is seated on a Lion. This 'baal ganesh' is fondly termed as 'baagetla ganpati' hence the decoration is always kept simple only with fresh flowers giving it a garden look and miniature silver toys, small porcelain and glass statues of dolls and animals who are used as decoration to play with 'Baal Ganesh'. Years ago our Ganpati used to have the typical old glass dolls and statues which most of the Pathare Prabhu household still possesses. With wear and tear the old toys have reduced however a few can still be seen in the picture.



Pushpal Vijayakar

This Ganapati was established in 1964. It is made of Shadu Mati and is hand made. Ever year the mufti has a new "Roop". this year it was Khandoba Roop. They send Ganpati invitations through cards because the tradition of "Lagna Patrikas" was started by the Vijayakars. Hence they are known as Chitthi wale Vijaykars. The murti is brought home in a silver tamaan. No hair or kanthi is offered to the Ganpati. Only Weni is offered. Every year they buy a silver toy for the Ganapati as can be seen in the picture. They have collected several such tiny toys till date such as musical instruments, scissors, saw, welding pump, games like carrom, chess, patang and firki, palakhi and various wahaans.

This year they bought a doli. These toys are arranged on steps in front of the Ganesh Murti. The entire decoration is ecofriendly.



Shobha Nayak



Vikas Kothare



Parag Talpade



Priya Tendulkar



Archana Vaidhya



Asha Rao

‘धैर्यवान’ ह्यांचा पुण्यातील गणेशोत्सव

-रंजन खंडेराव धैर्यवान

‘आमच्याकडे दरवर्षी गणेशोत्सव पारंपारिक पद्धतीने, उत्साहात साजरा होतो. आमच्या गणेशोत्सवाची पारंपारिकता माझ्या माहितीप्रमाणे २०० वर्षांहून अधिक आहे. माझ्या आधीच्या पाच पिढ्यांपासून आलेला आहे. मी, श्री रंजन खंडेराव धैर्यवान (७४ वर्ष) व माझी पत्नी सौ. ज्योत्सना हे गेली पन्नास वर्षांपासून जतन करत आहोत.

आमच्या गणेशमूर्तीचे वैशिष्ट्य म्हणजे, ह्या मूर्तीचा कमरेपासून वरचा संपूर्ण भाग, २४ कॅरेट सोन्याचा वर्ख (सोन्याची पाने) चढविलेला असतो. ही सोन्याची पाने लावण्याची व लकाकी आणण्याची एक



कुशलता आहे. ही मूर्ती भरीव शाडूच्या मातीची बनवलेली असते. ह्याला साचा वापरण्यात येत नाही, तर ही संपूर्ण हाताने आकार देऊन करण्यात येते. समोर चित्र किंवा कसलेही माप ठेवलेले नसते. ही कला माझा चुलतभाऊ श्री. चंद्रशेखर विष्णु धैर्यवान ह्यांना अवगत आहे. दरवर्षी मूर्ती एकसारखीच असते. मूर्तीच्या डोक्यावर पगडी घातलेली असते व कद निळ्या रंगाचा असून, त्यावर लाल रंगाची जरीकाठाची किनार असते. त्यांच्या सिंहासनाला रुपेरी वर्ख लावलेला असतो. माझ्या चुलत बंधूचा मूर्ती बनविण्याचा व्यवसाय नसून, आम्हा धैर्यवान घराण्यासाठी मूर्ती बनवली जाते. ही कलादेखील, माझ्या चुलतबंधुचे पिता कै. श्री. विष्णु रामराव धैर्यवान व त्यांचे आजोबा कै. श्री. रामराव गणपतराव धैर्यवान ह्यांच्याकडून पारंपारिकतेने आली आहे.

आता त्याचे दोन मुलगे ह्या कलेत पारंगत होत आहेत. डोक्याची रेखणी करणे ही पण महत्त्वाची कला आहे. हे केल्यावर मूर्तीतील भाव दिसण्यात येतो. ही रेखणी माझे धाकटे बंधू, श्री अनिल खंडेराव धैर्यवान हे गेली ५० वर्षे करीत होते. आताच्या त्यांच्या वयोमानमुळे, ही धुरा माझे पुतणे श्री. रोहित चंद्रशेखर धैर्यवान ह्यांनी सांभाळली आहे.

गणेशोत्सवात गणेशमूर्तीची स्थापना, मखरात करण्यात येते. पूर्वीच्या मखराला अनेक वर्षे झाल्यामुळे डळमळीत झाले होते ते आम्ही आमच्याच ज्ञातीतील पुराणवस्तु संग्रहक, सॉलिडीटर श्री रंजन मोतीराम जयकर यांना सुपुर्द केले. आता त्याच प्रकारे नवीन मखर बनविण्यात आले आहे. ह्यावरील पाच घुमट जुनेच आहेत. सर्व सजावट कडून दिव्याची व निरजनांची रोषणाई केली जाते.

इ. स. २००० साली गणेशाची स्थापना पुण्यात आमच्या घरात केली. त्याआधी आम्ही मुंबईत राहत होतो. पुण्यात आल्यावर आपल्याकडे गणपती दर्शनाला कोण येणार हाच प्रश्न पडला. परंतु आमचे घनिष्ट स्नेही श्री. विजय भिडे व त्यांची पत्नी सौ. उषा भिडे ह्यांना आमची विवंचना दूर करण्यासाठी गणपतीनेच पाठविले.

आता पुण्यातील भरपूर गणेशभक्त, आमच्याकडील दहा दिवसांच्या गणपतीच्या दर्शनाला येतात. मुंबईतील येणारे गणेशभक्त येतातच. भक्त नवस मागतात व पुढील वर्षी तो फेडण्यास जरूर येतात. त्यामुळे आमच्याकडे दहा दिवस भरपूर भक्तगण येतो व अशाप्रकारे आम्हा उभयताना गणेशाची व सर्व भक्तांची सेवा करण्याची संधी मिळते. दहाव्या दिवशी गणेशाचे विसर्जन करण्यात येते.

आम्हा धैर्यवान कुटुंबाचे परळ, मुंबई येथे ३० श्री माणकेश्वरांच्या स्वयंभू लिंगाचे मंदिर आहे. त्यांची स्थापना इ. स. १८३० साली कै. श्री. विठोबा माणकोजी धैर्यवान माझ्या आधीच्या पाचव्या पिढीतील सत्पुरुष ह्यांनी केली.



Vijay Dhurandhar

We have been celebrating Ganapati festival for almost 67 years. The decoration is made up of waste materials and most of the items used for the same too are that old. Thus, our ganesh is eco-friendly. We reside at Thane. Myself (Chinmay Dhurandhar) and my dad (Mr. Vijit Madhavrao Dhurandhar) have been preserving the age old tradition of bringing home the Vignaharta , religiously every year.



॥ अजिंक्याचा राजा ॥

साधारणत : सव्वाशे वर्षापूर्वी माझे आजोबा कै. गणपतराव द्वारकानाथ अजिंक्य यांनी नवी वाडीत सुरू केलेला दीड दिवसाच्या गणपतीचा प्रवास गिरगाव चौपाटी येथे १९४८ पर्यंत चालू राहिला आणि १९४९ पासून आतापर्यंत (२०११ आणि पुढे) म्हणजे तब्बल ६२ वर्षे, टिपीकल पाठारे प्रभु आरासमध्ये तो प्रवास दरवर्षी अनंत चर्तुदर्शीपर्यंत चालू आहे. सध्या अजिंक्य कुटुंबाचा गणपती कांदिवली (पूर्व) येथे विराजमान होतो.

दहा दिवसांमध्ये सर्व कुटुंबीय, नातेवाईक, मित्र-मंडळी श्री गणेशाच्या दर्शनासाठी येतात, आणि बाप्पाच्या आगमनामुळे प्रसन्न झालेल्या वातावरणात आनंदाची भर पडते. सकाळ संध्याकाळ आरती, पूजा आणि रोज नवीन गोड पदार्थ (नेवैद्यासाठी) अशी गडबड असते. ह्या गडबडीत दहा दिवस कधी संपतात हे कळतच नाही आणि बाप्पाला जड अंतःकरणाने निरोप द्यावा लागतो. “गणपती बाप्पा मोरया, पुढच्या वर्षी लवकर या”

उल्हास खंडेराव अजिंक्य



गरज

--सौ. उज्ज्वला र ब्रम्हांडकर

‘गरज ही शोधाची जननी आहे’ ह्या विषयावर शाळेत अनेकदा परिच्छेद, निबंध लिहिले गेले. वक्तृत्व स्पर्धामध्ये ह्या विषयावर अनेकदा बोललं गेलं. लहानपणापासून हेच वाक्य मनावर ठसलं... आणि ते खरंसुद्धा आहे.

पण काळ बदलत गेला तसं ह्या वाक्याचं उलट प्रतिबिंब जगात दिसायला लागलं. आता शोध हा गरजेचा जनक बनलाय. गरजेची व्याख्या आता बदलली आहे. शोधामुळे गरजेचं रूप बदललं. मानवाच्या सोयींसाठी नवनवीन वस्तू, संकल्पना निर्माण झाल्या. विज्ञानानं आसमंतात भरारी घेतली. प्रत्येक क्षेत्रात नवीन तंत्रज्ञान विकसित झालं. ए.सी, फ्रिज, मोटार ह्या गरजेच्या वस्तू बनल्या. त्यांनाही नंतर उत्क्रांतीवादानं ग्रासलं.

नुसता टी.व्ही. करमणुकीसाठी पुरेनासा झाला. त्याला व्ही.सी.आर, व्ही.सी.डी प्लेयर नि आता डि.व्ही.डी. प्लेयर ह्या चढत्या क्रमांकांनं पुरवण्या जोडल्या गेल्या...त्याही रिमोटसहित. रिमोट तर हवाच हवा. बाजारात ह्या पुरवण्यासाठी ऑडिओ सी.डी, व्हीसीडी नी डिव्हीडी ह्यांचा खर्च पडला. त्याचं अत्याधुनिक रूप म्हणजे पेनड्राईव्ह. कारण काँप्युटरनं आधुनिक रूप धारण केलं. हे सर्व घरात हवंच. फ्रीज डबलडोअर होता होता साईडबाय साईड झाला. मोटारीला ए.सी. हवाच. नी त्यातही सुखासीन मोटारीची तर गरजच

नुसता काँप्युटर घरात असून चालत नाही. त्यावर ऑर्क्यूट फेसबुक, ट्विटर हे अकाऊंटस हवेतच. तरुणाईच नव्हे तर मध्यमवयीन नि प्रसंगी वृद्ध माणसंही त्यावर नित्यनेमानं ‘चॅट’ करताना आढळतात. रोजच्या सकाळच्या आन्हिकांसारखंच हे रात्रीचं आन्हिक हवंच. जे लोक चॅट करत नाहीत त्यांच्याकडे “काय? तुम्ही ऑर्क्यूट, फेसबुक, ट्विटर कश्याकश्यावर नसता? शी!” अशा नजरेनं बघितलं जातं. क्वचित ह्या साईट्सवर येण्याचा आग्रह केला जातो. पण ह्यामुळे माणसांमधला खरा संवाद हरवला हे कोणाच्याच लक्षात येत नाहीय.

रोज रोज काय बोलणार (की लिहिणार?) ह्या साईट्सवर! मग थोडं काल्पनिक, थोडं खरं ह्याची भेळ तिकडे वाटली जाते. त्यासाठी लॅपटॉपही हवाच. प्रसंगी प्रत्येकाचा लॅपटॉप वेगळा हवाच. म्हणजे घरातील सगळेच एकाच वेळी वेगवेगळ्या लोकांशी लॅपटॉपवर चॅट करू शकतात.

आजच्या काळात सर्वात महत्त्वाची गोष्ट म्हणजे मोबाईल खूप सोयीचा नी इतका सवयीचा बनलाय की बाहेर जातांना मोबाईल न्यायला विसरायला झालं तर चक्क “नोमोफोबिया”नं माणसं ग्रस्त होतात. म्हणजे “नो मोबाईल फोबिया” त्यांना एवढा जाणवतो की माणसं खूप अस्वस्थ होतात. ज्या कामासाठी बाहेर पडतात, ती कामंही त्यांना सुचत नाहीत. तरुणाईचं तर बघायलाच नको. तीन तीन मोबाईल्स तर हवेतच. एक ऑफिससाठी, एक मित्र परिवारासाठी नी एक घरच्या माणसासाठी. त्यांची बिलंही भरमसाठ.

एवढं सगळं असल्यानंतर संगीताच्या शौकिनांसाठी नि तरुणाईसाठी होम थिएटर हवंच हवं. एल.सी.डी.टी.व्ही. तर अत्यावश्यक. परदेशातल्या नातेवाईकांना बघण्यासाठी वेब कॅमेरा हवाच. ते एक ठीक आहे.

पण एवढ्या सगळ्या साधनांच्या खर्चासाठी, विजेच्या अफाट बिलासाठी, खूप पैसा मिळवणं हे एकच ध्येय ओघानच आलं. मग मार्ग कोणताही असो. ज्यांना वैध मार्गानं मिळत नाही ते अवैध मार्गाकडे वळतात. त्या प्रसंगी स्वतःचं व बरोबर कुटुंबियाचं, पुढच्या पिढ्यांचं, अगदी नातवंडांचंही नुकसान होतंय ह्याचीही फिकीर त्यांना उरत नाही.

सोय म्हणून आधुनिक तंत्रज्ञान वापरायलाच हवं. त्यात वेळही वाचतो नी कामही खूप जलद नी थोड्या वेळात पुष्कळ होतात. पण सर्वच आधुनिक उपकरणं जवळ बाळगणं ही गरज बनलीय हे खरंच आवश्यक आहे का; ह्याचा विचार प्रत्येकानं करणं ही आजची महत्त्वाची गरज आहे.

*

LIFE WITHOUT FACEBOOK, TWITTER, INTERNET ETC..... INTRODUCTION

–SUSHMITA KOTHARE

OMG!! LOL!! TWEET!! BB!! . . . These sound familiar right? Yes they are our very own created lingo for the immensely popular social networking sites. Now-a-days, you can see people of every age, caste, creed either "FACEBOOKING" or "TWEETING" or chatting over the upcoming addiction "BLACKBERRY MESSENGER".

Our lives are being surrounded with these social sites. Each and everyone is logged on to it day in and day out. Anyone can trace you; see what you are up to, check what has been happening in your life... Socializing is become a click or miss thing. It complicates life with 300 odd friends from work, school, family, past life etc giving out too much information about themselves. We have been so addicted to these social networking sites that it makes me wonder, 'Will there be any change in lives of those who are Facebook, Twitter and Cell phone addicts? Will hanging out ever be more of a real concept than virtual. Will there be a day where we will have to go by ourselves physically in order to meet real tangible friends and have so much to tell to our friends?

Or will we manage to keep in touch with the world? Be in contact with our long lost friends... Increase our knowledge by the virtue of technology? Will there be emptiness in our lives??!! Well who knows, what is in store for us in the future. They say Change is constant and we need to accept it. But is it right to be overpowered by it? I am sure all those out there must be bogging their minds with these thoughts as well.

We put forth this thought and these questions to our PP youngsters. It is their minds and lives that have been whitewashed by social networking sites. We set an outline for them, asking them to pen down their feelings and thoughts if they were in a situation wherein their life was without FACEBOOK, TWITTER, and INTERNET.....Let us all get a sneak peek into their new life.



Life without mobile, facebook...

– APARNAH VYAVAHARKAR

....."aka chikee lakee chikee chikee lakee chu, hawa hawayee" –nasal, husky, rustic, all-in-one, a perfect bollywood remix-POP at 6.30 a.m!

Yes, that's my first wake-up call. Eyes still closed, I swing my arm and hit snooze and tuck it back under my pillow. Not for long, though. Soon our desi pop starts all over again ... "aka chikee lakee...". This time snooze is no more an option, its 7am and I can't afford another wink.

I rub my eyes and read my prayers-sorry my BB. Blue Star "Going to make chilly chicken now, its dinner time", 'BBMS' me a friend living in the US. Scroll to the Green Arrow: "Yawnnn, 2am me hitting bed- u have a gud day". 'Whatsapp's' that's my sister living in Harrow. I see three new pics of my dear Alkhil coming back from school-all sent by my sis-in-law within two mins. (This goes on throughout the day. It's free you know. Up to 20 pics everyday. Feel like I'm almost living with them.) A new pic from my niece in San Jose-that's her new boyfriend. Two red Stars on my sms: "your Vodafone bill is due"... Damn these network companies, sending messages at any time... Scroll down, "lets all wear sarees to office today-shud b fun xxx"... I sigh, "It's raining - u kidding me!"-Enter! "Dark Red star in my mail box: "Please send open file artworks ready for print", Mail sent at 1:45am! OMG does my boss ever sleep- jeez workaholic! Fortunately my alert sounds are muted! Who said it is a flat world. It's a one-stop world. Me. Full-stop. And it's in my hand. Palm power!

So that's the first five minutes of my morning dedicated to my love - my cell phone.

Morning chores begin, I plug-in and sing along with my music traveling to work. Blocks all the ridiculous honking outside and am all charged-up and in the right mood for the day ahead! But I know for sure that time actually accelerates. No matter how early I wake up, my boss is always there before me. Can't complain

of traffic every day.

Turn my PC on, a nice hot cup of tea comes, while my outlook downloads all my mails of to do's, I type FB Ctrl+ Enter... new tab, TOI Ctrl+ Enter. While scanning through the headlines, I simultaneously scan through friend's status messages and updates.

My work day starts, Illustrator and Photoshop files are all up and running on my screen while FB is quietly minimized. As my heavy files take umpteen amount of time to save, I switch to my very interesting e-book on my phone filling up doodle time.

What better time than Ganpati festival to do the usual visits to family and friends. Google maps on my cell and Presto! There we have the new flat the Trilokekars have moved into at Malad. Stay away from work, yet keep in touch with all that's going on. Keep in-touch with friends all over the world for FREE, or even you-tubing videos / watching movies whilst stuck in heavy traffic... So powerful, na? Without my cell phone, I am lost- feel as though I've left the house without wearing shoes! That little friend carries my whole world around with me.

Yet, sometimes you just want to be away. No minute-by-minute account of your whereabouts. They surely steal your privacy. Days when I haven't slept enough and have reached work all groggy and have ring-tones spreading like viruses from table to another-oh how I hate phones on such days. Or when I thought I had just grabbed my client's interest and attention and thought that he was finally on the same page as me and about to buy my idea.... there goes his cell phone, and he needs to urgently take the call and leaves the room. When he comes back, we start from square one. Oh! How I hate cell phones on such days.

I get off the phone with a really annoying friend, and I start complaining about how I can't stand her, and after 5 minutes I realize the line

is still connected. And can you imagine they are now selling phones where they can SEE what you are doing. Come on man, where are we headed to? Like the day I had to beat the road traffic and decided to travel by train to Malad and my long-lost friend happened to add me on to 'BBM' while I was waiting to board the next train. I was so carried away catching up on chat that before I realized I had gotten into the wrong

train and had moved four stations in the opposite direction. Well done my friend, I say to my BB.

And this brings me to my See-Saw Theory; where everything goes up and down. Friends, marriage, job, or phone. it is up to each one of us to draw that fine balance. Enjoy it when it's up, and wait for it when it's down.

Sorry my phones ringing now - got to go...

Life without cell phone, facebook & other social networks

–Prerit Nayak

Over 70% of the world's population currently owns a cell phone. I've had one for most of my adult life, since I was 18 and cell phones were almost the size of a brick back then (Hyperbole intended).

Cell phones have permeated every possible fabric of our society. From mobile banking and workout tracking to updating facebook, today's smart phones in particular come with everything but the kitchen sink (but you can look up where to buy a sink, of course). The most advanced smart phones are more computer than anything else, with a phone chip and antenna just along for the ride, it seems. With mobile Internet, email, navigation systems, high definition video, today's smart phones can do almost anything.

I understand that cell phones and by extension, social media, has made communication A LOT easier, especially across longer distances. I accept this...grudgingly.

It's not that I'm against social media or cell phone use in general. Sure, it irritates me sometimes when I'm out with someone and they fire out their cell during a conversation, like some sick twitch they can't control. And I don't particularly like those awesomely informative Facebook statuses: "Sheila is getting ready for the weekend."

Okay, Sheila, got it, thanks for the heads up!

But our reliance on cell phones and social

media has become ridiculous. Like zombies, we waste time on our Facebooks, surfing aimlessly for hours until our alarm clocks remind us that work starts in an hour. 10 years ago when I didn't have cell phone or a facebook account, I never really stopped functioning if I didn't know "Sheila was preparing for the weekend". But now it seems that it's probably very important. And with cell phones sometimes I feel that we've also lost our sense of social responsibility. Too often, we change our plans on the fly because we can text the person...on the fly.

However, the concept about facebook and other social networks that I love is that it has extended the boundaries of the cell phones ability of keeping in touch with your friends and family. It has created an unconscious feeling of continuous connection with them. No matter whether you are online or not you feel they are just a 'Like' or 'Offline message' away.

Although coming back to the title of this article, I feel that life would be just as normal but SLOW as it was before we had cell phones, facebook & other social networks. I mentioned 'slow', as the cell phones & social media have certainly increased the pace of communication. If it's taken off our lives 'now' then it would create a massive void in our lives as we have managed to make these tools an extension of our physical bodies. The existence of these tools sound to me a like a double-edged sword.



My life without Facebook

–Siddharth Kothare

Pretty much everyone I know has a Facebook account. I use it for emailing, messaging, sharing pictures, and more. That sounds pretty reasonable, right? Well, Facebook has a way of creeping from something useful into a major contributor to carpal tunnel, burning eyes, procrastination, and mindless clicking.

Haven't seen people you went to high school within ten years or more? With Facebook it's no problem. Since you can view everyone's friend list as soon as you connect with one person, the floodgates open, and you're back in your hometown, for better or worse.

Want to see what people are up to but have no interest in really talking to them? No problem with Facebook. If someone has an open profile you can click around on their page like you are their BFF, seeing all their pictures, friends' comments, and status updates. You can locate exactly where someone is and how they're feeling today in 3 minutes or less.

There was a time when I had few friends, not because I was geeky (I seriously wasn't....), but because there were few kids of my age who shared interest similar to mine. Now I have over 500 friends. Agreed that I have not actually met all of them but.....

I just love the sound of my voice. A compulsive chatterbox I have a Need For Speech (pun intended). Facebook is god sent for me. I can rant about everything on the face of this earth and still people listen to me and revert with their responses. Mom says I'm addicted to Facebook....Puleeze....As if.....It's not addiction if it's good for you right? There is no such thing as too much of a good thing right? Come on tell me, Right? Right? Just because Facebook is my homepage doesn't mean I'm addicted, right? So what if I update my status more than twice a day, I'm not addicted. That reminds me

Sorry just wanted to update my status.

Seriously guys, I tell you.....Bill gates would be a gatekeeper and Steve Jobs would be out of job if these moms had their way.

Life without Facebook? Can't imagine how the oldies used to live. They did have it tough you know. Imagine actually having to visit people and engaging in verbal conversations just to get an update of their status. That reminds me

Sorry just wanted to update my status.

Man I tell you, my pal Sachin has the best selection of songs and funny videos, which he has shared on FB. Yet I couldn't stand a minute of talking to him. His problem is that he talks too much, not interesting talk like me, but useless stuff like you know his life. All the time, he is like, I did blah blah and I am doing blah blah. There have been so many occasions when I wanted to yell "shut the @**^ up dude" but since he is six feet two and over eighty kilos of solid muscle, better sense prevails. Without FB I would have to endure countless hours of verbal torture just to get access to his latest collection. That reminds me

Sorry just wanted to update my status.

Then there is Priya, the sweetest angel this side of the planet. I never had the guts to approach her and impress her with my funny side. Thanks to FB now I can. She just can't get enough of my jokes and is always the first person to "like" my updates. That reminds me

Sorry just wanted to update my status.

My life without Facebook? There would be no life without Facebook. People would have to leave the comfort of their homes just to meet other people and get updates. That reminds me

Sorry just wanted to update my status.

We would have to actually spend time with each other. Travel on Mumbai roads just to see each other and see what's new. That reminds



me

Sorry just wanted to update my status.

We would actually have to show interest in boring people's talk just to get that small bit of interesting tit bit they had. I still shudder when I think of the times I had to sit with Sharda kaki and listen to her bhajans because my idiot cousin Shantanu would take a long time to get ready for play. Or the times I had to spend time listening to Pritesh mama complain about his

bowel motions just so I could get the latest comics he had got for me. That reminds me

Sorry just wanted to update my status.

Whew!!! I seem to be ranting a lot right now, but this has struck a raw nerve with me. Man I tell you, Facebook has saved me from loads of mental and physical agony.

So until the next update on my page.....GTG... TC.

Life (?) without cell phone, Facebook, Twitter...

–Swapnil Vyavaharkar

'Boarding completed' announced the crisp voice of the airhostess. As the last few passengers settled into their seats, I took out my cellphone and switched it off. My wife gave me a 'Colgate' smile and remarked, "2 weeks – No phone calls, no messages, no FB, no Cricinfo. Just you and me". Our vacation had started.

I still remember that happy feeling when I powered down my cellphone – that of disconnecting myself from the world, of being free! As the aircraft took off, I felt I was leaving all the tensions and social obligations behind and part of it was in the knowledge that I cannot be contacted. Well, that was the idea since we were on a vacation. But would I be happy if that were to happen in normal life? Would I be OK being disconnected? Err...Let me think.

Today we are in an age where being connected is a given. My typical day starts with my cellphone ringing, and it hardly ever stops the rest of the day. As I take the bus to office, I quickly check my FB to see what my friends are up to or what's happening in the PP community. I tweet the first random thought that pops up in my mind and keep checking through the day if someone has liked it or commented on it (Yeah, don't act like you don't do it!!). I take breaks during work to log on and chat with my friends who happen to be as jobless and conveniently

online at the time. Then there are the good old phone calls during the day. I like the fact that I can stay in touch with so many people so easily. I simply can't imagine life without these technologies. Or can I?

I just have to look back a few years to realize I was doing perfectly well without any of these luxuries. I would meet most of my friends during the day – at school/college, at play, at tuitions. No computers or cellphones meant quality time with the family in the evenings. Meeting a friend after a long time over a cutting chai and batata vada was more special as we filled each other with what was happening in our lives. These moments were treasured, since we didn't know when we would meet again. I would look forward to those STD calls with relatives who were staying far off. Come to think of it, I was very much connected with all those who mattered to me.

And that, I feel, is the difference. Earlier, I had to take an effort to know people. Today, technology has made it so easy to connect with every tom, dick, harry, munna and pappu. But does that mean I have to? In an effort to be connected with the world, am I giving enough time to my family? I may have 583 'friends' on FB, but have I talked to those six friends whom I will turn to for help in need?

These questions keep reminding me that I



am attached to people and not to technology. For me, life is about people I care for. Social media is one way of connecting with them. It is not the ONLY way. So, even if Mr. Zuckerberg decided to shut shop tomorrow, I would make

an effort to stay connected with them. But until he decides to, let me update that status and comment on that story and send a couple of friend requests.

*

Life without facebook, mobiles, etc.

–Chaitanya G. Kirtikar

I was out walking in a park the other day and witnessed an amazing set of sequences being played out before me. On one side, some mini maestros were orchestrating a 'lagori' game; A little distance away, a group of girls had cordoned off a section playing jump rope and saakhli; a bunch of boisterous boys had taken a chunk of the park centre for themselves, playing a rowdy game of football. All along the boundaries of this park, was a walking path, milling with old timers and youngsters alike, their only commonality – chatting away to glory in groups. There were other sundry clusters of people, some pottering over some wild plants, some exercising and trying their hand at yoga while one group was enjoying a game of charades.

I walked past this anachronistic tableau in awe. When was the last time I had seen a park, filled to the brim with people chatting and interacting with each other, in person no less! The answer – at least ten to fifteen years back, came to my mind, almost a reflex.

Indeed! Till about 10 years ago, we still spent weekends outdoors, visited relatives, called on old school teachers, kept in touch with old pals. A time when cards were played well into the night over endless cups of cutting chai; a time when we had time for listening to our grandparents' worries; a time when a power failure meant a round of antakshari or ghost stories or hide 'n seek; a time when we did not confide to strangers or even friends till we knew we could trust them; a time when phone wires could be curled around our fingers while talking to our latest crush; a time when computers and the internet were still considered a mystery; a time when we still had time for ourselves.

What has changed so dramatically over the past decade? What is the reason for the outbreak of zombified humans who find greater solace in opening their hearts out to faceless strangers in cyberspace rather than flesh and blood family and friends? Why do we play card games online rather than with our doting siblings? Why do power failures now only invoke a shudder at the inability to power up our laptops or cell phones. Why do we while away our time surfing listlessly and still find no time for our family? Why do we feel the urge to update our facebook or twitter status for the world but have nothing to share when we stumble across an old acquaintance in the market? Why do we wish people online or text them on their birthdays or anniversaries or on festivals instead of picking up the phone and calling them or hailing a cab and meeting up with them in person? Why are we suddenly such shameless slaves of technology that we cannot imagine a day without our trusty gadgets that we did very well without as youngsters?

There is of course no answer to these rhetoric why's. There is only the deadened blankness with which we stare at our mobiles / computers / TV screens, waiting endlessly for someone to switch the button off and shake us out of our reverie?

I literally tore some pages out of my notebook, instead of typing out this article in Microsoft word with spell check, just to see if there was any trace of non-expandable, non-upgradable human memory and sensation still alive inside me. Apparently there is!

I chose to mull about a day in the life of a fictitious youngster from our generation - Ram,

who in this alternate reality, has not been exposed to the 'tagged' world of facebook and who thinks a ringtone is an alternate sound for his doorbell.

Ram wakes up at the crack of dawn after a full night's sleep by the shrill clanging of an old fashioned alarm clock. He checks his 'wall' calendar and smiles while noting that it's a Sunday! He wakes up his sleepy eyed neighbor and they head out towards the beach for a jog. They take a bus to their destination and while their time singing old melodies during the journey. At the beach, the friends take in the sea shore and the cool morning breeze, jogging up a sweat. They taper off their outing with a round of cricket with some local boys. Ram heads back home and has breakfast with his family, while reading the Times' cartoons with a tilted head, off his father's open newspaper. He heads off to the bath and pops into his grandmother's morning prayer routine before stepping on the building terrace to help his mom dry out her fresh papads. He tastes the sticky dough and runs away as his mother chases him away with a laugh. He heads back home to catch up with some reading and has a nap in the afternoon. He rides out on his bike in the evening, to chat up a few friends over a cup of tea and roadside sandwiches. He brings some fried bhajiyas on the way home and enjoys them with his family, while listening to the radio. The family retires after a healthy round of chit chat over the dinner table. Ram smiles without expecting a smile back, waves at strangers and whistles without a hint of self consciousness.

How is Ram able to fit in so much into a Sunday, when the average city Joe or Jill cannot find enough time to make excuses for missing dinner engagement, birthday parties and family get togethers. What is he doing or experiencing that is so different from our daily lives today. The answer stares at us more glaringly than it should have... Ram is not a creature of addiction. He is not chained to his cell phone and laptop. He spends time with his family and friends by his own choice. He makes this choice over the monotony of sitting before a square screen, staring at lines of code.

Can we spend a day without watering our



Farmville plants, checking our 'wall', clicking 'like' on random web pages, updating our FB status to 'bored', updating our nth side profile picture, texting without shortening words, talking to the person in front of us without checking who just pinged us on our BB messenger. The answer 'NO' to all these questions is neither startling nor appealing to most of us. We choose this life of customized blandness.

Let's try and shake away these cobwebs out of our minds, shall we? Let's take back control of our lives. We agree that technology has its benefits and conveniences, but should also readily admit and be wary of its limitless, bottomless pitfalls. Social media is for online interaction; it should not become our only for of action for the day. Don't let cell phones bind you into cells. Leave your phone home for a day. See the lilt in your walk, feel your worry lines ease out. Stretch your legs, crack those knuckles, let out a yell, laugh at silly jokes, say 'I love you' to your mom and dad without reason, see with your own eyes that there is life beyond those illuminated square screens that have boxed in our lives. Surely we owe ourselves that much, don't we?



Life without cell phones

–Jatin Dilip Navalkar

Today science & technology has made great progress in practically all the fields with tremendous progress in satellite technology, communication has got a boost, which eventually has given a birth to a new form of communication systems "The Mobile Phone".

Life without a mobile phone is like a person without a soul. Today, cell phone is a necessary gadget to almost everyone. It would be impossible to imagine a life without a cell phone. It is very easy to carry due to which if at all we fall in any problem, we can immediately call a person & solve our problems if there would be no mobile phone then such problems would never be solved & it is very difficult to find a P.C.O nearby every time. Cell phones are not only used for communication purpose, many other facilities such as clicking picture, listening to music, playing games etc are also available. If there would be no cell phones then such entertainment facilities would not be enjoyed by us. If we are traveling in a bus or train in our spare time we can listen to music or play games. This would be possible only because of cell phones. Cell phones also provide us with calculator facility & GPS facility. If at all we are shopping in a mall & we need to calculate the

expense, it is impossible to carry a calculator every time with you, at that time a cell phone comes in need. If we are lost somewhere & we need to find the correct way to reach the destination & if the cell phone has a GPS facility we can easily come to know where we are & also will give the direction to reach our destination. If we attend any birthday party or any wedding of our friends or relatives & if at all we have to click any happy moments & unfortunately we have forgotten to carry our cyber shot our cell phone comes in need. Just with a click of a button the picture is captured & saved.

If there would be no cell phone all these things would be next to impossible. Cell phone is thus a man's way of life. In the earlier days when there were no cell phones it was very difficult to connect with people but today because of cell phones we can be connected with our loved ones in any corner of the world. If we are out of station & a very important message has to be sent & we do not have a cell phone then it would be very difficult to connect to that person.

Cell phone is thus a man's basic necessity in today's world. Today life without cell phone is boring & miserable.

Life without Facebook, Cell Phone, etc

–Utkarsh Ajinkya

Being a part of the younger generation Y, it's hard to imagine life without the things that define the way we live our lives today. Having spoken to different people from an older age group about these put things in perspective.

How did people communicate using telegrams and letters when their loved ones went abroad for studies or work?

How did people entertain themselves when there was no internet?

What was the most exciting thing those days which was the modern equivalent of Steve

Jobs Apple launching its amazing collection of iPods, iPhones & iPads and sending the entire world into frenzy?

Did people still come on time for appointments without the timely event reminders in their Blackberry?

How was it to watch CK Nayadu lead from the front to bat at the Brabourne stadium? Was it as exciting as watching Dhoni hitting the winning six on a 46" LCD TV?

The more I think about, the more examples come to mind. Some advances in technology

have made life easier for us while the others it depends on how we use it.

There is no doubt, that video games like Playstation and X-Box have given children a great source of entertainment options. When I was at school, I would rather play a game of soccer outdoors rather than play the football game on X-Box. This was not only more refreshing but also healthier option. I would occasionally hurt my knees and elbows, get my shirt dirty in the mud. But it was part of the fun.

The internet has turned our world into a global village. Facebook has allowed me to get in touch with my long lost friends of school. I even managed to organise a school reunion after a gap of five years. Some of my friends, who stay in Mumbai and live in Bandra, are friends on Facebook. But still they are not able to catch up as they are "in touch" on Facebook. The funny thing is that my grandparents say that they would have just called their friends

and met up for a movie or a coffee had they been in the same situation. The social media has changed the way we interact with people around us.

On the other hand, Skype and video conferencing allows us to see and talk with loved ones when they are overseas. That makes me wonder how people survived with sending letters to their near and dear ones when there was no airmail.

With our ever increasing fascination with hi-tech electronic gadgets, I see the people on trains and buses more involved in playing with their gadgets than having friendly conversations with fellow passengers.

I feel in the modern times, we have become more and more obsessed with technology. This has increased our 'faceless' communication while decreased our face to face communication.

*

Life Without Cell-Phone

—Janhavi Agaskar

Life's not the same without a cell-phone. Life without a cell phone is like a "Cake without a Party". Cell-phones make the earth go round and round in this new technological age.

One of the many reasons cell-phones are needed is because cell phones are a great resource in an emergency. Emergencies big or small a cell-phone could help in all those dangerous situations. In many situations cell-phones have saved lives in emergencies because of their easy and fast use. Besides, this we can take example of our day-to-day life from morning till night the cell-phone ring buzzes. It also reminds us of daily schedule. It connects people all around the world by just sitting at one place. Cell-phones play an important role in connecting to friends. And as we all know "Friends" are the most important part in everyone's life. For today's generation

cell-phone is an instrument without which no one can live.

But if we will have a look in the past there were no cell-phones, but still people lived their life as happily as others. Even without a cell-phone they would track each others lives and would stay in touch with each other. But in this generation, life without a cell-phone is "Horrible". It all shows that new technology has made man to be fully dependant on it. As in this new technology world we would hardly see a person without a cell-phone.

As cell-phone acts as a "Data-base" for a person and if there would be no cell-phone it would be very difficult for a person to maintain all the information conveniently in one single place. This shows how a cell-phone has changed man's life and as he cannot survive without it!

*



Life without Mobile, Facebook...

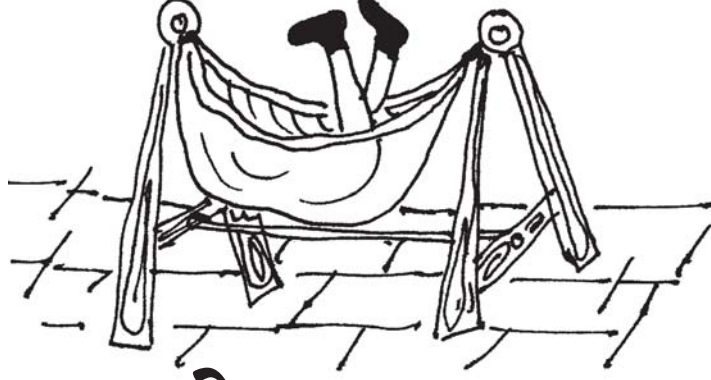
–Anand Vijaykar

Life today is about being connected. PDAs, tablets/pads, datacards and dongles, Internet; all these bring people 'together'. Staying in touch with a friend or an ex-colleague is as simple as ordering a meal or a book. Facebook, LinkedIn, Email and myriad marvels of technology make it possible for me to 'talk' to my friends. Making the trip from Santacruz to Dadar is something of a task, these days. But the truth is, I loved making that journey, and I still do; the travelling isn't as important as the reason. Spending time with my friends and relatives was, and still is worth the journey with all the inconveniences that go with it. My friends and my relatives, all have their email accounts

and their Facebook profiles and I have a long list of all these addresses, but when I think about what I'd do if I didn't have these means of communication at my disposal, I don't really find myself awed by the prospect of an 'unconnected' existence. I'd travel, sometimes short distances, sometimes long; but I'd be rewarded with the chance to connect with them on a plane wholly impossible over the 'net'.

Would I be handicapped, were there no Facebook, Internet or Mobile phones at my disposal? Hardly. What I would be is anxious and eager to once again see and be with the people important to me. Somehow, I think I'd have a slightly fuller life.





बाळाचे पाय पाळण्यात

प्रस्तावना :

-सौ. भक्ती प्रधान शेठे

जन्माला आलेलं बाळ म्हणजे परमेश्वराने दिलेला अमूल्य आशीर्वाद. ते बाळ म्हणजे आई वडिलांच्या हृदयाचा ठोका. आपल्या संसाराच्या वेलीवरती उमललेली एक नाजूक कळी. प्रत्येक आईवडील त्या बाळात आपलं प्रतिबिंब पाहत असतात. ते इवलेसे तेजस्वी डोळे, ते धारदार नाक, ते लालबुंद ओठ जणू नक्षत्रांचं लेणं. असं हे गोंडस बाळ जसं जसं मोठं होत असते तसें तशी त्याच्या सुप्त गुणांची आपल्याला जाणीव होऊ लागते.

त्याची तल्लख स्मरणशक्ती, असामान्य बुद्धिमत्ता, हुशारी, व आनंदी वृत्ती हे सारे गुण आपल्याला प्रकर्षाने जाणवू लागतात. खरं तर ती एक नाजूक वेल असते. आपण जशी वळवावी तशी ती वळते. बाळाने सायकलसारखे पाय मारायला सुरूवात केली की आपण म्हणतो की तो फुटबॉलपटू होणार किंवा डान्सर तरी होणार. असे अनेक तर्क वितर्क आपण सतत लढवीत रहातो. पण मूल जसं जसं मोठं होऊ लागतं तसं तसा त्याचा छंद ही त्याची आवड कधी होते हे कळेपर्यंत त्याचं रुपांतर एका सुंदर नक्षीदार उज्वल भवितव्यात होऊन ते प्रगतीपथावर रूढ झालेलं असतं.

“बाळाचे पाय पाळण्यात” ह्या सदरात आम्ही हेच जाणून घेण्याचा प्रयत्न केला आहे की खरंच हे असं असतं का? की ह्यात काही अपवादही असू शकतात?

QUESTIONS TO FATHER

१. पहिल्यांदा जेव्हा तुम्ही तुमच्या बाळाला पाहिलं, तेव्हाचा तो आनंद तुमच्या शब्दांत व्यक्त करा.
I was very happy to be blessed with a baby boy.
२. तुमच्या मुलाला / मुलीला लहानपणापासूनच ह्या क्षेत्राची आवड होती का?
Yes he used to always collect toys like army soldiers and pistols during his childhood. His childhood games used to revolve around army and similar games.
३. आपल्या मुलांनी कोणते क्षेत्र निवडावे ह्या बाबतीत आपला काही आग्रह अथवा इच्छा होती का?
Yes I wanted him to step into my shoes. I always wanted to see him in uniform with a golden wreath on his cap.
४. आज तुम्ही दोघेही एकाच क्षेत्रात असल्यामुळे as a senior म्हणून आपल्या मुलाचे / मुलीचे performance evaluation कसं कराल? (e.g. decision making thinking etc).
Yes as an army officer he is level headed person. He is very judicious in his approach and weighs the consequences before arriving at conclusions. He is brave and has flair to take challenges. He is an astute performer with a sound understanding of Operations and Logistics, in the Indian Army. He is keen on updating and using relevant knowledge keeping up-to-date technically and applying new knowledge to job.
५. यशस्वी आयुष्याची कोणती गुरुकिल्ली आपल्या मुलाला / मुलीला द्याल.
"Veer Bhogya Vasundhara", "The Brave Shall enjoy the Earth". So be brave and take life as it comes head on
I advise my son to to live his life in line with the famous Chetwood Credo.
"The safety, honour and welfare of your country, come first, always and every time.
The honour, welfare and comfort of the men you command comes next.
Your own ease, comfort and safety comes last, always and every time."

-H. G. Pradhan.
Indian Navy

QUESTIONS TO SON

१. तुम्हांला लक्षात राहिलेला तुमच्या बाबांकडून / आईकडून खाललेला मार / मिळालेला ओरडा? तुम्ही केलेली खोडी किंवा चूक?
Yes I still remember, I was in class III and it was my History paper, I had told my parents that due to lack of time I was not able to finish the paper in time. And the day came "the Open House day" while going through my history paper my dad saw a beautiful Ganpati portrait drawn by me in the middle of the answer paper and understood the reason for not getting enough time to complete the paper. I was so scared and was aware of the consequences. My dad was silent he did not scold me in school. At home he only said that "Ganpati portrait was good but the paper was wrong" and made me understand not to repeat such things henceforth. And thereafter before every exams I was reminded about this history paper.

२. ह्या क्षेत्राची आवड तुम्हांला लहानपणापासूनच होती का? व ती कशी जोपासली?

Yes was always interested in this field. I used to visit Naval Dock Yard with dad to get a closer look at the warships and interact with defence personnel. I used to collect newspaper columns & photographs on defence services and maintained them in a scrap book all through my childhood. Even my childhood games used to revolve around military themes. I enrolled myself in NCC during college and was an active participant in various activities.

३. हे क्षेत्र निवडताना तुम्हाला तुमच्या बाबांकडून / आईकडून मिळालेले मार्गदर्शन / मदत.

My father was always supportive vis-a-vis my choice of career. He let me choose my career as per my wish and guided me all through even though I was the only son. He shared my dream with me in my childhood which I am proud to have completed to his satisfaction. When my family and friends discouraged me he stood behind me & encouraged me to prod on regardless of all the difficulties. He shared his professional experiences with me which served as a guiding light in my career. He has been a patient listener and a wise counsel which helps me take up new challenges.

४. आज तुम्हांला असं कुठे वाटतं का की ह्या क्षेत्रापेक्षा दुसरं काही निवडायला पाहिजे होतं? ते कोणतं? आणि का?

No I always wanted to serve in arm forces as this was my only dream as a child and couldn't have thought for any other profession.

५. आपल्या आई / बाबाबद्दल वाटणारं प्रेम तुमच्या शब्दांत व्यक्त करा.

I am really thankful to GOD for giving me such a wonderful parents for which I am always grateful to Him. It was my fortune to get this lovely family. They have always been supportive pillars in my life. The trust & Faith which they have in me has been my strength all my life.

-Capt. Ashwin H. Pradhan

QUESTIONS TO FATHER

१. पहिल्यादां जेव्हा तुम्ही तुमच्या बाळाला पाहिलं, तेव्हाचा तो आनंद तुमच्या शब्दांत व्यक्त करा.

First time when I saw my son the joy and happiness I experienced was fantastic! It was beyond description. Firstly it was my first child so I was ecstatic and my wife had gifted me such a lovely baby boy so my happiness had no bounds. We were ready for both son or a daughter. God had been very kind to me so I thanked him for giving me such a wonderful child.

२. तुमच्या मुलाला / मुलीला लहानपणापासूनच ह्या क्षेत्राची आवड होती का?

As we say, 'balache pay palnyat distat', Tanmay when he was first taken to the pediatrician for check up the first thing he did was grabbing the doctors stethoscope and started playing with it, the pediatrician was surprised and said, 'like father, like son'.

As we are a family of doctors this our 4th generation of doctors my grandfather, my father, myself and now my son! When Tanmay was a child his favourite game was playing doctor - doctor, I remember he used to take his grandfather's stethoscope and play with it. He was brought up in a joint family and there was always an environment where medicine treatment was discussed. My brother Dr. Prafull Vijayakar, my father Dr. Gajanan Vijayakar and myself would always talk about different systems of medicines like homeopathy and allopathy and hence he and his two sisters were given the dose of 'BAL KADU', when they were very young.

३. आपल्या मुलांनी कोणते क्षेत्र निवडावे ह्या बाबतीत आपला काही आग्रह अथवा इच्छा होती का?

Myself and my wife, Shruti never forced our decisions of choosing the profession on any of our children. But as we discussed earlier that the environment in our family was such that seeing the success of his grand father uncle and myself played an important factor in his decision making.

४. आज तुम्ही दोघेही एकाच क्षेत्रात असल्यामुळे as a senior म्हणून आपल्या मुलाचा / मुलीचा

Tanmay was always an independent person since he was a child, he is sincere, quick brained and always takes a balanced decision. The one thing I like about him is that he always gives the patient a PATIENT hearing, which in my opinion is the most important quality a successful physician should have.

५. यशस्वी आयुष्याची कोणती गुरुकिल्ली आपल्या मुलाला / मुलीला द्याल.

If you want to be successful in your profession or life you should be HONEST, SINCERE HARD WORKING and TRUE TO YOUR PROFESSION, there is no substitute for HARD WORK. This profession is NOBLE DON'T COMMERCIALISE YOUR PROFESSION.

-Dr. Pradeep Gajanan Vijayakar
M.D. (Hom)

QUESTIONS TO SON

१. तुम्हाला लक्षात राहिलेला तुमच्या बाबाकडून / आईकडून खाललेला मार / मिळालेला ओरडा? तुम्ही केलेली खोडी किंवा चूक?

Early morning studies was the last thing I would do because sleep is very important for me and it's a task to actually wake me up from sleep but this one incident definitely made me a early riser... I distinctly remember about this thing when I was in the 6th standard had just shifted to a new school and new area as well and was coping up with changed situation so in my 1st unit test had not done very well in my exams. Later on settled in the new place had new friends and was just getting used to everything. Till then it was time to give my 1st semester. My dad used to teach me science and that too during my deep sleep time that is early in the morning, one day he woke me up at 6 am in the morning and asked me to study digestive system which he had taught me before also, he made me sit on the table and went out for a walk. I tried keeping my eyes open but couldn't so eventually I fell asleep on the table. My dad came back from his walk and woke me up. he asked me how much did you study. I said I slept just 10 minutes back fearing he would scold me I told him I have finished reading the entire thing. He asked me to draw and explain the digestive system and as it was done in half sleep I made terrible mistakes in the digestive tract until I felt a tight slap on my right cheek. I still can remember that slap, was into tears but one thing I understood that I have to take the human body seriously. I scored 92 in that science exam but that was a turning point in my life that I cannot make mistakes at least in science, had liking for the subject before but developed serious interest thereafter.

२. ह्या क्षेत्राची आवड तुम्हांला लहानपणापासून होती का? व ती कशी जोपासली?

As far as I remember I always wanted to be like my granddad, dad and uncle, more so ever like my grandfather because he had a Midas touch, all pain would just vanish, even if he would examine me half of the pain would be better so was greatly influenced by my grandfather. So as there was a very strong background of doctors I always wanted to be one. As I matured there was

more specification into what type of doctor I want to be allopath or homeopath, the choice was very simple since had seen uncle and dad cure cases miraculously and that too incurable ones, was highly impressed and keen to learn this science called homeopathy.

३. हे क्षेत्र निवडताना तुम्हांला तुमच्या बाबाकडून / आईकडून मिळालेले मार्गदर्शन / मदत.

My dad and mom have always supported me right from the time I made the decision of being doctor and much before that too, they have always guided me and nurtured me. If it was not for my mom I would have been a struggling cricketer somewhere in Shivaji Park and waiting to get some chance here and there cause cricket was one of the things that fascinated me most as a kid but because of my mom always being behind me to study I could take up science and develop interest into it. My dad or mom never compared me with anyone, neither wanted me to be a topper but always wanted me to have pretty much decent score cause I was always an average student, so my mom was my emotional support and my dad my intellectual support cause its from there that I developed interest for science and he would always answer my queries no matter when I ask him and that includes 12 o' clock at night too, when he would return home from his busy clinic but would always have time to answer my stupid questions.

४. आज तुम्हांला असं कुठे वाटतं का की ह्या क्षेत्रापेक्षा दुसरं काही निवडायला पाहिजे होतं? ते कोणतं? आणि का?

The thought of changing my profession or field has never crossed my mind and neither do I regret anytime choosing this profession. Being a doctor is a noble profession, a profession that serves the mankind so I am proud to be a doctor and have not and will never regret this decision of mine.

५. आपल्या आई / बाबाबद्दल वाटणारं प्रेम तुमच्या शब्दांत व्यक्त करा.

I am fortunate to have such mom and dad because I remember my mom and dad never ever pressurized me to do something only because they wanted me to do. I always had my freedom to take decisions. I never hesitated in asking them difficulties or sharing my happiness as well as difficulties or problems with them. They reprimanded me wherever necessary and inculcated strong family values which now as a grownup I can understand how important nurturing is at that tender age. Even if I compare myself with other friends of mine I would say my mom and dad have given me too much and I can't ask for more. Would like to say a big thank you to my parents for giving me such a wonderful life.

-Dr. Tanmay Pradeep Vijayakar.
B.H.M.S

QUESTIONS TO MOTHER

१. पहिल्यांदा जेव्हा तुम्ही तुमच्या बाळाला पाहिल, तेव्हाचा तो आनंद तुमच्या शब्दात व्यक्त करा.

I think it is very difficult to put in words the happiness of seeing your first-born for the first time. To just say 'I was happy', would be an understatement; and to say that 'I was ecstatic', would be overreacting. I will say, the extreme joy of becoming a mother for the first time is to be experienced and can't described.

२. तुमच्या मुलाला / मुलीला लहानपणापासूनच ह्या क्षेत्राची आवड होती का?

Yashodhara did not show any inclination towards legal profession when she was in school.



But while studying for the B.Com. degree, she was sure that she wanted to pursue 'law' after graduation.

३. आपल्या मुलांनी कोणते क्षेत्र निवडावे ह्या बाबतीत आपला काही आग्रह अथवा इच्छा होती का?

Neither my husband nor I, at any time, influenced or even asked either of our children to choose any particular field. Both of them were very clear about the field of education in which each wanted to make his / her career.

४. आज तुम्ही दोघेही एकाच क्षेत्रात असल्यामुळे ह्या हद्दी म्णून आपल्या मुलाचा / मुलीचा जेदिसहम त्तिसूदह कसं कराल? (e.g. decision making, thinking etc).

Yashodhara secured the 1st rank in the LL. B. Examination of the Bombay University and thereafter passed her Solicitor's exam as well. After marriage she passed the Barrister and a Solicitor's exam from the province of Ontario, Canada, where she practiced for a few years, before coming back to India.

५. यशस्वी आयुष्याची कोणती गुरुकिल्ली आपल्या मुलाला / मुलीला द्याल.

Be true to your profession and spare no efforts to give your best.

-NETRA VIJAYKAR

QUESTIONS TO DAUGHTER

१. तुम्हाला लक्षात राहिलेला तुमच्या बाबाकडून / आईकडून खाललेला मार / मिळालेला ओरडा? तुम्ही केलेली खोडी किंवा चूक?

I really do not remember any major or severe scolding or firing that I received from either my mom or dad, when I was young. Basically I had a great childhood with all my cousins and I guess we were not very bad as kids.

२. ह्या क्षेत्राची आवड तुम्हाला लहानपणापासूनच होती का? व ती कशी जोपासली?

I think I developed my interest in the field of law at the age of 14 because as young children you are never very sure as to what you want to become once you grow up. My mom was of course an inspiration. After coming back from the office, my mother would tell my dad everything that had happened during her day and legal terms were always part of the conversation. That's when I realized that this field would be an ideal one for me.

३. हे क्षेत्र निवडताना तुम्हांला तुमच्या बाबाकडून / आईकडून मिळालेले मार्गदर्शन / मदत.

As I have said earlier, my mother was the inspiration for me to choose this field but neither my mother nor my father ever pushed me into making this my career of choice. It was my own decision and I was never held back to follow what I wanted to do. It would have been the same even if I wanted to be a doctor or an engineer.

४. आज तुम्हांला असं कुठे वाटतं का की ह्या क्षेत्रापेक्षा दुसरं काही निवडायला पाहिजे होतं? ते कोणतं? आणि का?

I do not think that I could have done anything else besides being a lawyer. I love what I do. If I had pursued any other career, I would have been successful but unhappy.

५. आपल्या आई / बाबा बद्दल वाटणारं प्रेम तुमच्या शब्दांत व्यक्त करा.

My parents have always let both my brother and myself follow our hearts in everything we did. They never imposed their views on what we should do or what career we should follow. They let us make our mistakes but were always there to pick us up when we fell and stumbled. For that I have tremendous love and respect for them and will always do.

-YASHODHARA

QUESTIONS TO FATHER

१. पहिल्यांदा जेव्हा तुम्ही तुमच्या बाळाला पाहिल, तेव्हाचा तो आनंद तुमच्या शब्दांत व्यक्त करा.

Paraj was our second child. First being a son I always wanted my second child to be a boy too. Naturally, I was very happy because now we will have a male dominance in the house.

२. तुमच्या मुलाला / मुलीला लहानपणापासूनच ह्या क्षेत्राची आवड होती का?

Paraj was never interested in studies. So the field he chose was his comfort zone. As I look back I think his decision was right because he is extremely happy with what he is doing for the present.

३. आपल्या मुलांनी कोणते क्षेत्र निवडावे ह्या बाबतीत आपला काही आग्रह अथवा इच्छा होती का?

It was left to him to choose his field. The business what I started is growing. Our elder son Nishad has joined and is an asset. Paraj too is free to join us however no complusion.

४. आज तुम्ही दोघेही एकाच क्षेत्रात असल्यामुळे as a senior म्हणून आपल्या मुलाचा / मुलीचा Performance evaluation कसं कराल? (e.g. decision making, thinking etc).

At present we are not in the same field.

५. यशस्वी आयुष्याची कोणती गुरुकिल्ली आपल्या मुलाला / मुलीला द्याल.

Unstinted efforts, complete dedication to work, be true to your values, do what you feel is right, you should be convinced what you are doing is right.

-Bansi Dhurandar

QUESTIONS TO SON

१. तुम्हाला लक्षात राहिलेला तुमच्या बाबाकडून / आईकडून खाललेला मार / मिळालेला ओरडा? तुम्ही केलेली खोडी किंवा चूक?

Yes. I clearly remember when I was in my 4th std I had got 5 out of 20 in geography in one of the test papers. My mom had almost broken down by my silly mistakes and she thought I might fail in that paper but i survived due to combined passing with History paper. I think the mistake I made in this case was purely that I was not prepared for this paper for whatever reasons.

२. ह्या क्षेत्राची आवड तुम्हांला लहानपणापासूनच होती का? व ती कशी जोपासली?

Truly speaking we are living in the world of tecnology which is constantly updating itself since our birth. I happened to work for an IT/BPO firm in which there is a vast scope of learning.

Answering the first question no it was not that I planned for during the initial days of my career.

३. हे क्षेत्र निवडताना तुम्हाला तुमच्या बाबांकडून / आईकडून मिळालेले मार्गदर्शन / मदत.

My parents have perfectly guided me through my education days. I was getting the most appropriate direction from them till my education. Once I had my first permanent job that was the time for me to become a man from a boy whom they have been raising. But they were never against whatever decisions I made so far.

४. आज तुम्हांला असं कुठे वाटतं का की ह्या क्षेत्रापेक्षा दुसरं काही निवडायला पाहिजे होतं? ते कोणतं? आणि का?

Yes I will have that at the back of my mind. I always wanted to be in the core marketing division of FMCG, retail or media industry. This is because of the sheer interest of branding subject which I studied in my MMS.

५. आपल्या आई / बाबाबद्दल वाटणार प्रेम तुमच्या शब्दांत व्यक्त करा.

Well in short and sweets words they are the reason why and how I exist in this world. They are my eternal guides and gurus. Cheers.

-Paraj Dhurandar

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पावसाचे गाऱ्हाणे

ये रे ये रे पावसा, कुठून देऊ तुला पैसा
पैसा झाला महाग, महागाईची लागली आग ।
पाहुनी नभीची विद्युल्लता
मानवाने शोधिली विजेची योजना
वापरले पाणी तू दिलेले धरणामधूनी
अमाप वापरली वीज, झाली जागतिक गरमी ।
केली नाहिशी आम्ही, तू दिलेली हिरवळ
बांधल्या उंच इमारती, झाली भरपूर चंगळ
मिळविला खोटा पैसा त्यातून
झाले मंत्री आणि बिल्डर या पैशाधीन ।
नाही रहावया घर शहरातल्या दुर्बळांना
सुटेना प्रश्न प्यावयाच्या पाण्याचा
झाला शेतकरी हवालदिल तुझ्याविना
दिलीस हूल तू त्या कृत्रिम पावसाच्या प्रयत्ना ।
तुला दिलेला खोटा पैसा झाला मात्र उदंड
भोगती फायदे त्याचे अमीर आणि गुंड
नाही देणार आता तुला असा पैसा खोटा
येई धावून सत्वर हे पर्जन्यराजा सर्वश्रेष्ठा ।
अवकृपेने तुझ्या वाढेल हा पैसा खोटा
आगमनाने मात्र तुझ्या होईल सारी सुबत्ता
किती दिवस सोसावे थैमान हे खोट्या पैशाचे
येऊनी झडकरी करी मुक्त आम्हा यातूनी सदाचे ।

—सौ. रजनी विनोद कोठारे

वणवा

मालकाचा नेहमी तमाशा
एकटा बळी मी त्याच्या रोषा
गाळूनी घाम करूनी काम
तरी मुंग्या मेंदूला येती
देही, वणवा पिसाटला ॥१॥

विचारांची मालवून समई
सांजेच्या शांत समयी
सूर्य पसार, सुरू चंद्रविहार
जवळ करतो गुत्याला
देही वणवा पिसाटला ॥२॥

ऑर्डर घेते, ती पारु
चंद्रमुखी, ओतते दारु
नको सोडा, नको चकणा
दमात ग्लास रिचवला
देही, वणवा पिसाटला ॥३॥

का म्हणती वाईट मदिरा
कधी न दावी ती नखरा
थांबवी मेंदूच्या चकरा
निघतो आता, कोटा संपला
देही, वणवा थंडावला ॥४॥

—अजित प्रमोद तळपदे

प्रभुतरुणाची डायरी

जनन

२१-०९-११ सौ. जान्हवी आणि श्री. आनंद नरेश आगासकर, पुत्र, पुणे

आत्याबाई नाव बोला

आरूष आनंद आगासकर

मरण

| | | | |
|----------|-------------------------------------|--------|------------|
| ६-०९-११ | श्री. श्रीपाद वसंतराव धुरंधर, | वय ९१, | मीरा रोड |
| २०-०९-११ | श्रीम. नंदा (विमल) नारायण नवलकर, | वय ८९, | ठाणे |
| २०-०९-११ | श्री. समीर चित्रसेन व्यवहारकर, | वय ४३, | ठाणे |
| २५-०९-११ | श्रीम. नीला (पुष्पा) केशव कीर्तिकर, | वय ८६, | खार |
| २४-०९-११ | सौ. सुगंधा किरण कोठारे | | विलेपार्ले |
| ३०-०९-११ | सौ. शोभा अशोक विजयकर | वय ६६ | खार |






चित्र

आवळ्याच्या प्रत्येक फांदीनं,
ओठांना लिपस्टिक लावलेलं
बिट्टीच्या प्रत्येक अंबाड्यात
पिवळं जर्द फूल खोवलेलं,
'गुलमोहोर सरलाय, म्हणून काय झालं?
मी आहे नं' म्हणत, म्हणत,
लालजर्द एक्झोरा फुललेला मजेत.
फुलं संपलेली, म्हणून रुसलेला शिरीष,
कुपणावरची बोगनवेल, गारठलेली पावसात,
डुलतलेली चुकार फुलं, अधेमधेच,
पाठशिवणी चालू खारींची मनमुराद,
आवाजासह, 'च्युक् च्युक्, चटर, पटर!'
सरडा डोकावतोय एखादा हळूच
जांभळं सारी टपटपवून, सुस्तावलेली जांभूळ
लाल ठिपका मिरवीत दोनच बुलबुल,
फांद्यांतून नाचणारे दोनच बुलबुल!

— कल्पना सुभाष कोठारे

तुझे रुप राणी कुणासारखे ज
तुझे रुप राणी तुझ्या सारखे ज

मंगल आठवले हांचे दागिने घातल्यावर प्रत्येक स्त्रीला आरसा हेच तर सांगतो !



मंगल आठवले ज्वेलस्

१०५, गोकुळ आर्केड, पहिला मजला, स्वामी नित्यानंद मार्ग, गरवारेच्या वाजूला, विलेपार्ले (पूर्व) मुंबई ४०० ०५७.
दूरध्वनी २६८२७१६२ मोबाइल - ९८१९४९७११७ सोमवार ते शनिवार सकाळी १०.३० ते रात्री ८.०० रविवारी वेळ ठरवून

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हिन्यांचे दागिने हॅलमार्कींग, ऑथेन्टीसिटी सर्टिफिकेट तसेच
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QUIZ

1. Name the author who has mentioned about Scarlet Ohara's "Tomorrow is another day...."?
2. This author has mentioned about having a 'special cup of tea" in his article. Name the article and the author.
3. Name the author who has mentioned the scientist Dr. Ian Stevenson?
4. This author was told by his father to write 100 times that he was sorry for what he has done. Name this author.
5. Name the author who remembered C.V. Joshi's 'Chimanrao's' famous sentence?



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अभिनंदन

- * 'मिफ्टा' सोहळ्याची संपूर्ण प्रकाशयोजना, सजावट श्री. शीतल तळपदे यांची होती. अभिनंदन.
- * श्री. लोकेश (रोहित) स्मिता चंद्रशेखर विष्णु धैर्यवान हे बी. टेक. (आयटी) इंजिनियरींगची परीक्षा व्ही. जे. टी. आय. मधून ९७/१०च्या उच्च श्रेणीत उत्तीर्ण झाले. 'विरलेस सिनीयर नेटवर्क्स रिसर्च प्रोजेक्ट वर्क' साठी त्यांना 'आऊटस्टॅंडिंग परफॉर्मन्स'चा मान मिळाला. कॅम्पसमधून निवड होऊन त्यांची सॉफ्टवेअर इंजिनियर म्हणून विसकॉन स्टेट, मॅडिसन, अमेरिका येथील एमएस एपिक सिस्टीम कॉर्पोरेशनमध्ये नेमणूक झाली. अभिनंदन.

नोंद घ्यावी

'प्रभुतरुण'चा पुढील अंक डिसेंबर
२०११ मध्ये प्रसिद्ध होईल.

-संपादक

// श्री इंद्रायणीप्रसन्न //

// श्री गुरुदेव वत्त //



प्रकाश केंद्र

शुभ मंगल, स्वागत समारंभ....

सहली, सम्मेलन!

आम्ही, अशा मंगल प्रसंगी रुचकर
जेवणाची व्यवस्था करण्यास सज्ज
आहोत. पाठारे प्रभूंच्या वैशिष्ट्यपूर्ण
पदार्थांची व्यवस्था, शाकाहारी/मांसाहारी
जेवणाचे चवदार गरमागरम स्वाद्य पदार्थ
नियोजित वेळी पोहचविण्याची, वितरण
आदी सेवा!

विशेषतः सागुपुरी, गोडी बटाटी,
अननस सांबारे इ. आणि तसेच पंजाबी
डिशेस, गुजराती डिशेस शिवाच
सजावट - रोषणाई फर्निचर आदी
व्यवस्था देखील करतो.
स्वामधील गाथत्री मंदिराशेजारील
पाठारे प्रभू ज्ञाती सभागृहात एकमेव
आम्हालाच मागणी असते.

: संपर्क :

प्रवीण धुरंधर

डि. १३, बँक ऑफ इंडिया, वृंदावन सोसायटी,
दुसरी कोल डोंगरी लेन, स्वामी नित्यानंद मार्ग,
अंधेरी (पू.) मुंबई-४०० ०६९.

फोन : २६८४ ०९ २६ भ्रमणध्वनी :

९९६९१०४३८८

बोर्ड ऑफ कंट्रोल प्रभुतरुणाच्या मालकीचे हे पत्र

स्नेहेश प्रिंटर्स, ३२०-अ शाह अँड नाहर इंड. इस्टेट, अ-१, धनराज मिल कंपाऊंड, सीताराम जाधव मार्ग, लोअर परेल,
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१३४ / प्रभुतरुण दिवाळी अंक २०११

