

# **GLASS HOUSE**



# GLASS HOUSE

*Short Stories, Articles and Poems*

**S.L. Peeran**



**AUTHORS P R E S S**

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(Short Stories, Articles and Poems)

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Dedicated to my Loving  
Daadu and Amalu



## **PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION**

I am presenting the second edition of Glass house and other short stories. I have added to my earlier edition a treatise on 'Ego and Iness' and Poems on the positive and negative nature of man. The earlier edition was published in 2004 by Shri MS.Venkatramaiah of BIZZ BUZZ publications a good friend of mine. The earlier publication is as good as self-publication and all the copies were distributed to friends and well-wishers. In the present addition more articles have been added. Now the present second edition is being brought out by Shri Sudarshan Kcherry of Authorspress publication New Delhi. I am thankfull to him for accepting my work for publication. I would like to add that these stories does not relate to any living or dead person they are all fictitious.

I hope and pray that my work is enjoyed by the readers.

Bengaluru  
1<sup>st</sup> Nov 2019

**S.L. Peeran**





## FOREWORD

It is a pleasure to write a critical introduction to the stories of Mr. Peeran a well-known Indian writer in English. Moreover, one is attracted by the career of Mr. Peeran in different cities of India. His life and career are focal points for any Indian youth aspiring to reach the pinnacle of power and glory.

From the later part of nineties he has been writing and his skill as a writer is maturing day by day and week by week. The close friends like me are astonished at his myriad capacity. We know him only as a poet. Now in this volume he shines as a story-teller.

Peeran's stories are mirrors that reflect his faith in sufism, his loyalty to his own religion and his love of humanity. Peeran is a highly secular and cultured man but his secularism and culture are rooted in the basic teachings of Prophet and tenets of Islam. His characters reveal all aspect of humanity, but ultimately they strive towards divinity.

If Peeran had lived in the days of Moguls, he would have been placed in the court of Akbar for his versatility. His religious vision does not exclude other communities, but include them and his stories stand for control of senses, life of purity, elevation of soul and faith in God.

Such a holy spirit never dwells among the Islamic writers of India either in the past or in the present.

His 'Glass House' is a mirror that reflects a variety of characters. He is able to see a mini India in his school and college. He is highly conscious of sense of brotherhood that prevailed in the campus among Students of various states and communities. Apart from his moral values, Peeran stands for

a harmonious India where Hindus, Muslims and other minorities live in peace and joy. He describes all Indian festivals, holy places and national functions with minute details and patriotic fervour. Moreover, he is a social critic that points out the false nature, god men and spiritual masters.

He is a master of topography and history. About Indian cities like Bangalore, Delhi and other places he writes with great observation and with eyes of a landscape painter. His religiosity is keenly observed in his short story wherein a bad Muslim youth turns into a good Muslim through the influence of good friends and mosque atmosphere. His descriptions have two motives. They are not only artistic but they indicate the degeneration of persons and society. His derision of smoking, chewing, visiting dance halls and wine shops turn our souls from earthly pleasures and take us to the realms of God's mercy, love and glory.

Peeran is a shiny sufistic writer, but he is a moralist first, artist next and thereafter he is Islamic. By his preaching's through stories, Peeran has elevated himself as a follower of Prophet and as a champion of social harmony in India.

**Dr. M. Thirumeni**

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## PREFACE

The stories in this collection have emerged as an outcome of my life experience as a student, then working in the labour and management field; as a lawyer, Professor of law and now working as a Member (Judicial) in a high power Tribunal. The stories are all fictitious and do not have any resemblance to any living or dead character. My observations of life and my own experiences have given rise to fictitious stories. If I have captured some of the vicissitudes of life in my stories, and if I am in a position to convey the same to my readers, then it would bring me great satisfaction. It is said that mental makeup of a writer and his background influences his writing. There are no two opinions about this view expressed by some critics. We are influenced in our writing by our upbringing, the environment we live in, our education, besides our own experiences in life. We gather all of them together to create fiction. There is no underlining message in my stories but I have tried to project only certain aspects of life which I have noted.

I have not followed any pattern or imitated any writer as my alma-mater. The stories have come to me spontaneously which I have penned down. I am thankful to large number of my friends/nephews/nieces who read my manuscript and gave their valuable suggestion.

I am also grateful to Dr. M. Thirumeni, Professor of English Presidency College for being gracious to have gone through my manuscript and have given a foreword on my request.

I hope my humble contribution to the Indian literature in English will be appreciated by readers and critics.

Chennai

**S.L.Peeran**



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**PART I.**  
**STORIES**



# GLASS HOUSE

## Chapter 1. Initial Period of Nurture

Ramesh and Rahim studied together from 1<sup>st</sup> Standard in a co-educational School run by the popular Mahila Sangha in Bangalore. This sangha was the first of its kind to bring up children by giving modern education. Its patron was the Maharani of Mysore. A very large area was earmarked for starting this school in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century in Bangalore. The School was started with much fanfare and it was located in the area, which was in the heart of old Bangalore. Most of the middle and upper class officers and cultured families sought admission for their children in this school. It had secular objectives, although it retained the basic Indian Character and Culture. The medium of instruction was English. However, the teachers preferred to speak in Kannada. This was to create a homely and close environment.

The management did not open its doors to all and sundry. The students of rich parents were not taken in large numbers and admission to Muslim children was restricted. Only a fortunate few serving in high Government positions or hailing from prominent families could succeed in getting admission for their children.

Although the School had the syllabus prescribed by the Government but it had chosen to select its own text books for teaching English as a language, to maintain its exclusiveness.

The School had a very big compound, with a well maintained garden, huge shady trees, and large ground for

children for playing games like Tennis, Throw ball, Basket and Volley ball.

There were two sections in the School. The co-education classes were up to 6<sup>th</sup> class, which were referred in those days as Lower Secondary, for which District Public exam would be held for all the children of the dist. Schools. The High School was exclusively for girls.

Every day during morning assembly, the entire school children of all sections would line up and each day a particular divine song was sung along with National Anthem. One student was selected to recite 'a thought for the day' and another one to read the gist of the daily news. The unique feature of school was that it had reserved one period every day for storytelling. One child was chosen to narrate mythological and moral stories. Up to 5<sup>th</sup> class the boys and girls would be made to sit alternately on the bench each day. In 6<sup>th</sup> class, the boys and girls would be made to sit in two separate rows. Children were given two recesses. One short break around 12.30 pm and a long one hour break at 1.30 p.m. The classes would end at 4.30 pm. Children would play during lunch break and would engage in sports after 4.30 p.m. Except scouts and guides and training in Red Cross, the school did not have any other extracurricular activity. One period was reserved for Drawing and Painting and another for needle work for all children till 4<sup>th</sup> class. But girls continued to attend needle work and stitching classes till they completed S.S.L.C.

One unique feature of the school was that it didn't have any religious activity neither there was performance of any Pooja nor display of photos of gods and goddess in the class rooms or in office of the School. Only the divine songs were sung for goddess Saraswati in the morning. The teachers did not speak a word on religious matters.



But there were a few teachers, who would when upset would scold a child or punish him by making him stand on the bench or stand outside the class room. On rare occasions Muslim students would be taunted for not studying well. A congenial and homely atmosphere prevailed in the school and the School gained popularity as an example for its tolerance and universality.

It was not surprising that the children of all the communities mingled with each other, played laughed together. Each one of them felt close to the other and a kind of fraternity prevailed.

During the early fifties of twentieth century, Ramesh Rao had joined the School after a brief study in Hyderabad. He spoke chaste Urdu. The Muslim boys befriended him and he was affectionately called as “Ramesh”. Ramesh was a very intelligent and studious boy. During the Independence and Republic celebration, he would come dressed up in a Shervani and a cap. This endeared him to all the teachers and children. He stood 1<sup>st</sup> in the class and scored maximum marks in Sanskrit, English and in Maths.

Out of a few Muslim class fellows, Rahim particularly liked to be close to Ramesh and both became good friends. Often they would exchange sweets and together buy fruits and nuts sold outside the school premises by hawkers and share the same with each other. They played together. Ramesh spoke with Rahim and other Muslim boys only in Urdu. This brought them together and they all felt that Ramesh was part of them.

Ramesh parents would buy story books like Gullivers Travel, Ivanhoe, Arabian Nights, Alice in Wonderland, including comics of Tom and Jerry, Phantom and Tarzan. He would freely share these work with Rahim. Both collected stamps, coins and cricket pictures as a hobby. The popular games they played were “hopping” and cricket.

Ramesh and Rahim after completing their 6<sup>th</sup> standard joined separate Schools of the same management. These Schools were also run on the same pattern like women's league but were meant for boys. The morning prayers in the School were sung as under:

*“Raghupathi Raghava Raja Ram  
Pathita Pa vana Seetha Ram  
Iswara Allah there nam  
Subko San mati de bhaghavan”  
And  
“Gurur brahma Gurur vishnu  
Gurur Devo Mahesh waraha  
Gurur Sakhsath Prabh brahma  
Tasmai Sri Guruveh Namaha:”*

Ramesh and Rahim would meet on rare occasions, when both branches of the School had common celebrations like Prophet's Birthday, Ramnavami Celebration, Republic and Independence Day besides School day functions.

Thus the students never felt any isolation about their parental religious beliefs.

The School's headmaster Narasimha Rao was a very kind person. He would dress up in a cotton suit, pant and tie with an English hat. He came to be known as “Hitler” not for strictness but for his hat.

All teachers would come in suits and ties and a sense of discipline prevailed over everybody. The School had a cosmopolitan outlook with students coming from various states like, Rajasthan (Marvaries) Muslims, Sindhies, Gujarathies, Marathes, Teluguites, Tamilians and Kannadigas. An exclusive section was meant for those, who took Kannada as a second language. They mixed during language hour and would go to separate class rooms for their language study of Urdu, Hindi, and Tamil and Telugu. The Sanskrit boys were mixed up in these

classes. Thus the brilliant students of upper caste were part of this group. A spirit of camaraderie prevailed and there was not a single incident of any quarrel or fight between the various sections of students. The School management would invite respectable leaders and stalwarts from all communities to lecture during the respective festivals. They would point out that humanity is a single family (Vasudeva Kutumba) like water being called with different names, yet referred to a single thing; so also God is One and it hardly matters the way that He is worshipped. All men and women shared same feelings, pleasures and pains, woes and sorrows; hopes and dreams and each should stand for the other and work for each other's welfare.

Ramesh and Rahim joined the same college run by Christian missionaries and took up same subjects for study and again fate brought them together.



## **Chapter 2. Bohemian College Days**

Ramesh's simplicity and open heartedness endeared him to every one of his class fellows. He was particularly fond of one sweet looking girl, though not blessed with good complexion, yet her sweetness endeared him. She was dressed always in a skirt. The exposed legs would attract Ramesh's attention. He was an orthodox Brahmin, but the exposed atmosphere of the college, opened up another window in his mind and heart. He kept arguing with his self as to why a Brahmin can't enjoy the pleasures of life and why should he forgo the exquisite sight of the beauty. He would go in rhythmic and spasmodic jerks while listening to jazz music.

The strings of guitar and the sounds of the drum would make him jump with joy. John had become a fast friend. John took him first to Imperial Hotel near the college and for the first

time Ramesh enjoyed the puff of a cigarette. That day, he went straight to the bath room in his house and brushed his teeth with Colgate toothpaste and gargled his throat with euducolone which he had secretly purchased. He did not want his brothers Sham and Ravi to smell cigarette. He loved his mother Parvathi dearly and looked up to his father Sethapatti Rao more as a friend but could not dare leave any doubt in their minds about straying from the path of strict Brahmanical way.

Ramesh nearly broke his mother's heart when he didn't score a rank or even a first class in his PUC exam. He got through with a dismal third class!

This was an unbearable shock to Parvathi, Sethapati and his brothers. They wondered as to how such a boy like Ramesh, who stood first in the entire Dist. Exam scoring a high first class in SSLC, could do so miserably bad. Stigma and humiliation in the family circle left Ramesh's parents wondering and guessing as to what Ramesh could have been upto. They couldn't fathom the reason for such low grades scored by him. He was destined to be a Doctor and he had taken Natural Sciences as subjects for study. But Ramesh kept explaining to his parents that his interests lay in Math's and Physics. He had been forced to choose Natural Sciences, where he had to dissect frogs. How could he as a Brahmin cut the frog's stomach or handle cockroaches? He couldn't make head or tail of the floral diagram to be drawn in Botany class or to make out slides by taking samples of algae. He just couldn't apply his mind to these subjects of Zoology and Botany. Botany, he could manage but being a strict vegetarian, he couldn't bear the smell of dead animals. He would vomit in the practical's and would skip them on one pretext or the other. John was always a good company to skip the classes along with Gulati, a Punjabi boy. He enjoyed English movies of Elvis Priestly in 'Rex Theatre' which was at a stone's throw from the college. The Beatles were famous and Ramesh got hocked to their beats. The Imperial theatre was also

near the College. 'Lido' always displayed classics like "Summer of 42", "Cleopatra", and "Macchena's Gold" which ran for a year. The movies "Sound of Music", "My fair Lady" thrilled him. Ramesh took up to guitar, bongos and drum. The strings and the beat of the drums excited him.

John, Sundar, Dwarkanath, Gulati and Uttapa would form a gang and would go to 'Nepoli' to watch the 'Cabaret'. He would tell his parents that he would be studying in Sundar's house but actually he was enjoying the sights of bare legs. The sound of music would take him to raptures. Dwarkanath was a son of a legislature and his father's wealth, power and status had gone into his head. He had money but needed company to enjoy. He was from Shimoga and as he was not so very good at speaking English; he dragged Ramesh in his company. John an Anglo Indian boy had been born in an atmosphere of dance and music. These were natural and were nothing new to him, so were beer and cigarettes. This was their way of life. The seriousness in studies was dormant in him. However, outwardly he was an extrovert and enjoyed what came along his way but for Sundar, Dwarkanath Gulati, and Uttappa this world of joy and mirth was something new, strange and thrilling. It was a new path and they all felt that they had strayed from the sacred paths of their ancestors.

It became known to all the lectures and Professors that they were playing truant and were disinterested in studies.

Gulathi's father and brothers dealt in Silk Sarees and had a big show room in Chickpet. He came from Hindi School. In the company of these four persons, he picked up English and started speaking stylishly within a few days. His bold answers in grammatically incorrect English would send the entire class into a peel of laughter. Gulati would think that he was witty. Being very handsome and pulpy like Hardy, he endeared himself to everyone in the class. He was generous too and would come to the help all the boys.

Sunder was a brilliant student and studied hard to make a career as a Doctor but would not let his ambitions betray him nor allow his friends to know how he secretly enjoyed both booze and the books. He came out with flying colours and got admission in Bangalore Medical College. But fate decided his career otherwise. In Medical College, the atmosphere was quite different. The senior boys dragged him to the girls available in Gandhinagar lodges. He fell in love with a nurse and his failure in 2<sup>nd</sup> M.B.B.S led him to commit suicide.

John was an ever green hero. He got through in his exams well and after earning his degree, completed his post-graduation in Law. He was well employed in a Christian Child Care programme. Later, he started a company of his own. As he lost heavily, he took up to marketing and prospered as a rich business man. John learnt to balance between bohemian and a serious minded life; his cultural background taught him so. He was a catholic and regularly visited Church and his life was a mixture of all that it could offer. He turned out to be a well-balanced person.

Dwarkanath could look up to follow his father's foot step. He quickly realised that life, though meant to be enjoyed also deserved to be handled with care.

He also entered in business and being a shrewd person thought of supporting it with money, power, status and position. He got married to a rich girl and learnt to enjoy life but the pranks of the formative teenage life of waywardness left in him a sense of mischief to probe into the hearts of girls. He learnt that art with utmost care. He was a true Nawab of the present times.

Rahim watched this gang with eagerness since he was left out. The gang of five looked at Rahim like a "Bacha" (child), who had absolutely no sense of aesthetics. Neither he knew how to dress fashionably nor had an ear for music and dance let alone watching movies or going to restaurants.

Rahim was found in the company of Sathya, Babu, Prabhakar, Aleem, Hyder, Ali, Iqbal, Balakrishna and Noor. All of them had formed a study group. The English teacher at seeing Rahim seated with Hyder, Ali, Aleem, Iqbal and Noor would frown at them and would direct them to sit apart in the class room but watching them together in the library or outside in groups, he was forced to shout one day in the class as “you “Allah’s company get on my nerves”.

Since then Rahim and his friends came to be known as “Allah’s company”. As days passed the dream of Rahim to turn out to be a Doctor broke. He got a mere second class. He was compelled to turn to study of Sociology, Philosophy and law. He hailed from a noble family of sufies and fakirs. Its environment drew him to its bosom. The Professor of Urdu, Khader, who was an aged person in his sixties; filled in Rahim’s bosom, a love for Urdu and Persian literature. The Professors of English and Social Science were famous for their teaching. Rahim did not feel the loss for not having made a career as a Doctor. His other members of “Allah’s Company” turned out to be eminent Doctors except Hyder who joined Govt.service.

Sathya stood first in the University and felt that he should go to Loyala College, Madras for his Master’s Degree, as he felt that being a Brahmin, the Departmental Head of Central College Bangalore, who was a Harijan, may harm his career but he found to his dismay and shock that the external examiner during his first year’s Master’s course was a sympathiser of the Dravidian Party. The Examiner stood behind him and passed his hand on his back and felt the thread.

Sathya got miserable marks in practicals. He had to appear again for 1<sup>st</sup> year and final Master’s Degree exam. He could manage to get a mere second class degree. However, he was fortunate to be absorbed as a lecturer in a Brahmin managed college. He felt secure and did not change his job.



### Chapter 3. Ramesh's Joys and Anguishes

Ramesh in the company of his friends first tasted tobacco and forcably, tasted beer. They all argued that beer was not an alcohol and it was not sacrilegious to consume it. It was invigorating and healthy. After taking beer for the first time, he vomited and felt sick. He was scared as well. His mind and spirits revolted. He felt struck by lightning and thunder. His head was spinning with hundreds of thoughts. After breaking "Samskara"! Can he continue to be a true Brahmin with the sacred thread around him? He couldn't sleep that night, he was gripped with fear. He needed someone to console him. He turned to Sudhir, his cousin, a close friend as well.

Sudhir felt repulsive on hearing from Ramesh, about his taking beer. Sudhir scolded him saying "Today it is beer, tomorrow it will be beef. What if you stray away from the sacred path and become a vagabond"?

Ramesh tried to pacify his conscience. At the behest of Sudhir, he went to Sree Raghavendra Swamy Temple and performed special pooja and begged Sudhir to keep this matter to himself.

Ramesh was again dragged by his friends to Theatre Imperial to watch a late night show. It was a James Bond's "Gold Finger". Ramesh was fully aroused; his baser instincts and urges tickled. All his friends were in a bohemian mood and cracking crude jokes on girls. John and Dwarkanath suggested they go to Hotel Napoli and watch the cabaret. Both of them had watched it a number of occasions. It was agreed that the coming Sunday night, they would inform their houses that they are studying jointly in Dwarkanah's house and stealthily to go to Hotel Napoli. Dwarkanath was to give an alibi at his house that he would be at Ramesh's house having a combined study of difficult subjects. Thus, the plan materialised and Ramesh had his first opportunity to watch the cabaret dance. He lost his cool



over his senses and the feeling of being a good Brahmin. He took a peg or two of beer and stopped at that as he was afraid of vomiting again. That night, he couldn't sleep due to amorous thoughts gripping his mind. Well, he convinced himself that there was nothing wrong in watching a cabaret dance and by so watching, he could not lose the sanctity of a Brahmin.

His absence in the classes was being watched by his teachers and more particularly Rahim and other Brahmin boys. Rahim felt quite surprised in the changed ways of Ramesh. Rahim knew too well that Ramesh has been captivated by the new environment of the college. Rahim also evinced a similar interest and wished secretly to cross the limits. But, he could not go beyond Hotel Imperial and that too to sip a cup of tea. He was afraid of Khader Saheb, Professor of Urdu, who was known to his elders. His "Allah's company" also comprised of friends, who took him to Friday prayers to the Mosque. They never failed to speak on the type of religious life to be lived. Among the friends of "Allah's company", Hyder and Aleem were particularly interested in keeping a watch on Rahim. They knew him to be a friend of Ramesh and had watched Rahim in Ramesh's company and that had aroused their suspicion. They would tease him, if he chose to come in a colourful shirt or in tight pant. Rahim found it difficult to trespass the limits laid down by his friend and the Professors. He resigned to his fate.

It so happened that Rahim's father was superannuated in Govt. Service and he had many brothers and sisters. They were all living in a joint household with their aunts and uncles. Rahim had to be serious in his studies as his parents were making several sacrifices for his fees and educational needs. The strict vigil on him from all sides could not make Rahim to slip into the path to which Ramesh was slowly yielding.

During the course of time, Ramesh had taken up to bohemian life of mirth and pleasure. The attractive girl students in the class, the cheerful chubbies with laughter and fun,

changed his mental outlook entirely. Now, he learnt to see life in a different dimension, which was hitherto undiscovered and unknown to him. It was lovely like a fresh breeze and soothing fragrance. The college excursion trips with boys and girls from varied backgrounds, with jazzy clothes were full of joys. It opened his mind to the pleasures of life. All through, he lived amidst a surrounding, which was orthodox, religious and ritualistic. He had been made to feel that he belonged to a sacred world. He had been taught not to let down himself by joining the main stream of mirth and pleasures. He had been taught to live above the dirty stagnant water like a lotus by following a “Satvic” life and fulfilling the “Karmic” cycle with devotion, sincerity and humility. He had been made to believe that to make a good living, one had to pursue a career which is exclusive in itself and which can't be achieved easily by the ordinary persons. By using extraordinary intelligence he was told to achieve high status jobs. Thus, the study of Poetry, literature and Social Sciences, which did not gain any good employment, was discouraged. Science, Engineering, Medicine, Economics, Law and Accounts dominated the minds of the people of his caste. He was also instructed to be a strict vegetarian. He was made to understand that if at all he had to think of music, it has to be classical one with 'ragas' and 'talas'. He was made to learn to sing hymns to the multitude of Gods and Goddesses.

Now, Ramesh's mind had seen expanding horizon. The flood of light from all around was dazzling and sparkling. A sudden grip of youthfulness and passions inundated him.

His senses for discovering and drowning himself in beauty and love predominated in him.

He felt that he had broken and freed himself from the encapsulated cocoon and had taken colourful wings of a butterfly to hop and fly to every sweet and colourful flower, to suck its nectar and smell its fragrance.



## Chapter 4. Ramesh's Downfall

Ramesh was now in a new environment. His Schooling was not in exposed surroundings. His high school was located in a predominately upper class society, in South Bangalore; where people were of religious mind, suffused with rituals and superstitions. Now, he was studying in the college located in the cantonment of the city. Boys and girls came hailing from several Anglo-Indian localities like Richmond Town, Fraser Town, Cox Town and Tasker Town and also from centres of the city. The college hostel mates were like free birds and had joyful life.

There were several public schools around the college. His group of friends had made acquaintance with several girls and they would meet and have long talks. Ramesh was infatuated with one such girl studying in XII Standard of Good Shepherd School namely Meera. He would sing songs sung by play back singer Mukesh and write poetry and love letters. Once he drew his blood from his veins and wrote a letter with it, to demonstrate his passionate love for Meera. The affair came to the light of Meera's parents and they packed her off to a distant place, where her relatives lived. Ramesh turned himself into a road side Romeo and at every moment was looking for a Juliet.

The only class, he evinced interest was English language class, taught by Professor Subbu, a Tamil Brahmin, a very short person well dressed and neat. Prof.Subbu was a bachelor and he was love sick.

A chance came across in his path to befriend his lady student, who invited him to her home. There he met his student's sister and fell in love with her and ultimately married her. During his courtship, he was taking Ramesh's classes. Professor Subbu's exuberance in teaching Keat's romantic poetry impressed Ramesh. Ramesh's love also took wings. The result of

this was that Ramesh couldn't complete his studies and miserably failed in class examinations.

The desire for drinks and cigarettes was intense but he had no money. Out of desperation, he took up to driving an auto-rickshaw to make a fast buck. His demeanour changed, so also his manners and dress. He started eating in cheap hotels and shared meals with low class people. Ramesh was no longer a vegetarian. His taste buds had been tickled and he became a connoisseur of all types of foods, biriyanies, chops, mutton "samosas", sandwiches, burgers and hamburgers.



### **Chapter 5. Ramesh Fails in Degree Course**

The urge to make money to fulfill his daily needs drove Ramesh to drive an auto-rickshaw not only in the night hours but also during day times. He had a brush with stray fallen women and on a few occasions, he fell in the hands of policemen as well. The humiliating treatment at their hands became a talk of the college and at last Prof. of Botany Sri Rajan had to call him to his chambers for a tete-a-tete. Prof. Rajan was a devout Hindu and had leanings with religious organisations. His sensibilities were hurt and he tried to drive sense into the grey matter of Ramesh, but Ramesh was a hard nut to crack. He not only refused to yield to the sane advice but countered it with his own brand of Philosophy. Ramesh was well conversant with Scriptures and Sanskrit. He had been at one time a very studious Student and knew very well the depth of the religion. His simple argument was that the Brahminical practise in the present times was not as that of Vedic period. In Vedic period, a person of wisdom was referred as 'Brahmin' irrespective of his caste and they had no restrictions on food nor there any prohibition for drinks and womanising. Ramesh quoted several instances from

puranas and related the stories of 'Shakuntala', 'Mahabarat' and 'Ramayan' to demonstrate that present day 'Brahminism' of the caste system is a result of influence of Buddhism and Jainism, besides the conflict with several conquering tribals from central Asia.

Ramesh was convinced that the exclusiveness practised by his coreligionist was political in origin after the advent of Shankaracharya. Prof. Rao's lectures in Social Science classes had a distinct leaning towards socialism and democracy. Ramesh felt more democratic at heart and he had fully realised that the Oneness of human beings is the road to the divine path. All that mirth's and pleasures are part and parcel of life. The more one curbs them, the more one gets suppressed and bound to have its own effect in other ways and would ultimately rebound in a different shape.

Father D'Costa's lectures on science and religion, Professor Akbar's elucidation of the origin of species, principles of heredity, laws of genetics and Mendal's Law of inheritance, had broadened Ramesh's keen mind. The bible classes and moral lectures of Father D'Souza were most touching and healing to his ever puzzling mind.

By now, Ramesh's ways were well known to his friends, relatives and all. Though Ramesh's ways were disliked by many but his warmth, simplicity keen intelligence and loving manners endeared him to one and all. He had a strange sense of humour and wit, which made any group lively, with his conversations and exposition of subjects on varied topics.

Ramesh had missed many practical classes and couldn't cope up with the enormous syllabus. The scheme of Degree examination was to write the examination of three year course. It was different for him to make up in studies or to gather all the notes and study the syllabus of three years. Thus, he failed in the final B.Sc.Course.

Ramesh was left alone and all his friends parted their ways. The friends of 'Allah's company' and a large group of Brahmin boys secured admission in Medical and in Master's (M.Sc.) courses. Uttappa joined Army. Dwarkanath followed his father's foot step in politics. John and Rahim joined Law and Master's course in Public Administration. A few joined B.Ed., courses. A few found suitable employment.



### **Chapter 6. Rahim Comes to Ramesh's Rescue**

One fine day, Rahim was returning home from his College on cycle. He found Ramesh smoking cigarette near Mavalli Tiffin Room in an auto-rickshaw driver's uniform. He had parked his auto on the way side and had taken a heavy tiffin in the MTR hotel and was puffing the cigarette; on noticing Ramesh, Rahim got down from his cycle. Rahim felt deeply hurt to see Ramesh in such a condition. Ramesh had been his ideal during his school days and a good friend. Now, he could not bear to see Ramesh ruin his life. Rahim had tears in his eyes. After customary salutations, Rahim begged Ramesh to complete his graduation. Ramesh just threw up his hands and mentioned that his mind is unable to grasp the complicated subjects of Botany, Zoology and Chemistry. Rahim assured him of his fullest help with all the books and his notes. On the first Sunday of their meeting, Rahim took all his text books, notes and practical records to Ramesh's house. Rahim was greeted by Ramesh's parents. They felt exhilarated to see that one of Ramesh's, childhood friend, at last, had come forward to help Ramesh. Ramesh's parent persuaded Ramesh to see reason and take up to studies once again. Rahim undertook to coach Ramesh and begged him to give himself one opportunity and an attempt to write the examination. Rahim worked very hard to coach Ramesh.

During the session of coaching both had discussions on varied aspect of life. Rahim had evinced interest in palmistry and predicted Ramesh's bright future and of his completing Master's course and finding a good job.

Ramesh couldn't disappoint his mother, for whom he had special love. At one time, when his mother wept for him and poured out her heart seeing his wayward life, Ramesh had felt disgusted and had decided to commit suicide. At a forlorn place, he found railway track, he kept his head on the track. As the train neared him with high speed, he saw before him, his weeping mother's sight and at the nick of the moment, he withdrew his head. It was just a few days later, that he had met Rahim near MTR hotel. Ramesh was taken by surprise at these changes of events. He did realise that there was a hidden hand shaping his destiny. It couldn't have been possible for him to turn to studies but for his deep love and devotion for his mother. Both Ramesh and Rahim once again came nearer to each other for a brief period. Ramesh with stupendous efforts and Rahim's coaching got through in the examination and secured his B.Sc., degree.

Ramesh recalled how he had felt seeing upon Rahim on the convocation day with the gown receiving the degree. Ramesh had gone to see all his friends taking the degree certificate. He had felt a dagger passing his heart on seeing Rahim receiving the degree certificate. Ramesh had always felt Rahim to be a dull boy and could not match his wits and genius. Now, Ramesh felt deep pangs and hurt on seeing all his friends, even half-witted fellows graduating and taking degrees. His newly acquired habits had betrayed him. His addiction to alcohol and cigarettes and fun and his watching cabaret dance and rich food had dumbed his senses and he felt helpless. Now, when Rahim came to his rescue and gave genuine advice from the bottom of his heart, he was moved to determination, to take up to studies; after all, he was being given fullest help by Rahim in coaching him from the

first to last of the subjects with all books and notes. His mother's pleading had a tremendous effect on him. He had always felt that his mother had been extremely good and kind to him. She had never scolded him nor had come in his ways, as, she felt that God would certainly change his ways.



### **Chapter 7. Ramesh Takes up English Literature**

Ramesh's success in his examination and obtaining his degree was a sense of great joy to all the family members. They also felt jubilant and were confident that Ramesh would further his studies and make a good career. His uncle was a leading lawyer in Hyderabad, who suggested he take up law as Rahim would be helping him in studies but Ramesh knew that his mind was not cut out for such serious studies and did not wish to venture again in such troubled waters. He had a great fascination, fancy and liking for poetry and literature. He had scored very high marks in his English subject. His mother encouraged him to take up to literature. This noble lady knew that literature refines a man and good company of English teachers and students would certainly mould his mind to good thoughts. Ramesh's family friends suggested that Ramesh should be removed from the present environment, as Ramesh had gained notoriety and it was likely that he would again slip to those ways. One of their relative was a Professor in Mysore University. Thus with his assistance, Ramesh secured a seat after initial entrance test in M.A. (English) course. It was not difficult for Ramesh to enjoy the subject. He found new light spreading in his mind and Ramesh was back to his fold in applying his mind to studies.





## Chapter 8. Ramesh in Mysore University

Ramesh found the university environment most enduring and lively. By now Ramesh had overcome the teenage pranks and had seen the life on the seemier aspect as well. He felt more matured than others. The English Professor Dr. Tara Dev took liking for Ramesh and bestowed his best attention on him. Dr. Tara Dev was deeply interested in Indian classical music and loved to play sarod. Ramesh had learnt Tabla and would accompany Dr. Tara Dev in all his classical programmes. It was a good 'jugal bandi'. Music and poetry became Ramesh's passion. He had a keen ear for 'gazals' and Urdu poetry as well and had memorised many lines of 'gazals'. He could impress his class girls by singing old classical hit songs particularly sung by play back singer Mukesh. Ramesh won the hearts of a large number of girls. He was drawn to the beauty of Shameem, daughter of a retired colonel in British Army. Shameem was brought up in a very open society and was a very jovial and broadminded girl. She enjoyed the company of Ramesh. Ramesh had very handsome features; fair complexion was thin and tall with black eye lashes with curly hairs. He had a very sweet voice and tone and would speak English with perfect diction. Shameem felt drawn towards Ramesh. Ramesh initially hesitated to take any steps further except to keep a respectable distance. But Shameem's beauty disarmed Ramesh. Their friendship grew into infatuation and they would spend a lot of time together in the campus. They were found holding hands and sitting close to each other on the stones of the path way. It came to be known that a Brahmin boy was moving closely with the colonel Sahab's daughter and a whispering campaign started in the family circle of colonel Sahab. Colonel Sahab did not mind it. He had a large household and he was visited by a holy Sufi fakir from a place near the Himalayas, whose message was 'love' for all humanity, irrespective of any caste or creed. The teaching of this holy fakir was that "love is divine and it emerges from the inner core of the heart and so long as it is not out of mere

passion but out of deep desire to feel with one another then such love is from the spring of the Divine Being”.

Begum Colonel Sahab would not have this theory to believe it. As soon as Shameem completed her MA she was wedded to a close relative and packed off to America; thus ended the romance of Ramesh. Ramesh didn't have any regrets. He enjoyed her company and the nice 'biryani' 'koftas' and sweet meats offered by her. Ramesh felt benefited by Shameem's company. A strange feeling of relationship was felt by him besides seeing world in a very broad angle.

Shameem's company had made Ramesh a very studious person. They would have long discussions on each of the great writers. Ramesh's passion was poetry, while Shameem was a voracious reader of the English classics. She had done B.A. (Hons.) in English literature and had secured a rank. She gave lot of books to Ramesh for studying and helped him in preparing notes for examination. Ramesh in turn helped Shameem in English poetry and syntax. Thus Ramesh's mind was totally reoriented and filled with literature and music. Ramesh of Mysore University was no longer the same Ramesh of Bangalore.

Ramesh came through in flying colours in his final M.A. with a high first class. Shameem would explain to Ramesh the Sufistic thoughts of cosmic harmony, oneness of the humanity and about the universal love and compared it with the “Bhakti” movement in India. Ramesh's mind and heart turned totally towards worship of one Omnipotent Being.



## **Chapter 9. Ramesh Commences his Career as a Lecturer**

As Ramesh was smart and handsome with good knowledge of English, he found absolutely no difficulty in getting absorbed in

a well-known College in South Bangalore, close to his parents' house to teach the undergraduate students.

Ramesh could win the hearts of youngsters. He had a great knack for handling mischievous boys. Ramesh was very confident in his grasp of grammar and taught English in a good style. He knew the nature of the students, he was teaching. He was himself a mischievous boy once at undergraduate level and found absolutely no difficulty in controlling a few students playing pranks with him. Moreover, the College was known for its studies and high ranks fetched by its students. Only studious and high ranking boys and girls were admitted. The atmosphere in the college was very somber and intellectual. The students were all competitive and yearned to achieve laurels. There was certain orthodoxy among the teachers and lecturers and they were very old fashioned.

Ramesh's nature was one of light heartedness with broad vision. He viewed the entire society as 'Vasudha Kutumba' and his free thinking and mingling with friends from all the communities had released his heart from narrow maxims. Ramesh had matured beyond his age and felt in his heart love for one and all. However, the teachers, lecturers, Professors and the student could not see his vision nor could they feel his pulse. His lectures were on a very broad plane to encompass the entire humanity as one family. Sometimes, he would be ironical and sarcastic in the narrow manner in which the students were brought up and made to feel superior to other members of the society. Ramesh was very cultured in manner and soft spoken. His views were expressed in a subtle way and not in an outspoken manner with zeal or enthusiasm. He knew that he would be treading a live wire and would cross swords with the management of the college, if he were to be radical.

Ramesh could not last long in this orthodox and religious atmosphere. He knew that a time would come when he may be asked to quit. Before such an occasion arose, Ramesh was on the

lookout for a college, where such an environment did not exist. He looked for a College which had a broad vision, where there was intermingling of culture and ideas absorbed from all the sides. At the earliest opportunity he changed his job to a women's college run by a 'Shatriya' management.

Although Ramesh felt buoyant in spirit in change of the College environment but being a girl's college, Ramesh could not maintain his demeanour for long. The dormant romantic feeling again sprouted in him and slowly he took up to cigarettes and to an occasional glass of beer. His pleasing and melodious voice attracted a fairly good number of forward looking girls as his fans. Ramesh's mind got distracted. The young lady teachers were not far to draw his attention. A handsome macho and fair man with curly hairs and on broad vision and with good manners could not be resisted for long.



### **Chapter 10. Ramesh is Trapped**

At one time Ramesh had a go with two lecturers. One was Shamla a Brahmin lady in her early twenties, bohemian like him, dashing and modern. They would share a cup of coffee and go to movies together.

Shamla enjoyed every minute in Ramesh's company and insisted on going to Lal Bagh. This was a ruse to make Ramesh sing the famous hit Hindi songs of which she was very fond of. She would hold Ramesh's hand and squeeze it and express her love for him. Ramesh was quite used to these flirtations. He had absolutely no intention of getting fixed with her but did not mind just having fun for fun's sake. Shamla was dashing and meant more than mere sharing a glass of coca cola or a cup of coffee but Ramesh was unyielding. Shamla thought it better to

pursue some other suitable person and cold shouldered him. Ramesh breathed a sigh of relief!

But it was not to last for long. Geeta, a married lady in her late twenties was love sick. Her husband was critically ill and did not hope to live for long. Being sick, he could not give much affection and comfort and marital bliss. Geeta had been a flirt in her college days. She had enough money coming from a business background. Her employment was more to divert her mind from the unhappy married life. On seeing Ramesh, she was magnetically pulled towards him and would not lose an opportunity to draw his attention and to engage in talks.

Ramesh consistently ignored her and knew too well that he will be in deep trouble if he were to be seen close with a married lady. Moreover, Ramesh had been noticed in company of Shamala and already there was whispering going on in the staff room and among girl students about their proximity.

One fine day, Ramesh found Geeta in tears, and in a dejected and forlorn mood. Ramesh had a very soft heart and was moved. He became very sympathetic and was compelled to make enquiries. Geeta found it a golden opportunity to throw her web around Ramesh. She had touched his nerve cord and learnt immediately his weak point. She poured out her heart on the predicament she is placed in and about the bleak future she is facing with a totally crippled and sick husband; who had no chances of survival. Ramesh couldn't bear to hear such a pathetic story and did his best to console her. Geeta begged Ramesh to get him a cup of hot coffee, as she was feeling unwell. Ramesh arranged for a hot cup of coffee and did his best to elevate her depressed mood. From then on Geeta would seek the sympathy of Ramesh everyday and enter into a conversation. Ramesh as ever innocent and hardly being aware of Geeta's designs would cut one or two jokes and laugh mirthfully with a view to lift the sagging spirits of Geeta. But as days passed, Geeta suggested to Ramesh to go to a matinee movie, which had a romantic theme. Ramesh was perplexed and was trying to wriggle out of the quagmire but Geeta had her plans well cut

out. She made much of her depressive mood and begged for his company. She had been feeling awful about her husband's declining health and it had been ages, she had been to a movie to entertain herself. She was merely begging for his company and nothing else. She just wanted to ventilate her heavy bosom of pathos and the fears which were encircling her like dark somber clouds.

Ramesh was always compassionate. He did not feel any harm in accompanying her. He didn't have to fear; after all She is a married lady with a daughter of five years old and also elder to him in age.

Ramesh was in for a surprise, when Geeta took the bold initiative to squeeze his palms and hands during a very romantic scene. Ramesh took it in its stride and did not give much importance to it, even when Geeta took his hand and stroked it to his cheeks.

After the movie, Geeta sought Ramesh's company for a nice cup of coffee in a dark corner of an AC restaurant. Ramesh could not afford this luxury but Geeta realising his embarrassment offered to foot the bill but while drinking coffee, she was stroking her foot with that of Ramesh's. Ramesh could feel sweat on his brow and quickly withdrew his feet well inside the back of his chair. With a mischievous smile and a nervous laugh she winked with a sparkle in her eyes. Ramesh an old hat at these tricks got the message straight and clear. He at once got up from the chair suddenly making an excuse that he was late to his home and he had to go soon, as he had promised his mother to accompany her to the Sri Raghavendra Swamy Temple. Geeta won't leave so soon. "Come on Ramesh" she said in a pleasing tone. "I am not being a bug on you, hold on till I complete my coffee. I will drop you in your house". She hurriedly picked up her bag and came out of the hotel and hailed an autorickshaw and pushed Ramesh inside first and sat next to him. She signalled the driver to take them to Jayanagar. She was sitting very close to Ramesh and put her hand around his waist and

dropped her head on his shoulders. Ramesh felt a strange sensation and quite an irresistible one.

Soon, Ramesh was found chatting and laughing with Geeta. Geeta's blues had disappeared and she was feeling elated. Their flirtations grew into infatuation and into love. Geeta planned for a nice week end at Nandi Hills on the pretext of study tour. She was rich and could afford to hire a taxi. She had planned and booked a nice cozy room in the PWD guest house, using her friend's husband's influence, who was a Chief Engineer in PWD. All this, she did it secretly Ramesh was not aware of this. She had mentioned that they would be back in the evening but once on the top of the Nandi Hills, she controlled the situation and over powered Ramesh. Ramesh was fully trapped and had no other go but to let himself drown in passions, unmindful of the consequences. Geeta was a hungry lioness and like a parching land was waiting to absorb the first shower of rain.

The affair got leaked out and everyone in the college came to know about the duplicity of both Geeta as well as Ramesh. They tried their best to hide their feelings and pretend that they were just friends and Ramesh was merely giving Geeta comfort and solace during her dark hours. Yet one could feel that Geeta was not the same one as before she met Ramesh. Her gait had changed and so her dresses and fashions.

After a few months Geeta applied for maternity leave. She was making frantic calls to Ramesh and insisted on his visiting her house frequently. She introduced Ramesh to her ailing husband as a good friend, who has been giving her succour, courage and supporting her psychologically. Geeta's husband knew well that he was at the far end of the tunnel and was sure to blow off his candle. He felt reassured that at least, he is not leaving Geeta in a desolate and helpless position and that she had found someone who could stand by her.



### **Chapter 11. Ramesh's Measure of Woes Filled up**

Geeta gave birth to a lovely daughter, with blooming complexion and rosy cheeks of Ramesh. Geeta insisted that Ramesh to name her. Ramesh after great hesitation christened her Sundari.

It was not later that Geeta's husband passed away, when Sundari, was just nine months old. After the usual obsequious, Geeta resumed her work at the college. All her colleagues by now knew that she had fallen for Ramesh and Ramesh as ever gullible had become a sacrificial goat.

Geeta's pleasure started waning, as she found the responsibility on her shoulders to be heavier and heavier. She began to realise that she had slipped and led herself into a hollowed path of chaos. She became irritable and would pick up quarrel openly, in the staff room. By now Ramesh's flood gate of passion had been let out freely and he had lost all his steadiness and gait. He felt that he had reached the full circle and the sweetness inculcated in him by Shameem had totally dried up. He felt himself very sacrilegious and lost in the woods. On a fine day, on a small pretext Geeta snarled at Ramesh. Ramesh shouted back at her. Geeta felt humiliated and just in a flash slapped him hard. All the lecturers fled from the staff room. It was a bolt from the blue. Ramesh slipped and fell on the floor. Geeta in a rage picked up her hand bag and thrashed him several times. Geeta couldn't also bear for long, her pent up feelings. The looks and stares of her colleagues were awful and cruel. She knew that she had wronged the memory of her sweet darling husband, who had passed away miserably. On the day of the funeral, her in-laws were cursing her for neglecting him. Those words were ringing in her ears. She blamed Ramesh, for having joined this college and crossed her way at a crooked hour.

The fall from the chair and severe beating from the bag caused a wound on Ramesh's forehead. His blabbering's brought inside the peon, who was staring at them. Ramesh caught his



eye and shouted at him to call the police. Geeta on hearing the word “police” was panicked. She immediately withdrew herself and called her friend Shamla. Shamla came to her rescue. Like a bruised cat, she pounced on Ramesh and gave him left and right. She was a wounded tiger and now turned into a hungry man-eater. The commotion in the staff room brought the lady Principal inside the staff room. Shamla spoke first and in a raised voice accused Ramesh of assault, battery and sexual harassment. Ramesh was groping for words and was only stammering. The lady principal, an elderly lady sent for the police and in no time, the police reached the college. She handed over a written complaint accusing Ramesh of sexual assault on a lady lecturer. Ramesh was immediately taken into the custody. The next day on the front page of the daily newspapers, the news of Ramesh’s arrest was flashed boldly. Some of Ramesh’s sympathisers rushed to his aged parents. They were too shocked for any words.

Ramesh’s mother had been warning Ramesh not to cross the limits. She kept telling him that they lived a ‘Satvic’ life and it was not proper to have an affair with a married lady and that too a shatriya. Ramesh would laugh and brush off by saying that his mother was imagining too much and that they were only good friends.

Ramesh’s maternal uncle was a lawyer at Hyderabad. He was summoned by phone. With great difficulty they secured a bail for Ramesh. But the college management immediately placed Ramesh and Geeta under suspension. Thus ended the affair in a most dramatic and cruel way. Ramesh’s world was shattered and he had no more dreams on the horizon of love. He had lost everything and the world appeared to him for the first time to be a dark and a dirty place to live in.



## Chapter 12. Ramesh Enters a New Phase of Gloom

Ramesh was in deep trouble with humiliations heaped on him. People couldn't view the ability and talent of a person to be different from the weaknesses, he suffered. Our society is taboo ridden with deep faith in Karma laws and in astrology. Either poor Saturn is blamed or Mars, Kethu and Rahu are considered as enemy for all our afflictions. The commonest comment attributed to any calamity is the conduct of a person. More particularly among higher caste people, who feel that straying from the path of well-defined ways of life besets untold misery and such persons are outcast and look down upon, with exceptions to those who can cleverly manage to hide their weaknesses, with well covered mask or different mantles. Status, wealth and position are a good guard to any monstrous act committed in society. People are at the beck and call of high status people and they worship only a rising sun. The flatterers and sycophants fall on the feet of such persons and their action go unnoticed.

Those who live a simple and modest life sans any ostentatious are unprotected from the vicissitudes of life. They cannot live in ivory tower as they live amidst the population of common lot and social mingling exposes their deeds. In a way, this acts as a check and as social control, but when undue publicity is given unabashedly, without entire picture of the story being projected, the result is, the persons like Ramesh gets defamed and humiliated. They have no way out. They can't run away from the society in which they live and are compelled to face dire consequences. Especially when a criminal case is booked against a person, his misery is doubled. The only person who shows compassion and believes the accused person is his mother, whose faith in her child is always full and complete. The next person to understand the intricate and complex issue is the advocate, who puts his heart and soul to defend his client. It is in

the rarest of rare cases, sincere and old friends, who still keep their doors, open and come to the rescue of the accused persons.

The first person to call on Ramesh was his good old buddy Rahim. Rahim felt a ripple on reading the news item. Though, the news didn't surprise him but he couldn't believe the way the news had been projected in the paper. Ramesh was too meek, docile and a cultured person. He couldn't have indulged in 'sexual harassment'. It could be only a machination of the adversaries. Ramesh had been seen living a very sacrilegious life by the upper class people of his locality and in the college, so also his relatives and friends. His ways were not acceptable to them or his open heart policy of entertaining friends from all classes and sections of the society. He had already become an eyesore. Surely, such a person would be a thorn in their way. Rahim knew too well that Ramesh had crossed a certain limit though well-intentioned but who would care for such riff-raff behaviour. Everyone waited for a chance to grind their axes.

Ramesh hugged Rahim tightly and broke down. Rahim was only one person Ramesh could look for solace and understanding. Rahim was speechless and knew too well that in such an hour, words are empty and meaningless. Rahim could only tell Ramesh to bear patiently this hour of trial and come out of its tribulations. Rahim was certain that Ramesh would be able to face the woes but of course, with much misery and suffering. Ramesh's only source of strength was his loving and dear mother. His father was a person of patience and believed in Karma. He knew too well that Ramesh is a good person by heart and conduct and had done no harm to any one.

Ramesh was convinced that he had not lived an impious life to get this punishment. Although he had strayed away from the beaten path of orthodoxy as practised by his caste people but in no way, he had crossed the limits of righteousness. He had become unorthodox and had adopted a broader view of life, in so far as eating and drinking habits were concerned; which he

had every reason to believe to be not in any way inhuman or something the society had barred. It was neither an evil way. He had not lied nor cheated or committed any wrong to the society nor had caused any hurt to the sentiments of everyone. He quizzed the reason for this punishment.

Ramesh had genuinely sympathised with Geeta. It was Geeta who had overpowered his unwilling self and had laid the trap and made him give his affection, by again and again touching upon his sensitive nerve cord. How could he be blamed for showing compassion to a soul, who had been tortured in her youth, with a sick husband? She needed compassion and love and had begged for his attention. His sensibilities had been hurt and overpowered and had been placed in a helpless situation. He couldn't have done anything in a circumstance like this. When Geeta conceived, he had begged her and pleaded with all his innocence to go in for abortion to save him from embarrassment. Though, he had been forced by her to give his company and satisfied herself but Ramesh did not wish to leave any encumbrance, as that would be too cruel and sinful but Geeta had her own ideas, she felt full of love for him and wished for a moment and craving to bring up another baby. She felt that her elder child needed a company as she would be in college for the whole day. Though she expected a son but was not at all disappointed to have a daughter, who was extremely pretty and beautiful.

Ramesh's world had crashed and he felt totally deserted and cheated. He didn't expect that Geeta would all of a sudden turn hostile in this manner and forsake him so soon and so suddenly. It never occurred to him that the tides would turn so strongly against him and so soon. Ramesh's mind was puzzled with hundreds of questions and there were none to answer his queries to pacify him and release him from the anguishes.



### **Chapter 13. Ramesh's Faces Pangs of Hunger and Pain**

For few months, Ramesh stayed confined without the company of any friends or relatives. His mother and younger sister Sweta would console him. His brother Sham and Sundar left for America. Both were Engineers. Sham was just married and had taken his wife, a brilliant Industrial Engineer to California. Sunder had done Chemical Engineering and secured a rank. He got a scholarship for higher studies in Washington University. Sweta had completed her graduation and the parents were looking for a good alliance. There was a sound possibility of her match coming through for an Engineer, who was also trying to leave for Illinois, USA.

Ramesh didn't get his suspension allowance. His uncle advised him to meet his friend Prashant Rao, Advocate, a specialist in service matters. Ramesh met Prashant Rao, who filed a case in the Educational Appellate Tribunal; seeking several reliefs. Ramesh had no other choice but to wait for it's outcome. He knew that he will not get any other employment in the present predicament. He was whiling away his time by meeting his old friends and by borrowing money from them, assuring to pay them back on his getting the suspension allowance. Time though is a greet healer, but procrastination is also its enemy. Ramesh got employed by a political weekly magazine to work as an Associate Editor. The weekly magazine was started by some amateur. He worked for them for a couple of months but he was left high and dry without any payment except for an occasional payment of petty sum; ultimately, the weekly folded up and he was again jobless.

Prasant Rao was a very kind person. He could feel the pangs of Ramesh; but he was helpless. There was no separate Tribunal for Educational Institutions. The District Judge was entrusted with its jurisdiction. The Court was also a session's court and was always busy with very serious criminal cases. The

college authorities also didn't constitute an Enquiry Committee on the pretext that the matter was subjudice. Thus months and years passed without any result.

Ramesh made several attempts to contact Geeta. He would go near her house and stand outside to have at least a glimpse of his daughter Sundari. Sometimes, the sweet toddler would come out, peep for sometime and go away. That day, Ramesh's pangs would increase more than ever, with uncontrollable sobs and tears.

Geeta would not like to even see Ramesh's face. She would shun him. She also faced humiliation. She regretted having acted impulsively and having drawn the attention of other staff members. As Ramesh was asking for the police to help through the peon, she felt scared and had no other go but to seek Shamla's help. Thus, the matter had gone out of her hands. She was also bitter as the affair had come to light. Her friends and relatives had been looking down upon her. Shamla had been warning her not to tread the dangerous path but Geeta had been daring, hungry and passionate. She was bent upon winning Ramesh, more as a challenge to Shamla than as her own prize catch. After she had netted Ramesh, she didn't wish to let him go but stuck to him like glue. She felt that she was drowning and held on to the wooden plank, which She thought could take her safely to the shores of beautiful life.

Geeta had no dearth for money, but needed to keep herself engaged. She explored many possibilities and at last could secure the cooking gas agency and sole distributorship of household products. She opened an office and engaged the services of several sales representatives. She hailed from a business background and could get several helping hands and in course of time was well established in her business. She paid very high fees to her lawyers and took an assurance from them to drag the case against Ramesh for several years. Ramesh was in a pitiable condition. He couldn't leave the city without the permission of

the court, in which the criminal case of molestation was pending. The Criminal courts were well known for laxity and for a decade, a case wouldn't get concluded. Thus, Ramesh was left in deep lurch and every day was a day of boredom, pain and suffering.

Ramesh would go to Hyderabad for a couple of weeks for a change but he would feel lonely and his concern for his mother's would bring him back to Bangalore.

Ramesh in order to make both ends meet would sell sweet packets and other cheap commodities door to door. The worry and despondency had taken away his mental alertness. He felt morose and lack of sensitivity. He couldn't meet Dr. Tara Dev to accompany him in his musical duets, as he felt ashamed of himself.

Ramesh took some short term courses in Ayurveda, on the belief that he could change his career. But he could not practice it, although he could manage to get a certificate on its completion.

Some of his well-meaning friends suggested that he give tuitions but Ramesh began to feel an aversion for literature. He felt that his sorry state of affairs was brought about by his fancy for poetry and music and these twin brothers had trapped him in the ocean of false love, which proved to him to be a big mirage. He had been left in the parching desert sans cool water or wind but to sweat and toil.

Unaware of this, Ramesh was slowly feeling that he was drowning in mental apathy and melancholy. He couldn't move from his bed. He had not shaved for months together. He had grown a beard and his curly hair had also got matted into a plait. One fine day, his parents found him muttering and chattering incoherently. They called his uncle from Hyderabad. At one look, he was convinced that Ramesh had suffered a mental break down and needed to be taken to mental hospital for a checkup

by a psychiatrist. On a medical check, it was confirmed that Ramesh needed to be hospitalised and put on medication.

Ramesh was no longer, a handsome, jovial and youthful person brimming with life. Ramesh was declared mentally ill.

It took one year for Ramesh to recover from his illness. During this period, his parents regularly took him to several temples, and were shown to several Sadhus and Swamies. Several 'yagnas' and 'poojas' were performed. The some total effect of all this religions ceremonies was that Ramesh's mind turned totally religious and sentimental.



#### **Chapter 14. Ramesh Treads a New Path Towards Spirituality**

Ramesh gave up eating non-vegetarian foods and consumption of alcohol but couldn't give up smoking cigarettes. In his boredom, he would gulp down cups of tea and smoke cigarettes. Yet, his sharp mind had turned towards deep meditation. He would be up by 4 a.m. and take a cold water bath, even on a cold winter day and perform pooja in the pooja room and go into deep meditation by holding his breath. His yoga master was also a great spiritual healer Swami Sachidananda of Hilligiri mutt. Swami Sachidananda was in his late fifties. He took a great liking for Ramesh and bestowed his best of attentions. Special 'sacred thread ceremony' was performed and Ramesh was made to wear the white thread, which he had forsaken in the college days, after he felt himself impure.

Ramesh was asked to recite Gayathri mantra:

*Aum Bhoor Bhuvah Sva-ha;*  
*Tat Savitur Vare-nyum;*  
*Bhargo-O Devasya Dheemahe;*  
*Dhiyo-Yo Nahf Pracho-dayaat.*



(“O Divine Mother, our hearts are filled with darkness. Please make this darkness distant from us and promote illumination within us”)

And also recite special mantra to Sun god:

*Japa Kusuma Sankasam  
Kaas' Ya Peyam Mahathu Dhim  
Dhamorim Garya Paapagnam  
Prand Dhosmi Dhiva Karamesh.*

He was also permitted to recite the thousand names of the Lord Vishnu (Vishnu sahasra namam). Ramesh had mastery over Sanskrit and didn't find it difficult in either performing the Japams or in observing regular fasts on “Yeka' desi days and on important auspicious days.

After a time, Ramesh felt that he should visit Rahim. Rahim by now had become a management consultant and was prospering with a leading consultant in the city.

Rahim felt jubilant and spent enormous time discussing on the finer points of 'Tauheed' (Oneness of the Being) and on the principles of Vedanta. Ramesh was much impressed with the elucidation of Oneness of the Being and about the cosmic harmony. Ramesh felt that there is a great need for unifying the human beings on a secular spiritual foundation.

At the first opportune moment, Ramesh visited the Sree Rama Krishna Parahamsa Ashram at Bull Temple Road and on this occasion, Swamy Ranganathan was delivering a speech on Vedanta. Ramesh felt extremely elated. He brought books on the complete works of Swami Vivekananda and devoured it within few days.

Ramesh felt an urge to visit the Ashram at Red Hills, Thirumale of Sri Ramana Maharishi. On his visit, he learnt about great disciple of Maharishi, Swamy Ram Surat Kumar, popularly known as Vasu Shamiyar. Ramesh fell on the lotus feet

of the Swamy Ram Surat Kumar, whose face was radiating like a full moon. Ramesh felt spiritual awakening and stayed in the Ashram for a full six months and mingled with all the Swamy's disciples and learnt to probe into his own consciousness by putting a question "Who am I"? Swamy Ram Surat Kumar told him to sit in a lotus posture and take deep breath and concentrate on the third eye in between the two eye brows and see the picture of the Lord in his mind. Within a few days Ramesh could go in a trance and feel the Supreme Bliss.

Ramesh received a letter from his mother remembering him and informing him that his case had been decided in his favour. He should report for work as a lecturer, as the college management conceded the case but had not agreed to pay back wages or suspension allowance.

Ramesh was convinced that 'Truth ultimately triumphs' and after taking due leave from Swamiji he reached Bangalore and reported for work.

The lady principal did not like the appearance of Ramesh in long beard and in unkempt hairs. Although, Ramesh was in neat dress but the Principal directed him to have a clean shave and a haircut. Ramesh explained the religious vows he had taken and it would take some time for him to remove it, as he had to complete his vow by going on a pilgrimage to the Temple of Lord Venkateswara at Tirupathi. On hearing this answer, the Principal remained silent and allowed Ramesh to resume his work but not till she advised him by quoting from the "Ramayana", (English translation by C. Rajagopalachari) the following lines spoken by Seeta to Ravana.

*"Raavana laid aside all such vain thoughts concerning me. It is altogether improper for you to desire me. Turn your heart to your wives. Never can I agree to what you say, think of the family I was born in. Think of the family I was married into. How can you ever hope to persuade me? Do not give room for such foolish and impossible desires and make sorrow for yourself".*

*“How can I become your wife, when I am the wife of another? Do not violate Dharma. Do not tread the Path of sin. Listen to me. Think how carefully you watch over your wives to keep them safe from the touch of others. Would not other husbands do the same by their wives? Remember other men are like you. Do not cast your eyes on another’s wife. To be happy with your own is the way of true happiness. But if you allow your mind to dwell on another’s wife, sorrow and dishonour will be your portion”.*

Ramesh felt extremely sad and humiliated. He did not expect that he would be looked down again in such a manner and that he had shaken the confidence of the college management.

Ramesh recalled his umpteen visits to the Court for his case. His plight had been noticed by the lawyer representing the college and the Hon’ble Judge of the Court. They were convinced that Ramesh was a sincere person and not an evil one but had been trapped. They had done their best to bring about a compromise between him and the college authorities for his reinstatement. Now, when he heard the monologue of the Lady Principal and also reading from the Holy Book, his grief was compounded. Ramesh answered the lady Principal that he will not give any room for any complaint and will do his best to maintain the discipline of the college.



### **Chapter 15. Ramesh again Faces Termination**

Ramesh’s appearance was not so conducive to the young college girls, who were more charmed and bewitched with the charms of other younger male lecturers. Ramesh appeared very old fashioned and looked more like a Sanskrit pandit than an English lecturer. The girls couldn’t concentrate in his class and made lots of noise and din. They would keep talking a lot. The chattering’s and booing of the girls would disturb the other classes as well.

Ramesh was out of touch from his teaching Profession for over a decade. He had mental breakdown. His mind did not ring poetry or music or literature except for slokas and mantras. He had by now gone deep into meditation and to remain silent for days together. Ramesh also found it difficult to teach although he was determined to do his best by resuming his normal daily activities.

Ramesh would often apply for leave to go on a pilgrimage or for doing some special poojas or for meditations. Initially, the College authorities gave him leave but later refused to comply with his requests.

The girls had already complained to the Principal about Ramesh's inability to teach properly and answer several of their doubts.

After a year's service the management served a termination letter on the ground that his services are no longer required and that he has been found unsuitable for the employment.

Ramesh felt a shock. He felt that he had done his best to recover his health. Ramesh felt that this time the college authorities had terminated his services as he had turned religious and the management now had a majority of teachers of the same caste, as of the persons running the college. The management was more concerned to employ their own candidate. But Ramesh could not realise that times had changed and he had simply become redundant. The students preferred to have a lady lecturer, who could communicate more smoothly and freely with students with modern ideas and thoughts. The girls were weary of Ramesh's Philosophical musings and talks on spirituality. It appeared hypocritical to students to hear Ramesh speaking on morals, when he had been implicated for moral turpitude.

Shamla and other lecturers still bore malice towards Ramesh. They had spoken about Ramesh's episode and the long legal battle he had with the college management to the students.

They had secretly campaigned for his removal on the ground of inefficiency, although Ramesh was not that bad in teaching for the sake of his sudden removal. Moreover, he had been given the pre-university classes to teach and not the undergraduate degree level classes. Ramesh knew well that he spoke, wrote and lectured better English than others. Yet, appearance makes or mars a person's personality. It is the style, which makes a man. Ramesh's demeanor had changed. He lacked style, charisma and good looks. A few of his teeth's had broken and a few had come out. He now wore thick glasses and felt partially deaf. This deafness was more psychological than real. When all the girls would put questions at one time, he would feel confused and give irrelevant answers, which would send the girls into a peel of laughter. Ramesh had become more a laughing stock than a pleasant teacher; thus ended Ramesh's career as a lecturer. Again he approached Prasanta Rao to file a case against the college management for illegal termination. Prasanta Rao felt sorry for Ramesh. Being his uncle's friend he had to accept the brief, although he felt quite wary of Ramesh. Ramesh had also not made any payments towards his fees. Prasanta Rao could not assure Ramesh of much success in the case, as Prasanta Rao could also understand the predicament of the College management and could see the inefficiency of Ramesh due to his change in mental and physical demeanor.

Ramesh still hoped to get back his job with back wages. He felt aggrieved and carried a notion that he should get his back wages of a couple of lakhs of rupees. In this belief, he would approach his friends for financial help assuring them to return it, when he gets his back wages.

By now, Ramesh had been losing his entire friends. Only one or two good friends still had sympathy for him including Rahim.



## **Chapter 16. Ramesh's Experiences with Astrologers and Tailor Raju**

By now Ramesh had met a few astrologers, and tantrics. Some of them told him that he had committed sins in previous birth and he had to pay for his sins in this life. Ramesh had met a very old Rishi, in one of his travels and pilgrimages to Hardwar. This Rishi mentioned to him that in the previous birth, he was Banda Khan, a Moghul Pathan. As he had committed several crimes of killing innocent people, he was reborn to suffer.

Ramesh was perplexed. He had read Vedas extensively. He could not believe that a sinner like Badu Khan could have been born as a Brahmin. He questioned the Rishi, in the politest of ways, as to how Bandhu Khan could be reborn in the Brahmin family. The Rishi simply answered that Bandhu Khan was also a noble person and had prayed and done 'Namaz' performed haj and had been extremely charitable. Because he had waged wars and destroyed temples and looted its treasure, he was reborn in a Brahmin family but due to bad 'karma' of the previous birth he could not live a chaste Brahmin life.

Ramesh was not convinced with these explanations and this philosophy. He then and there decided to make a thorough study of the principle of karma, rebirth and find out an answer for his predicament.

But this resolution was short lived. Ramesh as ever mercurial could not stick on to one study or one place. The prediction of the tantrika only opened his mind for travel on pilgrimage to various temples and to meet Sadhus, Saints, Fakirs, Sufies, Vaidas and practitioners of Yoga, Tantra, Raiki and Pranic healing.

Ramesh's parents had decided to visit their sons at USA. His sister also got married and left for USA. He was left alone in his house. His parents had opened a savings bank account and had put some money for his daily needs. Although, Ramesh had

become very frugal in his habits and lived only on curds, butter milk, chapattis, rice, dal and vegetables, yet he needed money to move from place to place. He still could not give up cigarettes, for it was his best companion. Ramesh faced another problem and that is about his clothing's and dress. He hardly had any dress to wear. He had to be content with two pairs of shirts and pants. In the house, he would move about in shorts or in dhoti with banyan. After some time his shirt and pant also got torn.

He would approach his old family tailor and request him to put on a patch by mending the torn portion. His tailor, Raja had been stitching cloths for him, his brothers and for his father. Raju knew Ramesh's grandfather, a strict disciplinarian, who had retired as a District Education Officer. Raju felt sad on seeing the plight of Ramesh. He would get him a cup of coffee or tea and give him a cigarette. Ramesh in his boredom would find a stool near Raju's stitching machine. He would pull it near him and talk to him for hours relating to him episodes of his wanderings and adventures.

Raju would find Ramesh as a good company. Raju had been stuck to his stool and machine for decades. He had hardly gone out of Bangalore. Only on one occasion, he went to Tirupathi to fulfill his long due vow. On Sundays also, he would come to his old shop to mend worn clothes, which his old customers would give for alteration. During the week, he had lots of orders especially to stitch School uniforms, blouses, skirts, kurtas, pyjamas, pants and shirts. Raju was considered as an old fashioned tailor and being aged, he had to be content with his aged old customers, who would find Raju as their friend, philosopher and guide. Many old timers would find "Raju's Tailoring Shop" as a meeting ground. Old ladies would leave their bags and articles in his shop till they finish other errands in the market. Raju would keep all the secrets of the people, who would confide in him, their griefs, joys and pains. Raju's services were being used as a "match-maker" as well, besides to bring about reconciliation between estranged couples, parents and

children. Thus Raju had become a source of love, affection and care of a very large number of people. He would act also as a guide to several people, who came to him making enquiries about the addresses. He knew every nook and corner of South Bangalore and all the old families living there. During morning hours, several old people would come to his shop to read daily newspaper 'Prajavani', 'Deccan Herald' and 'Sudha', which he would regularly buy for several of his callers. He had put two wooden benches inside the shop and one outside for his regular chatters. Ramesh being one of his most valued customer shared his daily experiences; to enable Raju to gain knowledge of the outside world.

Ramesh would leave his house keys in the custody of Raju. Whenever, Ramesh went on his travels, he would intimate Raju about the places he would be visiting, so that his whereabouts are atleast known to someone.

Ramesh likewise informed Raju about having met an enthusiastic religious young widow, in his weekly visit to Sree Ramakrishna Ashram and about having become very friendly with her.

Raju knew the world better and understood from the way Ramesh put his story that Ramesh was again going to get trapped in the net. Raju warned Ramesh to watch his step as "once bitten is twice shy". Raju tried to convince Ramesh to abandon his plans and to take up to some stable job and settle down in life. Ramesh did not like the way Raju suspected his bonfires. He had taken up to the path of Truth and godliness, why should he stray from the path of virtue and again slip in the gutter, from which he had been saved by the grace of several gurus and saints. Raju sensing that Ramesh was adamant left him to have his own way.





## Chapter 17. Ramesh Falls in Love Once again

The young widow was Annu Radha, a daughter of a rich jeweller, a vysya. Her husband met with a tragic death in a road accident leaving a small baby. After the initial shock and a period of sorrow, her parents brought her to the Ashram, so that her mind could reflect on God and She can reconcile with the tragedy. After several visits, she found Ramesh in deep meditation with closed eyes. Ramesh attracted her attention as Ramesh had a serene, calm and sweet face. She could not take her eyes off Ramesh. When Ramesh noticed a young lady throwing glances at him and attempting to break into a conversation, Ramesh did her namaste. Annu Radha felt a ripple in her body and a pleasant sensation. After initial introduction, Annu Radha invited Ramesh to her house to meet her parents. Ramesh did not show much interest and thanked her.

Every week Annu Radha would attempt to speak to Ramesh and one day seeing Ramesh holding a book on the speeches of Vivekananda, requested him to lend her to read. Ramesh could not say no to such a request. But the book had been half read by him. He gave it to Annu Radha with a request to return it to him soon. However, the book never came to him. Ramesh felt the need to read the book as he had to find answers to his puzzle ridden mind.

Annu Radha suggested him to accompany her in the car to her house and she would give the books to him, as she had forgotten to bring it. Thus, Ramesh was practically dragged to her house, against his wishes. Annu Radha spoke about her feeling of anguish, pain and loneliness. Ramesh was moved. He tried to console her and give a philosophical lecture on 'karma', rebirth and about God's ways and that everything happens for the good and there is God's design in the ways of the world. Annu Radha had not heard such a lecture on godliness. Ramesh had soothed her troubled mind. Then on Annu Radha found

every occasion to invite him. Either, it is ‘shanthi pooja’ or ‘Guru Pravesha’ or ‘namakarma’ of her niece or any other religious activity in her house.

When some pilgrims met in the Ashram and disclosed about a travel agent regularly arranging for pilgrimages, Annu Radha begged Ramesh to give her company and volunteered to foot the bill. It is then that he broke the news to Raju of his intention to make a pilgrimage. Raju knew the ways of the world and did not want Ramesh to get struck in the mire again. But Ramesh’s weakness was travelling and to see new places and to meet proclaimed and unproclaimed ‘gurus’. He could not resist the temptation to go on the pilgrimage. After all somebody is paying for his tour and food and, it had been months, since he had stirred out of his house.

Thus Ramesh and Annu Radha joined the travel agents travel group to go to Rishikesh, Haridwar, Dehradun, Massouri, Delhi and other places. Annu Radha struck to Ramesh like a “chela”. She would sometimes act like a child expressing fears or grief. Sometimes she would seek Ramesh’s attention for small things like getting the water filled in railway station, when the train would stop for some time. By these ways, she slowly gained entry into Ramesh’s heart. Ramesh was very hesitant to take any steps in the wrong direction. Raju’s warning was ringing in his ear and he had scolded Raju for suspecting his intentions. Annu Radha first took the step in telling Ramesh that they had crossed the limits of formalities and he should not mind if she places her heavy head on his shoulders, while travelling as she would tend to fall asleep. Ramesh took it in his stride and was fully confident of his strong nerves.

But after visiting Amarnath, Kedernath, Haridwar and Rishikesh and on landing in Massouri, the moods of both Annu Radha and Ramesh had changed. The salubrious climate of Massouri, the green hills, the beautiful gardens fragrant and flowers suddenly made both of them romantic. Ramesh

spontaneously started singing his favourite Hindi songs, only to capture and captive the hungry Annu Radha. While they were going to Delhi, they broke off from the tourist party and got down in Meerut and took up lodging in Meerut's ever growing city of lodges and traveller's bungalows. Annu Radha had money if not good looks. Ramesh had charm and manliness. They stayed for three days in full comfort and enjoyed the heavenly bliss. Ramesh broke all his vows. The suppressed feelings gushed out like a torrent and overwhelmed the parching Annu Radha.

Ramesh on return to Bangalore avoided going to Raju's tailoring shop. Raju also felt relieved. It was a busy schedule for him to stitch the school uniforms. He didn't want to be disturbed at this hour. Raju could smell from the gay nature of Ramesh that Ramesh certainly has found fresh pastures to graze.

Ramesh was anxiously waiting for his mother to return to announce to her that he had at least found a right girl and that he could now settle down peacefully. There was no need for money. Annu Radha desired company and a charming personality as a life time partner. On their return, Ramesh's parents were happy to see Ramesh in a very cheerful mood. But the mother's cheer was short lived. On discovering the episode of Ramesh and his intention to marry a Vysya's daughter, they were placed in a deep predicament. They were certain that Ramesh would again land himself in trouble. Ramesh's mother discouraged the idea of marriage and furthering the relationship. But Ramesh was as usual adamant and would not come to terms. It looked like Bandhu Khan having taken a rebirth. "Once a Khan is always a Khan", so goes the saying. Even if a Khan is born as a Brahmin, the leopard cannot hide its strips. A tiger can as well go hungry but will not eat grass, so goes another saying. Ramesh's mother left the matter to Lord Ramachandara, as usual, her faith was strong and could not displease Ramesh by

scolding him. Ramesh's father was as philosophic as ever. He would mutter that everything happens for the good.

Ramesh was regular in his visits to the Ashram and to Annu Radha's house. Sometime, she would insist on his staying back for a couple of days. Ramesh would not mind, as many case, they had decided to get married.

Ramesh had to leave for Hyderabad to accompany his mother, as they learnt that his uncle had taken ill. Ramesh stayed back for a long time in Hyderabad. His mother would cancel her return journey on one pretext or the other. A clever ploy played by them to distract Ramesh from Annu Radha. "Time is the best healer," they would mutter.

Annu Radha had tasted blood and her 'kundalini' had been stirred. She found more charming youngsters taking interest in her. Why will they not do so especially when she had turned fashionable and taking interest in life with gusto?

When Ramesh finally returned to Bangalore, he was in for an irreparable shock. Annu Radha had stopped coming to Ashram. He was emboldened to visit her house but the watchman had been told to turn away Ramesh at the gate itself on one pretext or the other. Atlast Ramesh could succeed in meeting Annu Radha but was shocked to hear from her about her changed plans and won't like to continue to stick to one person in wedlock and live a slavish life. She did not mind Ramesh visiting her as a matter of love play.

Ramesh was shocked to hear such a blasphemy. He always held love as a spiritual union and not just for physical needs. Though, he had union sans marriage but he knew that there were other forms of recognised marriages in Hindu customs like 'Gandharva' marriage, 'Asura' form of marriage and it was not necessary that one should perform 'Satapadi' by going round the fire seven times with chanting of mantras to fulfill the vows of marriage. He began to wonder as to whether Raju had not

proved right. Raju with his abundance of common sense had tried to convince Ramesh on the need to hold on to ancient rites, customs and traditions. Raju had seen many changing times and tides and knew that this type of radical views would not stand the test of time.



### **Chapter 18. Ramesh's Hour of Trial**

Ramesh completely withdrew himself and shut himself in his room for days and weeks. He hardly ate his meals. The result was that he fell seriously ill and this time the mental illness leads to delusions, delirium and hallucinations. His parents did their best to get him the medication, and after a year's time, Ramesh had partly recovered. Before his eyes the sweet face of Rahim was passing through day in day out. He yearned to meet Rahim to pour out his heavy heart. His childhood pal alone could give him consolation and indeed he is Badhu Khan and Rahim must have been his real brother in the previous birth. Ramesh started getting all sorts of delusions. He would yell out for Rahim in his sleep. Ramesh's mother also felt that Rahim should somehow call on Ramesh. Ramesh went to the old office of Rahim, where Rahim had been working with the management consultant. He was disappointed to learn that Rahim had shifted to a place near Delhi.

It was December and the winter, that year had been unusually severe. In all the offices, heaters had been installed and so also in the houses, people had heaters. One had to wear three sweaters and over that put on a coat, when one stirs out of the house. During winter, days would be very short. Before 5 p.m. the sun would set. On one such winter day, Rahim came out of his chamber to go to the Conference Hall to attend to a group meeting of all the management consultants hosted by his

organisation. As he stepped out of his Chamber, he found a person in rags, with unkempt beard, partially bald but with a plait in a dirty torn sweater, bare feet, “salaaming” (salutations) him. Rahim was taken aback at this sight. He felt annoyed with his peon and guards for letting in such a person. So muttering, Rahim left for the Conference Hall. After the meeting, when he was returning to his chamber, he found this man in rags arguing with his staff. Rahim went close to the person, to have a look at him. Rahim was in for a shock. He found the person to be Ramesh. Ramesh just hugged Rahim and started weeping. The staff were alarmed; they all left at this man to separate him from clinging to Rahim. Rahim just stopped his staff and motioned them to go to their seats. Rahim was aghast and dumbfounded. After recovering himself, he led Ramesh to his chamber. Immediately Rahim called his peon and ordered him to bring water, tea, ‘samosas’ and bun. Rahim found Ramesh speaking very incoherently and suddenly becoming pensive and merely staring at the roof’s ceiling. Ramesh was speaking in monosyllables. Rahim coaxed him to drink water and take the snacks and tea. After some time, Ramesh came to his senses and could speak in a weak tone. Ramesh hadn’t slept for days nor had eaten anything. He answered the question in monosyllables. Rahim after lots of cajoling and questioning could gather that Ramesh had just come from the Karnataka express and had been making enquiries of Rahim’s office from each and every one. Some good samaritan noticing Ramesh speaking in very good English tried to probe him. On gathering that Ramesh had come all the way from Bangalore in search of Rahim, they escorted him to Rahim’s office.

Rahim brought Ramesh home. He first had to explain his wife Saleha, about the plight of his good old friend and not to get upset on his appearance and health condition. Rahim first asked Ramesh to take a bath. Rahim provided him with a fresh

set of clothing's, sweater and made a nice bed for him. After providing Ramesh with hot masala dosas, he administered Ramesh with a calmose tablet and made him to go to bed.

Ramesh slept like a log of wood. He felt relieved and having come in the arms of an angel. His peace couldn't be imagined. Ramesh had felt like a cut of branch of a tree, yearning to come to life. The branch took roots and fresh leaves were sprouting.

Rahim tendered Ramesh for a month and got him medical relief. Ramesh recovered his senses and felt a fresh lease of life.

Ramesh felt an urge to go to Haridwar, Rishikesh and Banaras on the way back to Bangalore. Ramesh provided Rahim with a nice kit with warm clothing's, blankets, and fresh set of clothes. He gave him money and parted with Ramesh after giving him solace and good advice.



### **Chapter 19. Ramesh's Visit to Sacred Places**

Ramesh had grown a beard and had long curly locks of hairs. He was wearing white cotton 'kurta pyjama' with several "rudrakshee malas" around his neck. He looked every inch a Swamy and learned pandit.

Ramesh had long discussions on various questions that puzzled his mind with Rahim. By now Rahim had acquired many degrees, diplomas and had become an expert, as a management consultant with varied experience, even as a visiting Professor.

Rahim had been drawn to mystical studies and had thoroughly studied philosophy and religious texts of various religions. Rahim was very regular in his religious practice and

would punctually say his “Namaz” (prayers), would observe “Roza” (fast) and was very charitable. Ramesh observed very closely the way Rahim lived harmoniously with his family, with lots of love and affection.

Ramesh felt an aura in Rahim’s house. The burning of “agar” in the mornings and evenings would create a peaceful atmosphere and a sense of solace and quietude prevailed in the house.

Ramesh was taken full care by Saleha and Rahim’s children. They all would surround him calling him “uncle” and press him to recite stories from Panchatantra. Ramesh would join all of them during prayers. Even before partaking breakfast, lunch or dinner, they would all gather on the dining table and mutter prayers.

In course of time, Ramesh felt a strong change coming over him. Rahim would tell Ramesh to look inward and wash off the guilt of the past; as the redeeming factor for a sound mind is to have a clear conscious; as “a guilty mind would always prick the mind”. Rahim would tell Ramesh to search for God in his own heart through the medium of love by shunning covetousness, and desires to acquire pleasures. Though Ramesh was well read on these aspects but the way Rahim put it to him, unlocked his mind afresh and his soul felt elated.

Ramesh insisted on teaching him some verses from the Holy Book. Rahim was quite puzzled, as he could not make up his mind to pick any specific passage for daily recitation. After much thought, Rahim asked Ramesh to recite the opening chapter of the Holy Book, which had come down from antiquity and its origin was as old as the creations of Man, himself:

1. *“Bismill Allah Ir Rahman Ir Rahim.  
Al hamdu Lillahi Rabil Alameen*



*Ar Rahman nir Rahim  
Maliki Yu Meddin  
Iyaka Nabudu Wa Iyaka  
Nastayeen  
Ahdinas Siratal Mustaqueen  
Siratal Lazina Unamta Alaihim  
Ghairil maqdubi alaihim.  
Walad dualleen”  
AMEEN*

In the name of most High Allah, the Beneficent and the Merciful”  
Praise be to Allah  
The Cherisher and Sustainer of the Worlds  
Most Gracious, Most Merciful  
Master of Day of Judgement  
(Thee do we worship  
And Thine aid  
We seek  
Show us the  
Straight way  
The way of those  
On whom Thou  
Has bestowed  
Thy Grace Those whose (portion)  
Is not wrath and who go not astray.  
(S:1 A-1-7)

2. *Allahu La ilaha  
Ila hu Al hay ul Qayum  
La'ta Quzhahu Seenataun  
Walanoun, Lahu Ma fez  
Sama Wati  
Wama fil ard  
Man zal laze yash fa hoo  
Indahoo Ella bi ezhnihi*

*Yalamo mabayana*  
*Aide him wama Khal fahum*  
*Wala Yuheetuna Bi*  
*Shaien bi ilmihi*  
*Ella bi ma Sha aa*  
*Wa siya Kursi hus*  
*Samawati Wal ard*  
*Wala Yahudu Hif zahuma*  
*Wahu wal*  
*Ali ul Azeem*  
(S.2 Ayats 254-255)

Allah! There is no god  
But He – the living  
The Self-Subsisting, Supporter of all.  
No slumber can seize Him.  
Nor sleep, His are all things  
In the Heavens and on earth  
In His presence, except as He permitteth?  
He knoweth what  
(appeareth to His  
creatures As)  
Before or after  
or Behind them.  
Nor shall they  
Compass aught  
of His knowledge  
except as he willeth.  
His throne doth  
extend over the  
heavens and the earth and  
He feeleth and  
Preserving them.  
For He is the High.  
The Supreme (in glory).

3. *Qul Hu wal lahu ahad*  
*Allah hus samad*  
*Lam Ya lid*  
*Walam yulad*  
*Walana Ya Kul lahu*  
*Kufa an Ahad*  
(S.112: A-1-4)

Say: He is Allah  
The one;  
Allah, the Eternal Absolute;  
He begetteth not,  
Nor is He begotten.  
And there is none  
Like unto Him.  
(A 22)

4. *Hwwal la hul lazi lailaha illahuwa*  
*Aali mul Qaibi*  
*Washh sahadati*  
(A 23) *Huwar Rehman ur Rahim*  
*Hu Walla hu lazi laillah illahu*  
*Aal malikul Quddusul*  
*Salammul mominul*  
*Muhaimummal Azeezul*  
*Jabbaru, Al muta Kabiru*  
*Subhanal lahi Amma*  
*Yush rekooon.*

(A 24) *Hu Wal Lahul Khaliqul*  
*Bariul musaw werul*  
*Lahul asma ul husna*  
*Yusabi hu lahu*  
*Mafis*  
*samawati walardi*  
*wahu wal azeezul Hakeem*  
*Aameen.*  
(S.59. A 22-24)

22 (Allah is He; than whom there is no god – who knows (all things) both secret and open; He, Most Gracious Most Merciful.

23 Allah is He, than whom there is  
No other god:-  
The Sovereign, the Holy one,  
The source of peace (and perfection),  
The Guardian of Faith,  
The Preserver of Safety,  
The Exalted in Might,  
The Irresistible, the Justly proud  
Glory to Allah!  
Above the partness, they attribute to Him.

He is Allah, the Creator, the Originator,  
The Fashioner to Him belong the  
Most Beautiful Names. Whatever is in the  
Heavens and on earth cloth declare His  
praises and Glory; And He is the Exalted in Might, the  
wise)

Ramesh memorised these passages and would recite along with his daily prayers including the prayers from bible:

“Our Father in heaven,  
Thy name be hallowed;  
Thy kingdom come,  
Thy will be done,  
On earth as in heaven,  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us the wrong we have done,  
As we have forgiven those who have wronged us.  
And do not bring us to the test,  
But save us from the evil one.”  
(Mathew 6-9-13)



## Chapter 20. Ramesh's Moments of Glory

With this new found understanding and keeping in his heart, the love of the Eternal Divine Being and His attributes; Ramesh with single minded devotion set out on pilgrimage to all the holy centres. He had varied experiences in each place. Initially, he stayed in cheap lodgings. The lodgers watching his spiritual state would consult him, taking him to be an astrologer or a tantric.

Ramesh knew palmistry a little. His deep concentration and faith in the Supreme Being was overwhelming and profuse. He would mutter Sanskrit slokas, perform a short prayer, and read the palms of the lodgers. Lo and sure, the readings would impress them and they would give him some money as "Gurudakshina".

Ramesh was able to make up his lodging expenses with this small gifts received by him.

In Haridwar, Rishikesh, Amarnath and Kedarnath he would stay in the chowtries meant for pilgrims. Several pilgrims would confuse him to be a very learned Sastric pandit and approach him for blessings. He would recite passages from Bhagavad Gita and exhort them to seek a true guru and serve him for attainment. Ramesh would quote Lord Krishna from Bhagavad Gita;

"Neither by study of the Vedas nor by  
austere penance, nor by charity, nor  
even by rituals can I be seen  
in my transcendental form, Arjuna."

Ramesh would explain that Lord Krishna tells Arjuna that this para vidya or knowledge of the spirit can be imparted by a wise seer and an illumined soul alone. Such a Sadguru does not stuff your mind with prolific description of Atman and paramatman, but one who takes you beyond the different paths of realisation.

Again Ramesh would quote from Kathopanishad and the Mundaka Upanishad:

“The Supreme Brahman cannot be attained just by reading the scriptures and listening to religious discourses. God can neither be attained through the mind nor by logic. He is accessible only to those who have a strong craving to know and unravel the supreme secret and essence of God.”

Ramesh would quote Sufi Saint Bulleshah –

“One may have read many scriptures and may have a large collection of books but if there is gloom in the heart, without the grace of murshid (guru), how can Supreme Bliss and fulfillment be possible.”

At another time, Ramesh recalled the words of Adi Shankara as stated in Vivek Chudamani:

“No matter how sweetly one talks, how elaborately one explains, how expertly one interprets the Vedas, if that Truth is unknown, salvation is not possible. The vedas speak of the inner world which cannot be perceived by mind, intellect and sense organs.”

Ramesh after several visits to all the holy places, like Varnasi, Kasi including the Golden Temple at Amristar, Darga of Ajmer Saint and down South visiting Tiruvanamalai, Tirupathi, Kanchipuram, Guruvayoor and at Sabarimala and after having darshan of Lord Ayappa, he returned to Bangalore.



## **Chapter 21. Ramesh Attains Bliss and Peace**

Ramesh fell on the feet of his mother and wept like a child. Ramesh’s mother Parvathi took hold of him and blessed him profusely. Ramesh related his experiences and as to how his stay

with Rahim and his pleasant divine talks had completely changed his mind and soul. Ramesh recalled the words of the holy Tantrik telling him to be reincarnation of Bandhu Khan in a Brahmin family.

Ramesh and his parents had a hearty laugh and Ramesh convinced himself that perhaps, Rahim must have been a Brahmin in his previous birth, otherwise how could he quote so much from the Holy Scriptures and be a “Shud Namazi”

After several years of study and meditation, Ramesh came to a clear conclusion that our Holy Scriptures give a detail account of the magnificence, and effulgence of the Omnipresent, Omniscient and Omnipotent nature of the Supreme Being; yet at the same time, Ramesh discovered that the divine play in various forms at different times enacted by the Lord in His “Saguna Swarupa” are not presented merely to demonstrate His playfulness but it has a definite purpose and meaning for all of us. The imminence and transcendence of the Supreme Brahman in human embodiment cannot be understood by mere intellect and logic but it is understood by only those who have known and seen His cosmic vision. Ramesh realised that Saints and Sages have always remained on Earth to provide direction for a meaningful life.

Ramesh also realised that the life of every individual is an unstable mixture of pairs of opposites; and that everyday life is filled with trials and tribulations of varying degrees and magnitude. While wise men seek to know the meaning of life, the ignorant just grumble and talk of a “wicked” God, whenever they are in pains and despondency.

Ramesh realised that human life has a higher and nobler purpose and the destiny of human being is to move higher up in the cosmic order to reach perfection and to realise the permanent and Supreme Bliss in the realm of God.

Ramesh's father observing that he had attained peace and spiritual solace and taken up to preaching the word of God, spoke to him one day and mentioned that he knew well that Ramesh would realise his goal. He further told him that the Hindu tradition is based not on acceptance of particular Gods, dogmas, revelations and religious strictures but on reverence for "Dharma", which are the rule of law and the ethics of the age.

Ramesh's father Sathyapathi Rao concluded by quoting Isha Upanishad (6-7)

"Those who see all creatures  
Within themselves,  
And themselves  
In all creations, know no fear.  
Those who see all creatures  
In themselves and themselves in all  
Creatures know no grief.  
How can the multiplicity of life  
Delude the one who sees its Unity".

Sathyapathi Rao quoted the definition of 'Man of perfection' from his reading of Bhagavad Gita as follows:

"He who hates no creature,  
Who is friendly and compassionate.  
.....free from attachment and  
Egotism .....

.....balanced in pleasure and  
Pain and forgiving.  
.... Self-controlled, of firm  
Resolve, with mind and intellect  
Dedicated to Me, he, my devotee,  
Is dear to Me."

"He by whom the world is not agitated and who is not agitated by the world, who is free from joy, envy, fear and anxiety, he is dear to Me."



“He who is free from expectations.....  
.....pure, expert, unconcerned, untroubled,  
renouncing all undertakings – he, may  
dreams, is dear to Me.”

“He who neither rejoices nor hates,  
neither grieves nor desires, renouncing  
good and evil, full of devotion, he  
is dear to Me.”

“Alike to friend and foe and also in honour and dishonour,  
alike to heat and cold, in pleasure and pain, free from  
attachment.”

“They, indeed, who follow this set of eternal principles as  
declared, worship Me, with faith, regarding Me at the  
Supreme – those devotees are exceedingly dear to Me.”

As Ramesh’s father was reciting these holy passages, Ramesh recalled Rahim reciting similar passages from his holy scriptures and they were ringing in his ears. Ramesh’s eyes were filled with tears. He fell on the feet of his father and accepted him as his Spiritual Guru to guide him further in his life.

Ramesh wrote a lengthy letter of thanks to his dear bosom friend Rahim, a “Shud Namazi” and a Sufi as he called him, for guiding him to the correct path.



# DEWS ON DRY LEAVES

## Chapter 1.

Ahmed Shariff had turned to religion after the death of his aged father, who died after living a full life till his nineties. Ahmed's father was considered a grand old man of Old Delhi for his piety, philanthropy and public service. The old man who was known as Sab Hazreth for his benign and compassionate looks, died peacefully in the presence of all members of his large household comprising his aged wife, children and grandchildren. He breathed his last after giving very sage advice to all his children. The aura surrounding the grand old man turned the passionate heart of Ahmed Shariff towards religion.

Ahmed Shariff was in his late forties and had his Schooling in the famous Public School of Delhi run by English missionaries. He had cultivated English manners but after entry into the famous Aligarh University for his English Honours, he became a typical Moghul in his manners. His further post-graduation stint in the Allahabad University turned him into a nationalist. Although, Ahmed Shariff had not participated in the national freedom movement, in his heart he became a socialist with full sympathy and compassion for the underdogs.

Sab Hazreth had possessed a peculiar sense of humour, which was contagious, though solemn and dignified. His command over English, Persian and Urdu and his love for its poetry had enlivened his speeches. In his decades of public service, he had come to be loved and respected by one and all. Ahmed Shariff was the fourth son but the most loved of his parents. Ahmed Shariff had inherited most of his father's traits of entertaining friends, relatives, and to be with one and all, to

win friends and influence people through his jovial nature; encouraging youngsters, playing with them, being very helpful to all his friends and showing compassion and being kind to the underdogs and the poor people. He would win the hearts of servants and drivers with his simple nature by sharing in their woes and helping with money. Ahmed was the most loved uncle to all his nephews and nieces. He would play pranks with them, tease them crack jokes, and share their joys and pains. Ahmed was a very wise, prudent person and would come to the rescue of each and every one. Ahmed followed his father's footsteps in public service, in every way.

In the evenings, he would join his friends over a game of cards. He was an expert bridge player. His pleasure in sharing with his friends, his money during their needs remained a secret, unknown to many. After the demise of his father Ahmed turned to prayers with all his devotion and to recite the Holy Scriptures. He gave up playing cards but could not give up smoking cigarettes. He was known to be fashionable and would puff only expensive cigarettes of those times, "Gold Flake".



## **Chapter 2. Marriage and Children of Ahmed Shariff**

Ahmed Shariff was been married to Sultana, the only daughter of a rich barrister of Allahabad, Asif Jah. Sultana had been brought up in a most special way in the care of an English governess. Sultana's father had an idea of retaining Ahmed Shariff with him at Allahabad to manage his affairs. Sultana was very proud, haughty, reserved and snobbish. While Ahmed Shariff was fair and handsome, Sultana was not at all good looking. Because of her English upbringing, she disliked the very idea of staying with the large house hold of Sab Hazreth. Sab Hazreth's wife was a grand old lady being the daughter of a rich

zamindar. She was not educated much, was an orthodox Muslim lady and knew little except to recite Scriptures and to write in Urdu. She had been educated in the house, in the manner and custom of ancient tradition. She hailed from Lucknow and carried with her the courteous manners of the Lucknow people.

Somehow the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law could not see eye to eye as both were poles apart. On the slightest pretext, they would cross swords. Sultana was to be spoil sport and was known for her cantankerous, suspicious and unfriendly nature. She became a pain in the neck to everyone. She was respected solely because of the love and affection of Ahmed Shariff for her. Ahmed Shariff had done his best to bring round Sultana to respect his mother, who was the jewel of his eyes but Sultana would taunt her and show utter disregard and disrespect to her. She bore malice and contempt for Sab Hazreth and his wife Rahima. Sultana's English bearing made her feel superior to one and all. She spoke with English accents and had awful pronunciation of Urdu. Delhites spoke in chaste, pleasant Urdu, which was pleasing to the ears and they would drop in their conversation, one or two couplets of 'Ghalib' 'Meer Taqi Meer', 'Hali' or 'Iqbal'. But this proud and haughty Sultana cared a dime for the Urdu poets, who were mere vagabonds and tramps in her eyes.

Sultana's father Asif Jah had a very large collection of books in his library. He was a connoisseur of everything delicate and fanciful. He had decorated his house with chandeliers, expensive European furniture, crockery, carpets and lived like an Englishman. Asif Jah dressed like a European, spoke English and had several breeds of dogs – Alsashion, Doberman and Bulldog. He was fond of love birds, parakeets and pigeons. Asif Jah had very choice friends from the high society. He totally disliked the age old customs. He preferred Ahmed Shariff from among several boys of high society solely because of his good nature, smartness and his high education particularly from a

Public School. Asif Jah was confident of making Ahmed Shariff his “son” rather than son-in-law but was totally disappointed to find Ahmed Shariff to be independent in nature.

Ahmed Shariff’s love for his parents and his open hearted nature was a cause of concern and worry to Asif Jah. Asif Jah wondered as to what Ahmed Shariff would do with his large real estate and with his beautiful bungalow at Allahabad.

Asif Jah’s wife Sameera was no different from Sultana, a wretched witch. She had a great dislike for her son-in-law. She cursed her husband in choosing a Delhite with Mogul manners, instead of one with western unbringing.

Ahmed Shariff kept a respectable distance from his mother-in-law, which was all the more a source of quarrel and strife in the family. Ahmed Shariff a nice person was caught between the devil and the deep sea. He loved people, people loved him. He hated the European manners and stiff upper lip of Englishmen. He imitated the life style of old moghuls, though not averse to European dress due to his high education and preferred to be simple, jovial and informal with one and all.



### **Chapter 3. Ahmed Shariff Proves his Loyalty**

When Asif Jah fell critically ill with cancer; Ahmed Shariff being a very compassionate soul gave up all his work and attended on the ailing Asif Jah. Asif Jah was touched with the kindness and good manners of Ahmed Shariff but it was too late to mend the fence. He died in Ahmed Shariff’s arms.

During the period when Asif Jah was sick and Ahmed Shariff was taking care of him, Sultana was appointed in All India Radio as a Newsreader. She had almost decided to seek divorce from Ahmed Shariff but fate intervened and Asif Jah fell

seriously ill. The devotion with which Ahmed Shariff served her father, made Sultana to wane and wax like a moon. Should she carry on with her own affairs or should she continue to be loyal to Ahmed, was a thought, which was perplexing to her. During this period, she bore two lovely sons. The eldest was named Shuja by Sab – Hazreth. Sultana’s hate for moghuls made her change the name of her elder son from Shuja to Feroz. Feroz was a photocopy of his father, sweet, chubby, loveable and mischievous. The second son was named Akbar by Sab Hazreth. Sultana changed the name to Shanawaz. Shanawaz was almost like his mother, in mannerism, style and complexion. He had neither charm nor humour. He was a glum and dull boy. A third son was born, when she was working with AIR. He was named Aiyaz, a bright and intelligent boy. Ahmed Shariff had one more Son, Sharafat, who was very cute and looked almost like Ahmed Shariff. He was born in Delhi, after the death of Asif Jah.



#### **Chapter 4. Sultana Shifts to Delhi**

Ahmed Shariff never showed any disrespect to his wife, Sultana. He loved her dearly but could not bear her ill-temper, bad manners and her continuous taunts. Sultana would contradict Ahmed Shariff even in trivial matters, be it to sending the children to the School, dressing them, taking them to functions in his relatives’ houses or compelling the children to speak in Urdu. Sultana insisted on maintaining her airs of adopted English aristocracy. She refused to move to Delhi, until Ahmed Shariff procured on rent a big bungalow in Lutyen’s Delhi near Connought place. She shifted there with her father’s expensive European household things plus the pet dogs and servants. She let out her house in Allahabad on rent to a highly sophisticated family.

She personally went to a Public School near Connought place and admitted all her children there. She refused to entertain Ahmed Shariff's parents or relatives in her palatial bungalow. In every way, she acted like Queen Victoria. She commanded Ahmed Shariff to buy her a car. Ahmed Shariff begged and borrowed money and bought a second hand black Ford car.

Ahmed Shariff was quite modest in his manners. However, his self-respect was constantly wounded by the irascible behaviour of Sultana. Ahmed Shariff's brothers and sisters loaned him huge sums and he borrowed money from his friends and bought a palatial bungalow near his house. After carrying out necessary repairs, he shifted to this bungalow, built on European model with lovely flowering trees, garden and a fountain.

Sultana put up a board "Beware of dogs" at the gate. It meant, she had no place for any of the relatives of Ahmed Shariff and none should even step inside and mingle with her children.

Ahmed Shariff was totally perplexed and felt harassed. After buying his house, he desired his brothers and sisters to live with him or atleast visit him frequently. His large heart yearned for his friends, relatives, nephews and nieces to come and enjoy his hospitality but Sultana would not have any of his ways. When she said "No" she meant it. If Ahmed Shariff's brothers, sisters or relatives visited him, Sultana and her mother treated them with scant respect. Both would taunt them on the way they spoke, about their backwardness and about their being hardly aware of the advancement in Europe and England. Both would break into English and refuse to answer queries in Urdu.

Sometimes, they would humiliate the nephews and nieces of Ahmed by questioning them as to why they visited them, without seeking permission from them. They would resent their

visits at odd hours without prior appointment. They would question his relatives' sincerity and bonafides. Sultana would accuse Ahmed Shariff of parting with a large portion of his income for the benefit of his brothers, sisters and spending lavishly on his nephews and nieces.



### **Chapter 5. Pangs of Ahmed**

Ahmed Shariff was deeply hurt and lived a life of anguish and pain. He would spend his time in the evenings with his friends in the club. This would infuriate Sultana because of her snobbish, argumentative and short tempered nature. Ahmed Shariff preferred to stay back with his friends till the children went to bed to avoid quarrels. Sultana found scope to taunt Ahmed Shariff and condemn his people and relatives in front of her children. She would fill their tender minds, with hatred and gall for Ahmed Shariff and his people.

Feroz had turned out, initially to be like his father but as he grew big, he began to take his mother's side and turned totally hostile to his father. Feroz was the first to show disregard and disrespect to his father's relatives. Feroz got all the attention and affection of Sultana. This made Shanawaz jealous and he would pick up a quarrel with Feroz. Sultana would thrash Shanawaz, all the while lamenting that his father had spoiled him and that Shanawaz was behaving like his cousins. Shanawaz was so mentally tortured, that one day; he ran away from the house and hid himself in his School.

Ahmed Shariff's heart was filled with melancholy. He had lost his dear father, who was his guide and Philosopher. He missed his dear loving mother, who had also immediately followed his father. His world fell apart. He felt humiliated before all his relatives and friends. When they all gathered to



console him and a few of them had rushed in search of Shanawaz all over the places; Sultana and her mother kicked up a racket. They shouted at all the relatives accusing them of scheming against her and her children. The poor relatives were very cultured, simple and polite people. They could not fathom the sophisticated mannerisms of Sultana and her mother. Ahmed Shariff for the first time broke down like a child and wept. This angered both Sultana and her mother. They tormented him further by accusing him of enacting a drama by weeping solely to steal the sympathy of his relatives and to paint them black.

Ultimately, when Shanawaz was discovered in the hostel of his School and brought home, Ahmed Shariff just wept and asked his son Shanawaz to boot him, as he had committed a sin in being his father.

It took a long time for peace to return to the house. On some pretext Ahmed Shariff shifted his business to Meerut and lived with his sister. This became all the more a bone of contention. Sultana accused Ahmed's sister of conspiring with him, solely to break her peace and marital happiness. Ahmed's sister Sayeeda was helpless. She and her children loved Ahmed. They gave him as much solace and peace of mind as possible but Sultana would not tolerate this situation anymore. She dragged Ahmed back to Connought place, New Delhi from Meerut.



### **Chapter 6. Sun Shines and Sets on Ahmed Shariff**

Feroz took to a wayward life, as he was backed by his mother. He cultivated friendship with rich boys and indulged in fun and frolic. He could hardly speak in chaste Urdu. He was anglicised. People used to mistake him for an Anglo-Indian. He failed in his degree exams, while studying at St. Stephen's College. All the

dreams of Ahmed Shariff to educate Feroz in Oxford were dashed to the ground. After much cajoling and driving sense into Feroz's gray matter, he could be brought around to complete his degree, in a mere third class. Ahmed had a large circle of influential friends. They helped Feroz in getting admission in Master's course in the newly started Jawaharlal Nehru University.

Ahmed Shariff was unanimously elected as Mayor of Delhi Corporation. He felt extremely jubilant. But in the eyes of Sultana, the part of a Mayor of a major metropolitan and capital city of free India was nothing, but one of contempt.

Ahmed Shariff hosted a grand party for all his friends and relatives and arranged for a 'gazal' night. He was extremely happy and jovial and entertained one and all. All his blues had vanished over and he felt light-hearted. He felt like floating in the air. Now, all his grief had waned and he looked forward to a very great success in public life. On the next day, Ahmed and his family were to be special guest of honour at the residence of Commissioner of Delhi. He returned home from the Council and found all his children and wife dressed up and ready for the party. As usual Sultana was caustic in her remarks on Ahmed being late to home.

Ahmed Shariff felt uneasy. He told them to go to the party. As he hadn't slept the previous night, he was feeling uneasy and said he would join them late in the party after snatching a few hours of sleep. Sultana liked to be in the company of high society. It was a party of big wigs. How could she miss it? She hurriedly left in her car for the commissioner's house.

Ahmed Shariff said his prayers and was in deep meditation, when he felt that he was at the end of the tunnel and the final call had come to him. He rang up his family Doctor Mohsin, a Physician from Glasgow and Cambridge University. Dr. Mohsin arrived within a few minutes. After the treatment,

Ahmed Shariff held out an envelope containing Rs.300/- and bade adieu to Dr. Mohsin by thanking him for all his services. Dr. Mohsin did not appreciate this joke. He assured Ahmed that his lack of sleep had tired him and he was getting delusions. He gave him a sedative and left him. Dr. Mohsin was fully satisfied that Ahmed Shariff did not have any problem, although he had warned Shariff to cut down on his heavy schedules and cigarettes but Shariff wouldn't care a dime for anything. He always felt that he had burnt his boats long time ago and there was no charm left for him in this world.

Sultana and her children for the first time in their life felt how important Ahmed Shariff was to the society and how much he was loved and respected. But there was silence and whispering among the gathering. Sultana felt a cold chill and shuddered to think of any dark clouds gathering around her. Sultana for the first time in her life got a strange eerie feeling. Immediately, she gathered her children and rushed home.

She found Ahmed Shariff reading the Holy book. Sultana had tears in her eyes and felt remorse. She fell on his feet, bitterly wept and sought his pardon. Ahmed Shariff just held his hand over her head and patted her. He spoke softly and told her to take care of his children, love them and retain the affection of all. Sultana broke down, so also her children. Ahmed Shariff slowly moved to his bed by laying aside the Holy book. He muttered the last prayer, the "Kalima" (the confession of faith in Allah and in His Prophet). He remembered his dear loving parents. By now, Ahmed's brother had reached his house; so also many of the guests who had gathered in the Commissioner's house. Ahmed had a massive heart attack. He had phoned for Sultana to rush home. In the midst of, all the relatives and his dear friends who had gathered, Ahmed Shariff, a Saintly person, breathed his last.



## Chapter 7. Grief and Melancholy

The sudden passing away of Ahmed Shariff was shocking to the entire population of Delhi. It was unbelievable news, like sudden withdrawal of electricity leaving everyone in darkness. The news was not believed by the public and they wished it would be false. A person like Ahmed Shariff was a rare one. He was a gem of the first water, its sparkling colours of various hues throwing light on one and all. A loved personality was suffused with love that profusely gushed out like a fountain, illumining every corner of the surroundings.

The morning 'National Herald' carried on the first page, the news of the sudden death of Ahmed Shariff leaving behind scores and scores of mourners. Within a few hours of the break of dawn, hundreds and thousands of people gathered in the huge bungalow of Ahmed Shariff. It was for the first time in the history of the Delhi Municipality that a Muslim gentleman had been unanimously elected as Mayor. He was a secular patriot, who had won the hearts of even the most hard-hearted persons. Ahmed Shariff had practically been deified as an icon. Thousands of people participated in the funeral procession. The body had earlier been lying in state for mourners to march past it. Everyone was eager to lend shoulder to his bier. The long distance from Connought place to the Fathepuri Masjid in old Delhi was strewn with flowers. After the funeral prayers, the body was interned in the family grave yard, besides the grave of Sab Hazreth and his wife.

Thousands of condolence messages poured into the house of Sultana. Several high dignitaries visited her to console her and her children.

Sultana was looking grave and ill. In her private moments, she was cursing Dr. Mohsin and blamed him squarely for neglecting Ahmed Shariff. When Dr. Mohsin came to pay his

respect to Sultana, she flared at him and called the Doctor, a murderer. Dr. Mohsin was a highly polished gentleman. He had done his best. He had warned Ahmed Shariff sufficiently and had put him on the best of medication. Ahmed Shariff had taken a promise from Dr. Mohsin not to disclose his health condition to his wife or even to his brothers. Ahmed Shariff did not want to spoil his chances of being elected unanimously as a Mayor.

It was a golden chance to be honoured as a first citizen of a metropolitan and he did not wish to lose it by disclosing his ill health to others. Dr. Mohsin being very compassionate was helpless. He had prescribed the best of medicine but what Ahmed needed was complete rest, totally giving up cigarettes and his rich diet, which Ahmed could not do. His heavy schedule and public meetings engaged him fully, which proved to be fatal and he had to pay the price.

Dr. Mohsin could not bear to hear such hard cutting words of Sultana. He was shaken and he could not concentrate fully on his consultation work. As Ahmed Shariff was a well-known personality, people openly took Sultana's side and blamed Dr. Mohsin.

Dr. Mohsin's practice suffered miserably and so also his reputation. This was a slow killer for him. He started withdrawing himself from high society and served the middle class and lower strata of society by associating with a charitable hospital but the stigma was attached to his name.

There were letters to the editor in the daily newspaper blaming Dr. Mohsin and a clamour was also raised for taking action for his negligence.

Feroz went hammer and tongs at Dr. Mohsin. He gathered all the prescriptions and the cardiographs and approached senior cardiologists. Every one pointed out that Ahmed Shariff had suffered thrombosis and it was against the professional ethics to

have left the decision to Ahmed Shariff alone. Feroz led a whispering campaign against Dr. Mohsin in the entire upper and middle segment of society.

Dr. Mohsin could not take the shock and humiliation for long, as the matter had been kept alive for attack by Sultana and Feroz. Both would seize each and every opportunity to blame Dr. Mohsin in any gathering or any function. The result proved fatal, as on an unfortunate day, Dr. Mohsin suffered a massive heart attack and passed away. His wife could not bear the trauma, she left for Europe with her children, but not till she gave a bit of her mind to Sultana and Feroz to bear in mind the damage done to a brilliant cardiologist and his family but Sultana and Feroz were rough and lacked sensitivity. They poo-hooed the claim of Mrs. Mohsin that their criticism had any consequence on Dr. Mohsin's practice or health. They kept repeating like a parrot that Dr. Mohsin had acted negligently and was incapable and inefficient.



### **Chapter 8. Sultana's Fury**

Sultana had no tears for Ahmed Shariff. The tears at the moment of his passing away were more perhaps for the snatching away of the glory that had reached her doors. She had planned to live in style to remodel her house. She had made hectic purchases of new dresses for herself and her children. She had got made a new diamond necklace from famous jewellery and she had still to clear the dues. She was seeing her dreams crashing and melting away. She was seeing the oncoming gloom and mighty deluge. It was not the separation from Ahmed Shariff, which bothered her. She wanted to paint him as a villain, who never cared for her and her children. It was the waning of power and importance and the onset of darkness, which gave her

pangs. She had no remorse but her heart was filled with wickedness and bitterness. She accused Ahmed's brothers and sisters for snatching away Ahmed from her midst all the time and for his neglect of her and her children. She would invent one excuse or the other to belittle all the cousins of her children and openly humiliate them. She would ask the relatives whether they were not feeling jubilant to see her in this plight and allege that secretly all must have prayed for this calamity.

Sultana's words were like spears. They would pierce through the soft hearts of Ahmed's brothers, sisters and relatives. However, much they attempted to shower their love and concern, Sultana and her children particularly Feroz were menacing and wretched in their behaviour and accusations.



### **Chapter 9. Sultana's Eccentricities**

Sultana developed herself into a dual personality. She did her best to prevent her children from associating with their uncles and cousins on the pretext that they were not their well-wishers. She would create suspicion and chaos in their minds. Shanawaz was one, who had developed attachment to his father and his relatives. Sultana used all the tricks in her bag to convince Shanawaz that his relatives were jealous and no better than street people sans culture. They had robbed his father and if he drew closer to them they would likewise mislead him. Shanawaz initially disbelieved his mother and refused to tow her line but Sultana was pretty good in slowly poisoning his mind by creating hatred against his uncles, aunts and cousins. Thus, Sultana succeeded in carving a separate path for her children. The result was that the hearts of the children could not nurture love. They were made to believe that the neighbours and relatives

were their adversaries who carried on a vicious propoganda against them to mar their careers.

While Sultana succeeded in spoiling the image of Ahmed Shariff and scores of his relatives but when it came to taking benefit of his legacy, she was not slow. The Governor of Delhi had written a personal condolence letter to Sultana expressing grief on the untimely death of Ahmed Shariff and offered any help and assistance within his capacity. By now Feroz had taken his Master's degree. At the behest of the Governor's influence, Feroz could get a good executive job in a multinational company. Shanawaz could secure a seat in a technical course on the same basis. Aiyaz was the most intelligent person. He came out in brilliant colours. Aiyaz never allowed himself to be swayed by emotions. He kept himself away from the family bickerings and he maintained a safe distance from one and all. While the last fellow Sharafat was a most neglected lot. He could not clear his subjects at the school level. He was made to slog in the house and heaped with insults. The result was that the injury caused due to his father's demise was compounded and he suffered a nervous breakdown. With great difficulty he recovered and could complete his graduation but was unable to get employed. He became vagabond and a waster. Sultana had spoiled her last son. She was abusive to him solely because of his resemblance to his father. This led him going off the track and hence could not make a career.



### **Chapter 10. Sultana Manages her Estate**

Sultana was faced with the enormous loans and debts left by Ahmed Shariff. She had a great knack to handle her financial matters. Ahmed Shariff had inherited large estates from his father, which fetched good rents. But his borrowings from



various sources for buying the bungalow, car, for his public life and for educating his sons in high Public Schools and St. Stephen's College was very high and enormous. Sultana being the only child of a rich barrister had been in possession of lot of wealth and properties. She never parted with a penny to Ahmed Shariff and closely guarded her wealth as if she foresaw that Ahmed Shariff would wither away soon. Now she cursed Ahmed Shariff and his family with choicest epithets. She was advised by her well-wishers to dispose of all her properties at Allahabad and after clearing the loans, invest in real estates in Delhi itself. She took the advice seriously. She got a fortune in disposing of her estates at Allahabad. After clearing her husband's debts, she bought a huge bungalow in Connought place which fetched her very high rentals. Thus Sultana had no death for money. She continued to live regally except for herself created unhappiness and dissatisfaction with life. After becoming self-satisfied, she brain washed her children that all that they have inherited from their father are only debts and infamy. The children were convinced that their all-around progress in life was solely due to Asif Jah and their mother Sultana that their father and grandfather were men of low means, poor culture and caliber.



### **Chapter 11. Death of Sultana's Mother**

Sultana had become weary of her mother, Sameera. Her mother had turned in senile with high BP and diabetes. Due to illness, she became bed ridden. Sultana had to engage two nurses by paying high salaries for day and night service, besides paying for the doctor, who had to make daily house visits. Sultana was already beset with many worries. She was a strict ring master for her children exercising control over them. She would go into fits of temper tantrums, if she found them whiling away their time

or being in undesirable company. She expected implicit obedience from them. Feroz was busy in his new found job, while Shanawaz was a crack pot being head strong. She felt severe migraine on his account. Besides, her nerves were also giving way to delusions and imaginary fears and unfounded suspicions. Shanawaz stood his ground and preferred to shift to hostel. He was as adamant as his mother. He didn't give up his ground, till he succeeded in being put in the hostel. Sultana had to appease Shanawaz and keep him in good humour, lest, she feared that he would join with his father's relatives and may create more problems for her.

As regards Aiyaz and Sharafat were concerned, she exercised full and absolute control over them. Aiyaz being studious would manage to avoid his mother's over burdening control on the pretext of tuition, study and examinations. While Sharafat was totally subjugated overpowered and silenced. Due to suppressed feelings he couldn't progress much in studies and thus turned out to be a muff and dullard.

In a situation like this, Sultana had no go but to slowly stop the medication to her mother. Sultana had no qualms or conscious. Her mother would make out a grievance that her husband's entire wealth had been usurped by Sultana, without parting with her share. But Sultana would silence her by saying "mummy, why do you need money, I am taking your best care".

The poor old hag had to remain silent, but not without cursing her daughter. Although Sameera disliked Ahmed Shariff but she had reconciled with him after his devoted service to Asif Jah. On shifting to Delhi initially she was very rude with Ahmed Shariff, but after Ahmed Shariff purchased the bungalow and made her comfortable by attending to all her needs, Sameera took a liking for Ahmed Shariff. But so far as Ahmed Shariff's people were concerned, she was one with her daughter. She would instigate Sultana to be rude with her in-laws and take the

lead in insulting Ahmed Shariff's relatives, nephews and nieces, whenever they visited her house.

On the sudden passing away of Ahmed Shariff, Sameera could not control herself nor could keep quiet. She let out choices epithets on the entire brothers, sisters and relatives of Ahmed Shariff. On the day of obsequies, she created a racket accusing them of celebration. Usually in the old Muslim families of Delhi, there would be ceremonies on 3<sup>rd</sup> day, 20<sup>th</sup> day and 40<sup>th</sup> day after the death of a person; choicest flowers and garlands would be procured for placing on the beer and on the grave, out of religious sentiments. But this cruel lady Sameera accused all the kit and kin of Ahmed Shariff of rejoicing his death. On the third day, sweet meat would be distributed to poor people. This she accused again of merry making to celebrate Ahmed Shariff's death, instead of taking it as a charity for seeking Grace from the Almighty. On the fortieth day, all the relatives and friends would gather to recite the Holy Book and food would be distributed. The food normally in any Muslim household for any occasion is 'biryani' and 'qurma'. Well, this appeared to Sultana and Sameera as nothing but feasting at their cost. Both the mother and daughter pooh poohed the religious ceremonies and heckled the people gathered at their house to pray for the departed soul. This behaviour had totally shocked one and all. Ahmed Shariff's children at this point of time turned hostile towards their uncles, aunts and cousins. They were convinced that their mother and grandmother had every reason to complain about the extravaganza. The young minds could not be convinced that these are religious ceremonies and had been done from time immemorial and is common to all religions but they would argue that such practices are prohibited in Islam and further it is a wasteful expenditure at the cost of the money of their widowed mother. Ahmed Shariff's brothers took upon themselves to share all the expenses. They hurriedly left the house, silently bearing patiently the brunt of all their wicked talks.

Now it was the turn of Sultana to turn to Ahmed Shariff's relatives for help to tend her ailing mother. Ahmed Shariff's brothers were compassionate, noble and kind souls. Their aged old culture and tradition forced them to yield to their sister's-in-law request and pleas. At each and every beck and call, they would rush to Sultana's help and render all the assistance. They had to receive banging's and also carry out her orders. Sultana enjoyed harassing them. She would consider them as naive and foolish, while forgetting that it is the age old traditions and nobility, which had subjected them to treat her as one of their sister in distress. They would consider it as their noble duty to stand by her and to forget and forgive her for her short comings. So also they would pardon her children's misdemeanor, as if it had been committed by their own children. But they would politely attempt to advise them and give sagely advice, which always fell on deaf ears.

When Sameera fell seriously ill and had to be hospitalised in Ram Manohar Lohia, Hospital, it was Ahmed Shariff's brothers and nephews who came to Sultana's rescue. They all turn by turn stayed in the hospital. Finally, when the end came to the old lady, there were none around Sultana except these good Samaritans. Sultana refused to allow them to perform the religious ceremonies, calling it as an innovation. "A simple burial would do", she commanded. Thus, the old lady died unsung sans any prayers. Sultana was more concerned with her money. She thought it to be waste of money to spend on food, sweets and flowers. Thus, she not only saved money but got rid of her sickly mother, whom she couldn't bestow attention or tender her with care and love. Love became a very precious commodity for Sultana. She had no notion of love both temporal and spiritually. She desired money and took pride in her antiques collection of furniture, cookery, dogs, in her expensive clothing's and jeweler. She was proud of her accented English and in her children's education in Public Schools. "How many of these mullahs and goatees, have the good fortune to

study in such high Public School”. She would brag and further boast that it was she who got her children educated in such high profile Schools. What do these old Delhites know she would say: “These moghuls knew only to enjoy life and wile away their time and life”. She would taunt them by making fun of their traditions and culture. She felt that only by being thrifty, one can progress in life and not by creating traditions and customs, which only drained off one’s resources.

Thus, she got rid of all the old traditions, customs and banished along with it the “Muslimness” from her children. “Think western, act western and be western” was her Motto. “Look at the Europeans, how disciplined, neat and clean they are”. She would tell her children, whenever Ahmed’s nephews and nieces would visit them on festival days. She would taunt them by saying that “it is these extravaganza that drove Moghuls away from Red Fort. You people will never progress nor elevate yourselves”, she would criticise them. Again, she would say “It is this ‘Mulla’ tendency, narrow thinking and ghutto living that has made you backward”. Ahmed’s relatives would simply feel aghast and leave her house. A few would envy her living style and wonder as to when they can learn to live like her.



## **Chapter 12. Feroz Falls in Love and his Marriage**

Feroz couldn’t reconcile with the untimely death of his father. On his father’s election as a Mayor, Feroz had thrown a big party to all his high profile friends. He was practically surrounded by many cronies. It was certain that had Ahmed Shariff lived, Feroz would have brought disgrace to the oldest tradition ridden family of Sab Hazreth. The passing away of Ahmed Shariff, though tragic, proved to be a blessing in disguise to all his sons. They took their life seriously. Whatever people may say about Sultana,

they would remain mum on this point of her giving attention to her children and in molding their career. Sultana cared a heck and a dime for the Muslim tradition. She just wanted to sail with the high profile society and act in their traditions and ways. She disliked Public Service and discouraged her children totally from that course. She desired them to choose the modern management courses, study Science and economy. She had wealth, name and fame. She desired her children to be positioned in high profile jobs in the modern world. She was certain that money would flow, but, it is the style and the art of living that mattered. There has to be an aesthetic sense and one should live fully not be wedded to bigotry and decaying traditions. She was a connoisseur of beauty and art. She desired to follow the western life style, enjoy reading western literature, cook in western style with all modern gadgets and live in style.

Feroz had come to be known as an Anglo-Indian. All his mannerism was western and angilised. He could not speak chaste Urdu let alone to read and write. He had learnt French language and moved in high society. He marked a girl Shereen from such a society, a rave beauty, having participated in beauty contest. He courted her and succeeded in winning her heart.

Sultana was quite choosy in her choice. She did not want Feroz to be tagged with a tradition ridden house hold as it happened with her. Feroz explained to her that her fiancée's father was a scientist in America and she was living with her mother and brother. Both she and her brother had been educated in Public School and all their ways and manners were like them. Sultana though was happy on this count, but, on later reflection, she felt hesitant. In heart of hearts, she knew Ahmed Shariff bore nobility and so also his son Feroz. On her discreet enquiries she learnt that Shereen did not carry blue blood. She was disappointed. She desired to look for nobility and choose a girl from one such a family but Feroz had made up his mind and

wouldn't take a 'no' for his choice. Sultana always pampered Feroz. Thus, she conceded to his request but on a condition that Feroz should not interfere in her talks with Shereen's parents. Sultana was blunt with Shereen's parents. She plainly told them that the wedding had to be arranged in Hotel Oberoi for more than 1000 guests. A brand new car of a latest model should be decorated with flowers to take the groom on the wedding day. A long list of jewellery items, requirement of cash, as dowry, was placed in the hands of Sheereen's father. Sultana beckoned Ahmed's brother to be present during this time and made him a scapegoat.

Sultana did not invite the relatives in the traditional way. An ordinary wedding card went by post to chosen relatives. But expensive cards were distributed to friends from high society. Only the uncles and aunts were invited sans nephews and nieces. The wedding went on well in the five star hotel in a grand manner, with special band and music played on the occasion, this was a unique wedding compared to the traditional 'nikah' ceremony. There was inter-mingling of ladies and gents. After the 'nikah' the bride and groom sat on the dais and received the greeting from the guests. Sultana attracted special attention from every one. She went to "Shahnawaz beauty parlour" and got Shahnaz to specially attend to her. She wore the most expensive saree and put on an expensive diamond set with gold bangles and expensive ruby ear rings in her ear lobes. The guests were placing in her hand gift cheques and expensive gifts.

All the poor relatives were left out. The uncles and aunts of Feroz were sidelined. There was no sight of his cousins, as he felt that they were jealous of him. He refused to call them for the wedding.



### Chapter 13. Shereen Faces Trial

Sultana carried a strange notion about her daughter-in-law. Her control on her children was firm and strong and her word had to be obeyed. She had never understood the sensibility of a daughter and how a girl feels about herself. Moreover, the times had changed; Shereen was a model and beauty pageant queen and had also lived freely in a hostel. She was absolutely at sea, when she entered the house of Feroz. It never occurred to her during her courtship with Feroz, that he was totally submissive to his mother and a meek fellow.

Sultana from the very first day exercised her control over Shereen. She told her that Shereen can't spend her time in bedroom except during night hours for sleep. She had to be up and ready in the early morning and take care of all the household work. Shereen was shocked with these utterances. She had never been commanded and ordered about to carry out work in that way throughout her life. At any and every pretext, Sultana would cut her short and pass caustic remarks that would bring tears to Shereen's eyes. Shereen had never held a pan, let alone seeing the inside of a kitchen. She felt helpless and despondent. There was absolutely no cheer in this home. Feroz, an executive would behave like an officer in the house also. His attitude had changed; he would simply stare at her when his mother would scold Shereen for no reason.

Shereen had expected a nice honey moon and a joyous moments but it was only a dream. A beautiful tender girl, who was always playful and joyous, felt herself being in a quagmire situation. Feroz wouldn't come for the lunch and sometimes he would come late in night hours, on the pretext of executive dinner meetings. He would be away to various places on tour.

Shereen felt that she was encaged. She was not allowed to go out to the market and there were severe restrictions on her.



She couldn't use the telephone to speak to her parents. The telephone was shifted to Sultana's bed room. Whenever, Shereen's parents or brothers rang up, Sultana politely would tell them that Shereen was still sleeping or was in bathroom or away to market. Shereen's parents were perplexed and worried. They were hoping that Feroz would take Shereen out for movies or for outings but Feroz wouldn't yield to any of the Shereen's pleas. He would tell her to seek permission of his mummy. Shereen noticed that none of the relatives of Feroz were also paying their visits. She understood that she had entered a wrong household and felt perplexed. She had absolutely no idea as to what she should do?

Sultana would raise several questions during lunch time and pass caustic comments on Shereen's upbringing and family background. Sultana suddenly felt that Ahmed Shariff hailed from a noble family and carried blue blood. She doubted as to whether Feroz's children would inherit such nobility? Sultana discoursed that Shereen's father was a converted Muslim and her parents had a love marriage. These talks all the more infuriated Sultana. She kept harassing Shereen on not disclosing about her parentage to Feroz. She would openly tell Feroz that he had done a grave error in choosing and insisting on marrying a girl from such a background.

Feroz would also lose his temper during night hours, when Shereen would broach the topic of her mother's-in-law ill behaviour. He would plainly tell her that he would not give his ears for such talks and wouldn't bear to hear anything spoken against his mother. It is her mother, who had sacrificed everything and fought her way against all the adverse circumstances in bringing them up. He was today in such a nice and coveted job, solely because of his mother. He told Shereen to respect his mother and just obey her.

Shereen had no difficulty in learning the house hold cores but it is the caustic remarks, criticism and condemnation of her

family background that would pain her very much. She felt that her mother-in-law had crossed all levels of decency, when she alleged that Shereen's parents had not spent much on her marriage and had not given as much cash, jewellery and property as she had expected. Sharafat was always around to butt in and take the side of his mother in harassing Shereen and in running her down. It was less than a year, when Shereen conceived. She got an opportunity to use the telephone, when Sultana had gone to visit her doctor. Shereen rang up to her aunty at Delhi and expressed her plight and inconsolably wept over the phone. Within a few days, Shereen's parents, brother, aunty and uncles came to the house of Sultana and quietly told her that Shereen needs a change as she is now pregnant. They sought Sultana's permission to take her home. Sultana knew too well that this was a mere ploy to take away Shereen. She told Shereen to go inside the bedroom, as she had something important to talk to her parents. Shereen felt scared. Quietly she looked at her brother for a while and went inside the bed room. Her brother got up and went out, on the pretext of taking a fresh air. Shereen quickly entered her bed room and from another door which opened to the veranda came out and went straight to the gate, where the car had been parked. Within a moment, her brother started the car and zoomed off. He dropped Shereen in her aunty's house and quietly came back and joined others in the drawing room. Meanwhile, Sultana had raised a tirade against Shereen, complaining on each and every thing. As soon as Shereen's brother entered the drawing room, he just signalled his parents to get up and leave the place. They felt that he had helped Shereen to get away, as they heard the sound of the car getting away. They all got up and after exchanging pleasantries rushed out of the house, got inside the car and left the place.

Sultana was fuming and fretting. She entered the bedroom of Feroz to give a bit of her mind to Shereen, but was surprised not to find Shereen. She thought that Shereen must be in bathroom, after waiting for sometime, she came to the dining

hall and sat there for a long time reflecting on the day's happening and wondering as to what next, she should do to prevent Shereen being taken by her parents. When Sultana did not find any response from the bedroom of Shereen, she searched for her everywhere. She asked servants about Shereen. One servant's child told her that she had seen "bhabi" going in the car with her brother. When on hearing this piece of news, Sultana's blood started boiling. She rushed to the telephone and rang up to the Shereen's aunty. They all knew that Sultana would play all the tricks in her bag to prevent Shereen from leaving Delhi. They had bought air tickets to Kathmandu and had come to Feroz's house. They all went to the house, quickly kept all their suitcases, took Shereen's passport and rushed to the airport. Within two hours, they were bound to Kathmandu.

Sultana could not get any response to her telephone calls. She rang up to Feroz and asked him to rush home. Feroz was in an official meeting therefore he expressed his helplessness to come home immediately. He could come home only in the night. He was in for a shock. He desperately tried to contact Shereen's aunty over the phone, but finding no response he personally rushed to her house and learnt from her children that all of them had left for USA. They did not mention that they had gone to Kathmandu. Thus, the marriage of Feroz came on the cold rocks.

Feroz could not fathom as to what exactly happened. He knew his weak points but he was helpless in so far as his mother's control on him was concerned. Yet, he was in an illusion that Shereen was deeply in love with him and this factor alone would be sufficient for her to bear with his mother. He thought that Shereen would adjust with his mother. Somehow Feroz could not be manly to take any bold steps nor did he have patience to hear from Shereen her pangs. He thought by not giving any ear to what his mother spoke to Shereen and avoiding talking on this subject it would be better for him. He lacked

sensitivity and had not learnt to feel the pulse and inner mind of a young lady. The result and consequences proved grave for him. He dearly loved his wife but he had no courage and his cowardice had been exposed.



### **Chapter 14. Feroz's Anguish and Pains**

Feroz for the first time in his life felt the pangs of separation. He hadn't cried much on the death of his father, for he bore malice and his rashness of youth held out grievance against him. His mind had been fed with hatred towards his father. He kept up the feeling of animosity against his father and did not realise what separation meant. Now, his love had turned sour, like milk to yoghurt.

Feroz was now in a confused state of mind. He began to feel that he had wronged his wife in not caring much and also for not standing up against his mother's mental torture. But he was led to believe by his mother that Shereen needed to be put in the groove and trained to be a housewife. She happened to be the first daughter-in-law and had much responsibility to bear in as much as that the huge real estate owned by them had to be taken care of. How would she have managed all these affairs, if his mother was not to chasten her? That is how he would reason and leave matters at that. The sudden departure of Shereen opened his eyes to the realities of life. It is now he felt like a bare and dried up tree, sans leaves and flowers. He felt a deep pain in his heart.

Feroz called up his father-in-law, who spoke grimly, in monosyllables. Shereen refused to come on the line to speak to him, so also his mother-in-law. He tried to reach Shereen's aunt, who spoke very crossly with him and put all the blame on his

shoulders. She just put up her hands and calmly told him not to bother her on this delicate issue.

Feroz could not go to USA. He tried to obtain a visit visa, which was flatly refused by the US Embassy. He kept writing letters to Shereen in order to mend the fence, expressing his undying love for her but Shereen's tortured mind was not inclined to reply to any of his letters.

Through common friends who resided in USA, Feroz tried to mediate but Shereen and her parents were quite cut up and hurt. They were deeply hurt with personal remarks, on their lineage and background. Shereen's ears were ringing with several insulting and harsh words of her mother-in-law. She had been tortured and treated with utmost cruelty. The very thought of returning to Delhi was out of question. Her wings had practically been clipped and caged. Now she could breathe freely and live with new found freedom. It was invigorating and refreshing.

Shereen gave birth to a lovely daughter. She named her Noorjahan. Shereen joined a new course. After successfully completing it, found a good employment. She had all the support of her parents and her brother. She did not bother herself to either speak to Feroz or communicate with him. She lost interest in married life, which proved to be a hell for her.

Feroz's condition worsened. He couldn't think like any other ordinary Muslim fellow, who would just forget such runaway girls and go in for second marriage. He loved Shereen and knew only one girl in his life. He yearned to see his daughter, but there was oceanic distance separating them.

As usual Sultana played up a big drama. To everyone, she spoke about her gentleness and kindness and pretended that she loved her daughter-in-law more than her pets. She didn't have any daughters. Being the eldest daughter-in-law, how could she be cruel, she would argue. After all, it is the blood which is

thicker than water. A noble blue blood wouldn't indulge in such mean acts. She kept arguing with Feroz that Shereen had shown her colours. A lady of good breeding would certainly be obedient to her mother-in-law and will never give any room for complaint. Here is a girl, who doesn't even know how to prepare a cup of tea nor know how to tie a saree? She had no idea of a good and decent living, let alone to think ideally and live in beatitude. Where is class in her? She had only complexion but neither delicacy of manners or culture nor awareness of anything aesthetic and sophisticated. Thus, by such comments, Sultana would justify her actions. Feroz loved and respected his mother. He knew that his mother wielded enormous sway over him. All the properties stood in her name. His income was not so high to live regally. At best, he could rent out a small flat in some remote corner of Delhi but how could he live in such circumstances without car and comforts of a pleasant and good living. He was too used to luxury. He readily agreed with the arguments of his mother. He always felt that his mother was a paragon of virtue and Shereen ought to have adjusted and put in all her best efforts to learn the "art of living" from her mother. He had also attempted to explain to Shereen that culture is something that is not learnt in a classroom. It comes through tradition and through generations of cultivation and good breeding.

Shereen knew too well that this type of aristocracy was a false show and pretensions meant to deluge oneself in illusions. It was not in keeping with the times and such people were far and few in Society. The society had turned modern with Socialistic and democratic thinking and there was no place for aristocracy and sophistication.

But her talks and arguments were considered as demeaning and uncouth. Sultana and Feroz would wonder as to how they can make Shereen think in high level and live in style. Style for them didn't mean buying latest fashioned dresses. For them style

meant classic way of living with delicacy and royally. Well Shereen and Feroz were poles apart and a world of difference separated them.

Feroz pangs and pathos were real and visible. He lost concentration in his work. His gait changed. It was observed by his colleagues. Some suggested that he consult some good astrologer. Feroz didn't believe in superstitions. It was never practiced in his house or in his grandparents place. Some suggested that he visit the Darga of Saint Harrah Nizamuddin Awaliya and also meet the 'Khadim' Khwaja Nizami Sahab. Sultana and her mother were all against visiting Saints and dargas. They never held them in reverence although Ahmed Shariff was a great devotee of Sufi Sarmad and regularly visited his mausoleum at the gate of Jamia Masjid. As a child, Feroz had accompanied his father and grandfather to all these places. But after his father's demise, he never went to even a mosque. Some friends were bold enough to tell him plainly that it is not enough to live in material comforts one needed to turn to spiritualism and religion. It is only faith in the unknown Divine power that acts as a solace and brings succour and comfort.

Feroz was practically pulled and pushed to visit the Darga of Saint Hazrath Nizamuddin Awaliya On his very first visit, he felt a strange peace. He wept for the first time in his life. The "Khadims" offered him a 'Chader' and sweet meats and prayed for him. The prayers had a comforting feeling and he really felt like having found a lost way and being back to his fold. He felt an enveloping compassion and peace surrounding him.

He met Khwaja Sahab and introduced himself as a son of Ahmed Shariff, Mayor of Delhi and grandson of Sab Hazreth. Khwaja Sahab hugged him and reminded Feroz of his good old relationship with his family and Feroz's father being his close friend. Khwaja Sahab extracted a promise from Feroz that he should regularly pay his respects at the Darga every Thursday

and assured him that Feroz will certainly find everything going his way with the blessings of the Saints.

Feroz became an ardent devotee of the Saint Hazrath Nizamuddin Awaliya. He felt protected and he kept reminding himself of his father. Feroz felt remorse and sincerely repented for holding so much grudge against his father and grandfather. Feroz paid his respects to all his aunts, uncles and cousins. They all hugged him and openly welcomed him with warmth.

Feroz fully realised that the real culture which his mother spoke was not in aristocracy but in aged old traditions of his father and grandfather, where nobility resided and prevailed. He felt a change of heart. At this point he realised the wrong path to which his mother and maternal grandmother had put him to. Feroz did not tell his mother about his frequenting to the Darga and his meetings with his father's relatives.

Feroz found his cousins to be sincere, loving and compassionate. His pathos and grief had led to his resignation from the multinational company. Now his cousins came to his rescue and found him a very good job, which was better than the previous one. All his cousins gave him comfort. He found the lost love of his father in all his uncles and aunts. He started frequenting old Delhi and visited Sufi Sarmad's mausoleum regularly. His Urdu improved.

This change of heart in him made him write very touching and deeply affectionate and loving letters to Shereen. He expressed his deep love to Shereen and longings to see Noor Jehan his sweet daughter.



## **Chapter 5. Shereen Returns to Delhi**

It was almost four years of separation. Shanawaz completed his technical course and left for America for higher studies. The first



thing he did was to visit his 'Bhabi' Shereen. Shanawaz was an open hearted person, blunt, straightforward and frank. There was a contagious humour in him. He attempted to imitate his father's ways after his father's death. Shereen refused to come before him. Shanawaz did not care but straight away pushed himself into Shereen's bedroom and cracked jokes and poked fun at her. He took lots of chocolates and dresses for Noor Jehan; a nice diamond necklace to Shereen along with an embroidered expensive silk saree. He completely bowled over Shereen. Shereen had a long list of grouses and complains. Shanawaz heard her patiently. He did not even make a slightest attempt to defend his brother or mother. He fully supported Shereen and blamed Feroz and his mother. He spoke through his heart, sincerely and truthfully. He assured Shereen again and again that Shereen should give an opportunity to Feroz. She should atleast speak once over the phone. For hundreds of letters, she had not even bothered to speak or write once. Shanawaz just picked up the telephone and straight away dialled to Feroz and trusted the receiver on the ears of Shereen. Feroz just broke down and wept like a child. Shereen's heart melted. She felt ashamed of herself. She spoke first mildly and hesitatingly. After the ice was broken, Shereen and Feroz spoke over the phone almost daily.

Shereen recalled to her mind her love affair and how deeply she had fallen in love with Feroz. Feroz had proved his love. Her parents did not stand in her way when she packed her things to join Feroz in Delhi. Accompanied by her daughter, brother and Shanawaz, she landed in International Airport Delhi. Feroz was standing at the airport with a bouquet. He hugged Shereen tightly for several minutes and wept and wept. Shereen melted like an ice and tears of love and joy overflowed her eyes.

Sultana had been punished severely and put to severe humiliation. In the meanwhile, she suffered a heart attack and paralytic stroke crippling her to the bed. Shereen went and

touched her feet. Sultana was in tears. She hugged her daughter-in-law for a long time. There was a silence in the room. Shereen wept and held to her mother-in-law tightly for some time. She also felt sorry for her mother-in-law.

Shereen took care of Sultana and nursed her back to health but within a few months, they got the shocking news of the death of Shanawaz in a tragic road accident in New York. This broke Sultana's heart. All her pride simply waned. She realised how loving Ahmed Shariff was to her. Her entire life moved before her eyes. Soon, it was discovered that Sultana had turned schizophrenic. She was admitted in mental hospital.

But the destiny decided her fate differently. For everything good and bad, there has to be an end, either sweetly or sourly. In her mental illness, Sultana acted in all sorts of manner. She was totally deranged. In a short while, she had a brain hemorrhage and went into coma. After being in that state for a month she died peacefully in her sleep.

Aiyaz got married to a sweet girl from a very noble family in terms of the wishes of his bereaved mother.

As regards Sharafat, he could not reconcile with the twin tragedies and all the sorrows he had seen in his life. His marriage came to rocks and he couldn't live with the girl, his brother had chosen for him. He decided to remain as a confirmed bachelor to manage all the estates left by his parents.



## **STREWN PETALS**

This is a story of those old times when India was under the British Raj. Its empire and rule had spread over seven lands and seas and it came to be known that the Sun would never set on the British Empire.

Throughout her kingdom, Queen Victoria held sway and through her magnanimous reforms in all the colonies ruled by her, a sense of dignity and pride was instilled in her subjects. She gave them education and liberty to carry on their business and trade throughout her colonies.

During the British Raj, several Pathans from Khandahar, Kabul, Peshawar and many other such places traded in horses and also dry fruits, persain carpets, gems and precious stones. They would buy merchandise from various cities for trading in those far off remote places.

A few such Pathan families started settling down in major cities. These were during the first and second world war. The British needed recruits, and agents to collect information. These Pathans proved to be worthy and loyal soldiers besides these Pathan were merchants and traders, who supplied rations, uniforms and to fulfil the needs of the Army. In course of time, some of them became wealthy and rich.

Sardar Ajmal Khan became a famous person in Kanpur. He was a leading Army Contractor. He also did business as a Money Lendor. He amassed huge sums of money and became a big landlord dealing in timber, fruits, transport and other businesses. He had more than one wife and a very large household.

As is often the case, power corrupts and the absolute power corrupts absolutely, Sardar Ajmal Khan's eldest Son Sajjad Khan took to a wayward life. Wealth had corrupted the rash insolent youth. Sajjad had a large number of friends. He was fond of horses, wine, good looking girls "Shikar" and latest sports cars.

Ajmal Khan maintained his authority and control over the large family. No one dared to cross his limits. He suffered from weaknesses. He would let the youngsters have their ways as he knew that the Pathan blood and temper was bold, courageous and irascible. Ajmal Khan was known for his philanthropy and large heartedness. He had endeared himself to both Muslims and Hindus and was a well-respected figure. He was held in high esteem.

Ajmal Khan watched his eldest son's ways and soon realised that he needed to be chained in the wedlock. He found a beautiful girl from another of his clan, an equally respectable Pathan family. The wedding was arranged to be on a grand scale, with invitation sent out to the high and the low.

But a shock awaited Ajmal Khan. On the night prior to the wedding, his son Sajjad eloped with a local poor merchant's dashing daughter and he was found to be nowhere. Pathans temper and stubbornness and sticking to their guns are well known. Sardar Ajmal Khan could not believe that Sajjad would let him down. In a fit of rage, he picked up his revolver and set out himself with all his brothers and friends hunting for Sajjad. Within hours Sajjad Khan was traced. Ajmal Khan first coolly confronted his son and asked him in a pleasant but authoritative tone as to what was he up to. Sajjad Khan knew his father's ways that he would not yield and would not waste a minute in arguments. Sajjad plainly confessed that he had secretly got married to Shabnum the pearl and jewel of his eye and couldn't yield to his father's choice. Ajmal Khan had his revolver out in a minute and commanded his son to just sit quietly in the car and accompany him. Sardar Ajmal Khan, the financier, Army

contractor, timber merchant and philanthropist would not waste his time in arguments. His word was law. “If you have married on your own that is not my business, tomorrow is your “nikkah” with Nazima the most beautiful daughter of Naseer Khan. Ajmal Khan, his tall hefty brothers, sons and neighbours just pulled and pushed Sajjad Khan in his latest model Ford car and were off to Kanpur.

Sajjad Khan had no choice but to take Nazima as his second wife in a properly arranged ‘Nikkah’ ceremony. Ajmal Khan did not care about his son having got married to his first love. In no way his son was different from him. His son could have his way and he would have his.

Thus, Sajjad Khan had his first love Shabnum and the beautiful Nazima, the choice of his mother Begum Khatoon Saheba. Well! Love is the elixir of life and it is blind. At the first given opportunity Sajjad Khan declared his independence and left his father’s household. Sardar Ajmal Khan banished Sajjid Khan from his empire. Nazima continued to stay with her in laws. Sajjad would occasionally visit her at the bid and call of Begum Saheba on important festival days and during family functions. He couldn’t give his heart to Nazima. His love was like full Moon and it could shed its glorious light only on his Shabnum.

Days and years passed. Both Shabnum and Nazima begot children. Ajmal Khan died of a massive heart attack. His second son, Afzal Khan succeeded to his business and forcibly obtained power of attorney from Sajjad Khan to represent on his behalf to settle his father’s affairs.

It so happened that the most handsome person in the family was the third son of Ajmal Khan. He was Sultan Khan, an intelligent buoyant youth, fond of horses and cars like his father. He joined the British Army. After a brief stint in the

Second World War, he took discharge and followed his father's trading activity and set up offices in Paris and London.

Sultan Khan and Nazima fell in deep love and the affair leaked out and Begum Saheba was in a great fix. So were the brothers of Ajmal Khan. All knew that Nazima, a beautiful damsel, had been neglected and it was not surprising for Sultan Khan to get umpteen occasions to be alone with her but what was to be done?

Afzal Khan had the power of attorney of Sajjad Khan. Their wily family lawyer Sir Chowdhary suggested in absolute confidence that Afzal Khan could give 'Talak' on behalf of Sajjad Khan to Nazima on the strength of the power of attorney and it would be a valid one. Well, Sir Chowdhary had his own aims. He needed large acres of land of Ajmal Khan to start a Trust for his community. With his cunningness and crooked advice, secretly the 'Talak' was to be documented and after the customary 'Iddat' period Nazima was to be wedded to Sultan Khan and on a fine day they would secretly fly out to Paris and calmly settle down there.

The foolish and gullible Sajjad Khan believed in a cooked up story that Nazima had TB and that his brother had volunteered to take her for treatment accompanied by Begum Saheba and his elder sister. Sajjad Khan's eldest sister was married to a Pathan of another clan residing in Allahabad. Begum Saheba brought about the marriage of Nazima's only daughter with her grandson through her elder daughter and Sajjad Khan was led to believe that it had to be done hastily and quickly as Nazima was sick. Thus, Nazima was made free of encumbrance to accompany Begum Saheba and Sultan Khan.

The cunning Afzal Khan used the power of attorney of Sajjad Khan to get a compromise decree from Civil Court settling all the properties in a partition-deed. The partition deed stated that Sajjad Khan had consented to release his share in

favour of his second wife Nazima and her only daughter. The property settled in favour of Nazima was about to be sold to a leading merchant of Kanpur.

Somehow, the old servants of the Begum Saheba's household and some jealous relatives broke this news to Sajjad Khan. Sajjad Khan nearly had a heart attack. He was in a fit of rage and picked up his revolver to finish off every one.

Luckily his close friend Gautam was with him. He knew the nerve cord of Sajjad and the ways to bring him to senses. He took him to his family lawyer of reputation and nobility Rao Bahadur. It so happened that the leading merchant Guptaji had got all the documents of sale of Nazima's property prepared through Rao Bahadur. Rao Bahadur was the only son of late Sir Rao Sunder, a leading Barrister of Kanpur.

Rao Bahadur was surprised to see the documents produced before him. Since Guptaji was his father's client, he could not refuse the documentation work. But extraordinary care was taken to put in the terms of sale deed about the compromise decree and other important details.

When Gautam got an interview with Rao Bahadur for his agitated friend Sajjad, and when Sajjad was narrating about all the injustice done to him and how he was being deprived of his share; an alarm bell rang in the mind of Rao Bahadur. He asked him as to whether he had settled his share in favour of his wife Nazima. On hearing this piece of news, Sajjad grew pale and panicked. On hearing the details from Rao Bahadur, Sajjad broke down. Rao Bahadur was a person of integrity. He did not wish to mislead Sajjad Khan and hide the facts of having prepared the document for Guptaji. In any case, they are all public documents and any one could get it.

After cool thought, he suggested ways to overcome the malady and assured Sajjad of his wholehearted help. The first thing, Rao Bahadur did was to get hold of the draft documents

he had prepared. From this document, the details of court cases and partition details were taken. All copies of court documents were also obtained.

Rao Bahadur discovered to his shock and dismay as to how Sir Chowdhary had arranged all these shady deals and affairs. Rao Bahadur contacted Sir Choudhary. Sir Choudhary feared an exposure and a sure scandal by which his career was sure to get ruined. Sir Choudhary thanked his stars for the matter had gone into the hands of Rao Bahadur, a noble soul.

Both the legal giants sat together with Begam Saheba and all her children and a compromise was thrashed out. Nazima got her legal divorce from Sajjad and Sajjad in turn got his share of the property. He did not care a dime for his brother Sultan Khan having an affair with Nazima and ultimately a proper “Nikhah” was arranged. He sighed with a sense of relief and all the Pathans twirled their moustaches and walked with a sense of pride and puffed up chests.





## **SREE VINAYAKA SWAMY TRUST**

Prasad a young, enthusiastic Scholar was studious and ardent devotee of Sree Vinayaka Swamy. As a child, his devoted mother brought him up in a traditional way by filling in his mind with folk lore, and stories of great mythological heroes and sages. Prasad's grandfather was a Sanskrit and Kannada Scholar, having donned the mantle of Professorship of the Mysore University and also for a brief period being it's Vice-Chancellor and a Member of Senate of the University.

Prasad lived in his grandfather's house. His father and uncles were all living in a joint family. Then his uncles found good employment in various places and left the common household but his widowed aunts and his cousins still continued to live with them.

Prasad's father was a doctor in the government hospital at Mysore and later became RMO. Prasad's father C.V. Rama Rao hardly had any time for studying Sanskrit or to spare for the various religious ceremonies taking place in the house. Any leisure time C.V. Rama Rao got was taken away by the local Rotary Club of which he was the founder President.

The entire responsibility of educating and taking personal care of Prasad fell on the shoulders of his grandfather Professor Chandrasekar. Prasad's elder brother Ravi was more bohemian and took to sports and athletics besides being a good dramatist and a singer.

The family had been Trustees of a Temple for ages, the administration of the temple vested totally with them under the Muzrai department.

Owing to changed times and legislations, all the wet lands surrounding the Temple came under the Land Reforms Act and individual tenants filed applications for occupancy rights and the same were granted to tenants because of political pressures and interference of local MLA Chandre Gowda. Thus the source of income to the temple suddenly dried-up.

Meanwhile, Professor Chandrasekar passed away and Dr. C.V. Rama Rao was so busy that he could not devote any time to the Temple affairs. Ravi being the eldest was to become 'Madathipathi' but he was deeply involved in sports and athletics and dreamt of reaching National and still higher levels. By now, he had already reached the State level and played for Ranji matches. Ravi hardly had any religious feelings. He was very secular and enjoyed games and good food.

Professor Chandrasekhar had been an ardent devotee of his family Temple as Chief Madathipathi and had gained State wide reputation for his learning, Scholarship and devotion. Prasad being attached to his Grandfather took care of the family heirlooms and also the huge library of Professor Chandrasekhar.

Because of the personal attention bestowed on him by Professor Chandrasekhar, Prasad completed his post-graduation in English literature and easily got appointed as a Lecturer in the local Maharaja College. He was a very popular teacher and liked by one and all as he has imbibed the Scholarship and learning of Professor Chandrasekhar. He found no difficulty in enrolling himself for doctoral thesis leading to the award of Ph.D. He was specially awarded the Late Maharaja's Scholarships.

Owing to his busy schedule of lecturing and also his research work, Prasad found practically no time to devote to the Temple activities. Ravi also did not evince any interest in its affairs but the land reform matters had to be attended to. The main tenant, Honne Gowda, a powerful Vokkaliga leader, had his lands adjacent to the temple. Due to severe caste feelings, the

entire village and people from surrounding areas were causing lot of trouble to Dr. C.V. Rama Rao during the annual fare and in Temple activities.

Honne Gowda lodged claims to the land abutting the Temple, which had a “Kalyani” (water tank), mango grove and coconut plantation. This piece of 4 acres had on it a farm house as well where Professor Chandrasekhar used to spend most of his time during holidays. All the ‘patta’ and records stood in the Temple’s name; yet Honne Gowda planned to knock off this piece of land. He trespassed and cultivated half an acre adjoining his piece of land. This became a bone of contention.

The responsibility of taking care of these matters fell on the shoulders of Prasad. Dr. C.V. Rama Rao developed pneumonia and passed away. Just before his death, he specially instructed Prasad to maintain the family tradition and carry on the Temple activities, as Prasad was an ardent devotee of the family deity and was also preparing to become a Scholar.

Ravi got selected to the National team and left Mysore. He was employed in State Bank and was posted at Bombay and he represented that State. Prasad had full trust in his lawyer Byre Gowda, his classmate. He entrusted him with all the legal matters but Byre Gowda could not appear before the Land Tribunal as the Act prohibited lawyers appearing before it. Prasad had to fight the battle alone in the most adverse circumstances.

Honne Gowda was backed by the entire village and the local MLA. They were making all attempts to snatch the Temple “Kalyani” and the farm house. During the hearing before the Tribunal, the MLA being a Member supported the cause of Honne Gowda. Prasad pointed out to the Chairman, a young IAS officer from UP, that the Temple’s “Kalyani” and the farmhouse were outside the purview of the Land Reforms Act and that the portion trespassed and occupied by the Honne

Gowda did not fall within the tenant's survey number but within the survey number of the temple. Though the local MLA brought lots of pressure, the Chairman got a spot inspection done and a Mahazar drawn. This sealed the case against Honne Gowda and his application for grant of occupancy right to the Temple "Kalyani" and farm house was rejected. Honne Gowda's appeal before High Court was also rejected on technical grounds. Hence he did not interfere with Prasad's staying in the farm house during Temple festivals.

Then Honne Gowda started his own pooja with the help of the people of the entire village and the adjoining areas in a grand style and lots of money was spent. This was done by Honne Gowda to strengthen his case. He started tying his bullocks and cows near the "Kalyani" and spoilt its sanctity. He asked all the other farmers also to use the "Kalyani" for washing the cattle and squat in the Temple premises during night times. The farm labourers would squat and play a game of dice. There were rumours that illicit activities also took place in the Temple's premises during night.

Prasad was advised by a large number of his relatives, uncles and cousins to fence and put a brick wall around the "Kalyani" to save it from this sacrilege. But Prasad had neither funds nor time to spare. With great difficulty he begged, borrowed and sold his newly wedded wife's jewellery and accumulated a big amount for that work, the estimate for which was over a lakh of rupees.

Prasad found a good friend Pratap Singh to supervise the work. Pratap Singh was a bold Rajput. He had just been relieved from the Army on completion of the emergency commission. Pratap Singh was hoping for allotment of lands for ex-jawans and army men. He thought that it would be a good opportunity to supervise the work. But he was unfaithful and irreligious.

Pratap Singh found a local civil contractor and entrusted the work to him by paying some paltry sum. He got new coconut saplings planted and also got a good garden laid out. A good nice wall was built around the ‘Kalyani’ and the entire area was fenced. Prasad, in total trust and faith, passed on the entire sum of over a lakh of rupees to Pratap Singh without even asking for accounts or even a receipt, as it was ‘Gods’ work.

Pratap Singh was a clever fellow. His pension had not yet been settled and the lands were yet to be allotted. His sister’s wedding had to be performed and hoping to get his money and pension, he lavishly spent the bulk of the sum given by Prasad on the wedding of his sister. The contractor’s bill had not been settled. To the contractors, he lied that the entire bills would be settled by Prasad at the end of the work. The contractor Hanumantha Gowda was a good person and a very just man. He was a devotee of the Temple and did not like the way his people were grabbing the land. He kept himself away from his people and lived an honest life.

When Hanumantha Gowda did not get his payments, he came with the supervisor of the farm house and his friends to Prasad’s house for seeking payments. Prasad was in a hurry to go to the University. It was examination time and he could not spare a moment for any one. On seeing his supervisor with these people, Prasad was surprised. He asked them the reason for their coming. Prasad’s wife quickly offered them chairs and prepared nice masala dosas and steaming coffee for all the visitors.

Prasad was in for a shock, when the supervisor mentioned that Hanumantha Gowda had not received payment for the work done. He could not believe that his childhood friend Pratap Singh could do such a thing to him. Pratap Singh had all along assured him that he was personally supervising the work but now what had he done? Prasad’s senses fell apart. He felt shattered. Where will he get the funds and money to pay the bills? He had been clearly cheated. Prasad took out his diary and

showed the entries of payments done to Pratap Singh. Hanumantha Gowda believed every word of Prasad. He always had misgivings about Pratap Singh. He knew that some Rajputs of Mysore were very jealous and disliked the farmers.

It was getting late for Prasad to go the University. He excused himself from the visitors and told them to meet him on Sunday, so that, he could confront Pratap Singh and also meet his lawyer friend Byre Gowda.

Prasad could not concentrate on his work. They were tears in his eyes and all his dreams of reviving the ancient institution collapsed and got shattered. How could he show his face to his relatives, friends and well-wishers? Everyone would now taunt him!

Ravi was always against Prasad's enthusiasm to spend huge sums on the construction of the wall around "Kalyani". Ravi was more practical and knew the ways of the changing world. He was also wise. He had neither money nor time to spare for all these works. He kept discouraging Prasad and tried to reason with him that it was futile to revive Sanskrit or age old customs and traditions.

The taunts, jeers and warnings directed against Prasad were all ringing in his ears. He felt giddy and developed migraine. He had to seek the help of a doctor as he also developed BP due to stress. The doctor warned him of diabetes and mental break down, if enough care of health was not taken by him.

Prasad had to fight back and recover not only the money from Pratap Singh but also his lost prestige. He was determined to carry on his ancestral work and did not wish to give up.

Prasad was a popular teacher. He knew all his students personally. One student's father was a Sub-Inspector Hombe Gowada. Fortunately, Hombe Gowda was posted in the police

station, located in the place where Pratap Singh lived and Prasad sought his help.

He explained to Hombe Gowda and showed him his diary in which the entries had been made for payments to Pratap Singh. Hombe Gowda expressed his helplessness as there were no receipts for payments and in such a situation, Pratap Singh would clearly deny any payment made to him.

Hombe Gowda was a student of Prof. Chandrasekhar. He was a benign person and belonged to the old times. He was proud of Kengal Hanumanthiah, former Chief Minister of Mysore, who was responsible for building Vidhana Soudha. He was proud of being a Vokkaliga and was proud of Kempe Gowda, former Raja of Mysore and of scores of great men of his community and old Mysore State. He disliked the very idea of snatching the lands of Temples, Churches and Dargas. He was determined to help Prasad.

Pratap Singh totally denied receiving any sums from Prasad. He swore before Hombe Gowda to take revenue, if any harm were to befall him. He had received gallantry award for bravery. He was a proud Rajput and would a Rajput dare to be disloyal to his friend? He only chided his friend Prasad for falsely accusing him. He questioned as to how Prasad could get such huge sums. He accused Prasad that in order to cheat the contractor and project the farmers in a bad light, he had used his intelligence and cunningness.

Prasad was in deep trouble. His anguish and pains were too deep. All his relatives and friends had lost confidence in him and he became a target of taunt and criticism.

Prasad sold his new vespa scooter, which he had purchased by taking a loan. He cleared a part of the bill of the contractor. Every bit of jewellery his wife had and his Grandfather's 'Navaratna' ring presented by the late Maharaja were pledged

with his uncle's son, who was his great supporter and thus another part of the bill amount was settled.

Prasad went to his advocate friend Byre Gowda. Now, he wouldn't trust anyone. He had totally lost faith in people. Byre Gowda on seeing Prasad in a depressed mood consoled him and encouraged him. Byre Gowda was angry and hated the politicians ushering in Land Reforms Act to totally deprive the rights of small landlords, mostly comprising widows and orphans.

He knew too well that Temples, Churches and Dargas were not exempt under the Act and it was just to damage these institutions politically. He totally disapproved of these ways. He knew that royalty and aristocracy had its own advantage, so also the feudal system. The late Maharaja's age was a glorious period. He was an old timer and believed in a good harmonious society.

Byre Gowda reassured Prasad. He pulled out his drawer and took out Prasad's file. He placed before Prasad plain white sheets. Prasad blinked and was dumbfounded. A sudden change took over Prasad and there was a twinkle in his eyes. He just got up and hugged Byre Gowda and his blues turned to joys. The blank white sheets had signatures of Pratap Singh. Prasad wondered how Byre Gowda had managed to play this trick on Pratap Singh and how it was done. Byre Gowda laughed at the naivette and gullibility of Prasad. Byre Gowda knew that Prasad would not heed to his advice of not venturing into this work but the temple work also could not be neglected. He knew at a glance that Pratap Singh would dupe Prasad, as Pratap Singh lavishly spending Prasad's money. When Prasad approached Byre Gowda for preparing a power of attorney for Pratap Singh, Byre Gowda cleverly and secretly managed to obtain these signatures. Prasad praised the ingenuity of Byre Gowda in getting the signature of Pratap Singh on the blank white sheets.



Byre Gowda asked Prasad to type out receipts for the amounts on these blank signed papers. Hombé Gowda summoned Pratap Singh to the Police Station. On being confronted with these receipts, Pratap Singh was just flabbergasted. He knew that he had signed the blank papers, by which he had been trapped. Pratap Singh feared arrest. He broke down and confessed. He had to mortgage his ancestral house and clear the sums received from Prasad.



## THE DREAMS ON THE HORIZON

The mirth and joys of life are so attractive that they create dreams even among the rustics living for ages in the remotest villages in our countryside. The fast industrialisation, the improvements in the towns and cities and political consciousness, enthrust people to spread their tentacles to the last man of a village. The lure created in the minds of these villagers for the purpose of a single precious vote has awakened the sleeping giant.

In one such remotest village of Kotegenahalli in Channapatna Taluk of Bangalore District lived the poorest of the poor. The young mother Yellamma had just returned from the farm of Dasare Gowda, after completing her daily farm work. She had just crossed fifteen and the severe labour pains and her yells attracted the attention of the village elderly lady, Kuppamma, a benign mid-wife. In the thatched shed, her husband, Prasada, a youth of twenty with his aged parents were in panic and couldn't think of what to do. He was blabbering and yelling with tears trickling uncontrollably and his sobbings attracted all the neighbours. The women gathered around the hut and Prasada anxiously waited outside praying for Deviyamma, his village goddess to bless his wife and show mercy to Yellamma. Then he heard the cry of the baby and all the men surrounding the small hut let out a cry hailing Deviyamma for blessing them. The mid-wife Kuppamma held the bonny child, who was licking the honey placed on the lips by her.

Prasada's fear turned to joy. Every one gathered there jumped in joy and called out "Ananda, Ananda". Prasada rushed inside the hut, his mother was holding the head of

Yellamma. A pot with water was in a corner and blood smeared all over. Yellamma's saree and petty coat were in blood. A cloth had been tied around her stomach. Prasada's sweet tone brought Yellamma to senses. She opened her eyes and looked enquiringly at Prasada. She felt relieved to see smiles all around. Prasada yelled "Maga" "Maga" (son, son). Yellamma uttered a big sigh and smiled at Prasada. Prasada's mother quickly brought sugarcane bits, with groundnuts and jaggery in a basket and gave it to Prasada to distribute it to the villagers gathered outside. He rushed out and distributed handfuls to all the villagers. The bony child was named Ananda.

Ananda had bright shiny eyes. Prasada would rush to his hut on the slightest pretext and would pick up the suckling Ananda in his arms. He would break into folk dance and sing mirthful songs. Yellamma sometimes would refuse to give the child to Prasada. She would make Prasada to take oath on Deviyamma to send Ananda to school.

Everyday Yellamma would bathe Dasare Gowda's children and would dress them in School uniform and carry them to the nearby hobbli's School, the only School for 20 villages spread over a radius of 20 kms. Yellamma dreamt of Ananda also going to School, but being a tribal, she feared the higher caste people. Would they allow her child to learn alphabets and lisp numbers? Couldn't she dream of educating her child? Her mind was filled with umpteen fears and doubts. She was an ardent devotee of goddess Deviyamma and she knew that Prasada also dreamt like her of educating her little diamond Ananda.

Prasada would turn bitter and would let out a curse on the higher caste "ajamanas", who never let him peep at the classrooms or even go near the School, let alone hold a slate and a pencil. Yellamma would taunt Prasada. She would sometimes break into loud cries and sob uncontrollably, when Prasada would express his doubts and fears. Prasada always felt that they were born to live a life of wretchedness and shackled slavery.

How could Deyiyamma change their fate when for ages they lived in chill penury?

Yellamma wouldn't have it any of the mutterings of Prasada. She was determined to fulfil her dreams.

Yellamma, as soon as she resumed her farm work, took her bonny Ananda with her. At every given opportunity, she would make Ananda mix with the children of Dasare Gowda. When Ananda reached five years of age, he had picked up very fast all the alphabets and could count till hundred. The youngest son of Dasare Gowda, Vidnesh Gowda, was two years older than Ananda. He became very fond of Ananda and would play with him. He refused to heed to his parents' scoldings and reprimand, not to mingle with the tribal boys. Vidnesh was mischievous and a dare devil too. He became the monitor of his class and the instinct of leadership was sown in him. As a seed sprouts, it develops into a healthy sapling and such a good one would always get the tender care of the farmer. The plant would be disinfected regularly watered, manured and pruned. Likewise, Vidnesh got all he wanted from Dasare Gowda. He became adamant and wouldn't go to School unless Ananda accompanied him.

Dasare Gowda was a kind man and the chief of the village panchayat. The Congress Party's slogan of untouchability had reached the innermost corner of his heart. He readily yielded to the insistence of Vidnesh to allow Ananda to be put to School. But his wife, Kamamma knew that Vidnesh had been brainwashed by Yellamma. Vidnesh was brought up by Yellamma. They would leave Vidnesh in her care, whenever they had to go to the neighbouring village for festivals or weddings. Kamamma blamed Dasare Gowda for spoiling Vidnesh and allowing him to be corrupted in Ananda's company.

One fine day Kamamma threw out Yellamma from the work accusing her of theft of valuables. By now Ananda had

completed the 5<sup>th</sup> Standard. Prasada fell seriously ill with T.B. Her world fell apart and so also her dreams. She could not dare to go near the farm house of Dasare Gowda nor walk to the Hobbli's School. She had to be content with picking dead wood from the nearby forest, collection various roots and seeds of jack fruit, Sun flower, poppy and other grains and selling them. She would collect flowers make a garland and sell it at the nearest bus stand, which was 10 kms away. She would sell seasonal fruits. She would forego her lunch and dinner and lived on a single meal of "Ragi balls" (millet) and tamarind chuttney. Tamarind was collected from the road side trees.

She would not fail to go to the temple of Deviyamma and pray with all her heart and soul to bless her son Ananda with the light of knowledge.

Vidnesh was a clever boy. He never liked his mother and her scoldings. The more he heard his mother speaking ill of untouchability, the more he would become determined to help Ananda. He did not like his uncles brutally assaulting and beating the farm labourers and refusing to pay their wages. He grew to be a strong lad. He would beat and thrash any fellow teasing and hurting the untouchables. Vidnesh became an eye sore for the other landlords' children.

Vidnesh was not alone. He slowly gained friends. As a village chief's son, he could not be ignored. The village School Teacher Narayana Rao secretly hated the landlords. He knew that the Village School was being used by the landlords' sons during night hours for committing illicit acts with adivasies and innocent tribal girls. Narayana Rao found a golden opportunity to secretly support Vidnesh and his friends. He went to the District School and met the Asst. Education Officer and begged him to allow him to start "Seva Dal" and scouts work in the School. Being a single teacher school, he did not find any opposition and soon Vidnesh was chosen as a leader for all these works.

Vidnesh met Ananda accidentally in the village weekly fair, where he had gone to sell the farm produce. He was overcome with joy to see Ananda. Yellamma hugged Vidnesh and poured out her heart to Vidnesh and begged him to help Ananda join the School.

Vidnesh did not promise, nor said anything. Next day, he went to Narayana Rao and expressed his desire to bring Ananda. Narayana Rao got up from his old chair and was about to slap Vidnesh but withheld at the last moment realising the consequences. Vidnesh and his gang refused to join the scout and seva dal work. Narayana Rao had already informed AEO and invited him for Independence Day function to hoist the flag. He feared Vidnesh. By now Vidnesh had gained notoriety as a bully. Narayana Rao had no choice but to pacify Vidnesh and yield to his request.

The AEO was Khader Sheriff, son of Moulvi Azam Saheb. Khader Sheriff was deeply interested in the welfare of downtrodden and had managed to get funds sanctioned to award free ship and Scholarship for poor boys. Narayana Rao was keen to get the Scholarship for his nephews. Dasare Gowda was pleading for his neighbouring panchayat members' children. There were several claimants who were vying to please Khader Sheriff.

The entire school had been decorated with mango leaves and flowers of gulmuhar, red bracts of fire of the forest. A special jasmine and rose garland was obtained from Chennapatna. Toys were purchased to gift to Khader Sheriff's children. The visit of AEO was like the visit of a Maharaja. He was the highest official to visit the village after several years. At the most only a School Inspector would visit, who was given the best of treatment. The visit of a gazetted officer was like the visit of a Minister or a Governor.

The scout and seva dal boys were given a new set of uniforms and had memorised a song in praise of Khader Sheriff.

Prasada and Yellamma had hardly any good dress to wear. Prasada managed to borrow shirt and a vest from a fellow villager. Yellamma begged the mid-wife Kuppamma to spare her only good cotton saree and a patched blouse. Yellamma as usual had her bath and before break of light went to goddess Deviyamma wept and pleaded for help. There was no dress available for Ananda and she did not know what to do. When she returned to her hut, she was overjoyed to see a pair of old dress left in the hut by Vidnesh.

Ananda was jubilant. By now he had memorised the National Anthem and was determined to sing the same. He knew that none of the boys could completely sing the anthem correctly.

The decorated buggy of Khader Sheriff reached half an hour before the scheduled time. Khader Sheriff was in a suit with a white turban and a cane in his hand and highly polished brown shoes with brown military socks. He wore glasses and had a majestic and benign look with well-groomed black beard.

The Head Master Narayana Rao, Desire Gowda and all the Mandal Chiefs were in their best dresses; in sparkling white dhoties and shirts with towels hung on their shoulders. They all greeted Khader Sheriff. A sweet young girl had been chosen to present the garland. Every one shouted “Bharat Mata Ki Jay”, “Sheriff Saheb Zindabad”.

All the landlords and parents were lined on one side. A few were holding petitions written in Kannada by Narayana Rao for freeship and scholarship; in a distant corner stood Ananda, Prasada and Yellamma.

Khader Sheriff was taken round the school and shown the classes. He felt sad to see the plight of the school. He promised

to grant funds for the School, a black board, coirmats, table and chair for the Head Master and other sundry items. He spoke little and conveyed everything through his eyes and gestures. Desire Gowda spoke welcoming the AEO and pleaded for posting more teachers as the strength of the only classroom was over flowing, particularly after the admission of downtrodden tribals. When he spoke these words, there was hushed silence. Narayana Rao was taken aback. He did not expect Dasare Gowda to mention about downtrodden tribals. What if the free ship and Scholarship were given to them? The elderly panchayat members feared that Dasare Gowda, a sympathiser of oppressed, would expose their cause. They were cursing him.

After Khader Sheriff hoisted the flag, his eyes met on the sparkling eyes of Ananda. In a moment, he summoned him and asked him to sing the National Anthem. It was a most unexpected shock for Narayana Rao and others. They had all trained their own favourites to do so. But how could they interfere now? They only hoped that Ananda would not open his mouth and they would get a chance to belittle the untouchable.

Ananda had become bold in the company of Vidnesh and his gang. He was bright, enthusiastic and intelligent. He wished to fulfil his parents' dreams and efforts taken to bring him up to the primary class. Now was his moment. If he sang the anthem well and succeeded in getting the scholarship, he could join VII standard at Chennapatna and complete his SSLC, which was more than a degree for the villagers.

Ananda broke into a broad smile and giving a smart salute to the National Flag, stood in attention and sang loudly the National Anthem, perfectly. It was most impressive. The entire gathering was stunned.

Khader Sheriff was extremely impressed. He enquired about Ananda and his parents. Ananda turned and looked at his



parents. Khader Sheriff immediately gathered that the lone poor couple in tattered clothes was his parents.

Narayana Rao immediately went forward and presented the petitions of the gathered parents. Dasare Gowda offered tender coconut and the toys. Khader Sheriff distributed the toys among the poor children. He took one or two sips of tender coconut and after raising his hand in salaam, got into his buggy and left.

After two days, a messenger arrived with a cover addressed to Narayana Rao from the AEO's office. Narayana Rao took it and rushed to Dasare Gowda. Both called for an urgent meeting of the village heads and its members. They all opened the cover anxiously. The letter was a sanction letter granting full freeship and Scholarship for the entire education and free uniform for Ananda.

Prasad, Yellamma, Ananda and all other tribals were jubilant and held a special pooja for goddess Deviyamma, as thanksgiving.



## THE TURNING POINT

Saleem a middle aged pulpy and bloated person interjected Ilyasi and spoke in an irritating tone “stop your muttering Moulvi sab, I have heard enough”. Ilyasi would not give in. He always believed in his power of persuasion and not in reacting to interruptions. He was carrying on the divine duty of passing on the message of Allah and His messenger. Why should he take any taunt and jeer personally? The more obstacles he faced, the more he was sure of receiving blessings. He had only to emulate the example of the Holy Prophet’s companions and exercise patience. He was confident that Allah would change the heart of rowdy Saleem and that he would become a ‘Namazi’ one day and join the “Tableegi Jamaat”. Ilyasi knew how to touch the sensitive nerve cord of Saleem. “Bhajjan” spoke Ilyasi, softly in a very sweet tone, “Our Holy Prophet our Saviour, our Commander will succour all the sinners on the day of judgement and save us from Hell but brother we need only to say our “Namaaz” that’s all”.

Saleem had no desire to look like Ilyasi with a goatee beard, in unkempt kurta, short pyjama and white cap. The more he looked at the shabby bearded fellows the more he felt irritated. Saleem, the uncrowned Prince of the Jaggarnahalli, did not wish to break the hearts of street queens and hundreds of his fans by joining the “Jamaat”. How could he miss the first day shows of ‘Yousuff Khan’, ‘Feroz Khan’ and ‘Amjad Khan’ movies? He could not miss the belly dance of Helen, Madhuri Dixit, the Jazz music, the free “pan paraag”, cigarettes. He was a terror to the bootleggers and wine merchants. How could he give up his “mamools” and join the ranks of these hagglers? Saleem took a deep breath and gave Ilyasi a chilling stare. He puffed up his chest and was about to raise his hand to strike Ilyasi. An old lady noticing the change of demeanour in Saleem intervened

and loudly admonished Ilyasi. “Moulvi Sab, you better mind your business and leave this place”. Placing herself between them she gave a disgusting look at Saleem and muttered. “What baba, you are such a good boy. I have seen you as a child, now stop thundering”.

Saleem looked at the old hag recalled how she was once a charming beauty. As a child he was very fond of Nadira and would keep staring at her scantily dress which would send a ripple through his body. Now in her old age she had taken up to match making and would often turned to Saleem for help to bring round the opposite parties during negotiations. Saleem got his cut as commission. At one time Nadira was a good cook and served as a maid servant in several houses. Saleem used to get all the information he needed from her for his nefarious acts. The old lady had a special place in his heart. He couldn't bash up these 'Jamaaties' whom he felt were making in-roads in his territory. Moreover, he did not like these goatees going round asking people not go to the Mastan Sahab's Darga. He was an ardent devotee. His mother would take him to the darga and make him wear 'Taweez' (Talisman) that drove away his fears. He still has one tied to his arm and it gave him immense courage. Moreover, the Mutawalli Sahab of the Darga was his close friend and he was at his beck and call but he could not stomach the blabbering of Ilyasi anymore. Ilyasi realised that it was time to look for someone more responsive and he would catch this big fish some other time with Allah's help.

One day Saleem was on his usual rounds creating panic and confusion among the drug peddlers, collecting his “mamools” from the wine merchants. He was overdrunk and had a brawl with another 'dadda' of Metadahalli. Saleem was a courageous and smart fellow. He over powered the petty fellow and thrashed him but not without getting deep cuts on his chin and brow. He would never go to hospitals. The local quack Doctor Nazir was always handy. Dr. Nazir gave him a prick and bandaged him.

He returned home and found his wife Fahima, a buxom lady, double his size and older in age, refusing to serve him food. In his anger, he fisted her on her chin. Fahima was well used to his rough handling. She picked up a kitchen knife and threw it at Saleem. Saleem jumped and the knife flew past him. Saleem burst out in his choicest expletives. Fahima retorted in her own fish market vocabulary, which was more profane. The excess booze and the puff of ganja was having its effect on Saleem. Fahima knew that it was time to subdue this fellow. She pushed him with all her strength and with a thud Saleem fell on the ground and within seconds he went off into deep sleep.

Next morning, the old hag Nadira was on her usual rounds to gather the gossips in the neighbourhood. She entered the narrow lane leading to the tiled house of Saleem. Unusually, the door was closed and there was no noise inside. It surprised her, as Saleem's harsh voice is like the roar of a lion and he would be up before dawn for his nefarious activities. The silence outside his yard left Nadira thinking that something must have happened and her curiosity grew. She pushed the door and found none inside the house. The courtyard led to several clusters of tenements, each with several tenants. She was surprised not to find any one. She stood thinking as to what could be the reason for the absence of all the neighbours. A slight chill went up her spine and she could feel the sweat on her brow. A boy came running inside the courtyard yelling and weeping. Nadira could sense that Saleem's days of freedom must have come to an end and his wings must have been clipped and the bird caged. The boy yelled that the police had come before the break of the dawn and had dragged away the sleepy Saleem in the jeep. Fahima had raised a hue and a cry and had collected all the neighbours and had rushed to the police station. They had all gathered there and a few of them had rushed to Advocate Basheer, who was an expert criminal lawyer, handling the cases of hoodlums.

The canny Nadira felt relieved on hearing the name of Advocate Basheer. She knew that it would be a matter of a day before Saleem would be out again by greasing the palms of the

greedy police. She placed her hand on the chin of the weeping boy and consoled him saying that Saleem dada would be back soon and he need not wail and weep. The boy asked her how soon Saleem dada would be back as he had promised to get him a slate and books. She pacified him and said that he would be back soon.

As she was still talking to the boy, she heard heavy footsteps and people running. She turned back to see that Saleem, Fahima and all the neighbours were back. Saleem had plasters on his chin and on the forehead. There was a look of triumph on his face. Fahima was hurling choice epithets at the police, cursing them for snatching her pair of gold bangles to release Saleem and her only savings of Rs.300/- by Advocate Basheer. Saleem stared at his wife and gave her a menacing look, when he heard her curse Advocate Basheer. He would not tolerate any thing spoken against the Good Samaritan Basheer Bhai, who always came to his rescue at any hour and free him from the clutches of the hawks. Saleem shouted at Fahima to stop meddling in his affairs and to quickly fix his breakfast, as he was feeling very hungry. Fahima did not yield to Saleem till she extracted from him a promise to have her gold bangles and money back by the evening. The neighbours by now were very wary and all left for their daily errands.

After a heavy breakfast of two omelets, 'paratas' and 'samoosas', with a mug of tea, Saleem left for his daily rounds, chewing 'pan paraag', puffing a cigarette. He had a red hanky tied around his neck with a yellow shirt, black pants and a black belt with a big buckle. He put on black gum boots that would help him run fast, when the need arose.

Late in the evening, Saleem turned up at the office of Advocate Basheer and was surprised to find Ilyasi, the local 'Jamaat' preacher. Saleem loudly called out "Assalam o alaikum". Advocate Basheer, a short stout man in late fifties with snubby nose and thick glasses was peering into the FIR's and charge sheets. He did not take any notice of Saleem. Ilyasi

was only pleased to see his big prize and it was an ideal time to trap him. With a charming smile and in a pleasing voice, he responded to Saleem “Walaikum Assalam” and got up from the only old chair and offered the same to Saleem. Saleem felt embarrassed and tried to be polite and said “No No Moulvi sab please be seated”. Ilyasi would not have it. He forced Saleem to take the chair and stood by him.

Just then they heard the sonorous call of Azaan of the Moezzin from the minaret of the nearby Mosque. Advocate Basheer stopped reading the papers and waited for the ‘Azaan’ to be over. He lifted both his hands and prayed and ‘duas’ by Ilyas.. Suddenly Advocate Basheer got up from his chair and signalled Ilyasi to join him to go to Mosque for prayers. Saleem wanted to talk to Advocate Basheer urgently, as he feared that his rival gang would again direct the police at him like mad dogs. He wanted Advocate Basheer to phone up to Uttappa, PSI of local police station. He kept following Advocate Basheer and made attempts to stop him to make his request but Advocate Basheer did not even care to look at him. He simply waved his hand and asked Saleem to just follow him. Like a sheep, he just followed Advocate Basheer, Ilyasi and few other bearded old fellows accompanying them.

All entered the Mosque and straight away went to the water tank and started performing ablutions. Saleem had not entered the Mosque for ages. He felt himself unclean and wished to withdraw quickly but Advocate Basheer suddenly stopped him from running away. He pulled Saleem by his hand and made him sit next to him on the stone in front of the water tank and with his finger signalled Saleem to perform the ‘wazu’ (ablution). Saleem was in a fix and he could not leave the Mosque since he needed Advocate Basheer’s help. He had no choice but to wash his hands, face and feet and join in the ‘namaz’.

After the prayers, Ilyasi got a golden opportunity to request Advocate Basheer to be seated on the mat. All the elders sat

around Saleem preventing him from getting up and walking out. Ilyasi took a book from the shelf and started reading in Urdu stories of compassion, mercy, valour, piety and of good deeds of Holy Prophet and His Companions and as to how the work was carried on by the Saints and great Kings. There were tears in the eyes of the young and the old. Saleem was quite surprised at these happenings. He was not used to all these sensibilities and was always looking contemptuously at these ‘Jamaatees’ and the old hags with goatees but just as he was wondering as to what he should do, he heard Ilyasi speaking about the ‘Jannat’ (Heaven) and Allah’s wrath on all the evil doers. A cold chill and a shudder went up of Saleem’s spine; his wounds on the chin and brow were still fresh. He had three daughters of marriageable age and one small suckling son. When Ilyasi spoke about the punishment to be meted out to the evil doers in the grave and also dwelt on the transience of time with death being round the corner, Saleem could no longer bear it. There were tears in his eyes and he broke down. His sobbings made the entire group to weep and they all loudly called out ‘Allahu Akbar’. There was a shine and glitter in the eyes of Ilyasi. He had finally netted his prize catch. Ilyasi became more emotional and bursted out loudly weeping unceasingly. The entire atmosphere had a strange effect on Saleem. Ilyasi stopped reading and lecturing. He lifted both his hands for ‘dua’. All joined him in ‘dua’ by lifting their hands. Ilyasi made very humble and sincere pleadings to Allah to change the ways of the way wards and bless all His creatures.

Saleem gathered along with others outside the Mosque in the tea stall and slowly sipped the tea. Ilyasi presented him with a white cap. Advocate Basheer took the cap in his hands and muttering “Bismillah” placed it on the scalp of Saleem.



## ASHOK IN BLUES

Ashok, an above average post-graduate, looking far ahead; beyond the twilight and the horizon, suddenly finds himself hospitalised. The place is unlike any other crammed hospitals with rush of people, with noise and din. It is silent and calm with none around with large open spaces, airy, and with beautiful surroundings. He is laying on the hospital bed, with his head spinning, pale, anaemic, feeling throbbing pain all over his body. He tries to gaze on the ceiling to realise, as to how he has come to be here and as to why this hollow and dull feeling? A feeling of total desolation and loss grips his mind sans cheer; he is down with melancholia and grief.

Just as he is trying to make sense out of this quagmire situation, a pretty face pushes the door and enters the ward. In a sweet voice, she says “Hello dear” and looks up to him softly and prettily. He is touched with softness and the pleasant smile. The face appears to him to be familiar. He tries to locate her as to how and where he had seen her. She speaks up again and asks him teasingly “Are you still angry; had you been a good boy, Shekar wouldn’t have tied you to the bed so severely? “Poor boy!” So saying, she comes near him and pats Ashok on his head.

He is overcome with grief, for the pain in his body is severe. He realises that he had been tied to the bed by the ward boy, for having behaved eccentrically and attempted to wink at the nurse, who had come to administer medicine to him. He feels a sting on his back muscle. A strong doze of tranquiliser had downed him. As he was behaving very aggressively, he had to be tied tightly with a rope to the bed. That had given him severe pain all over the body. He recognised the pretty face before him to be the



same nurse who last night was teasing him. He had felt amorous thoughts gripping him like an electric current passing over his body. He unabashedly attempted to seduce the nurse though fully conscious that he is a good boy but acting naively.

“Now get up and wash yourself. Go to the toilet”, ordered the nurse. Obediently, Ashok tries to get up at her bidding but found himself stiff and unable to move. His mind is alert and he tries to move his hands and legs but could not do so. A strange feeling and sensation crosses over his body. He felt being out of body and as if flying out and watching himself lying on the cot, blinking vacantly and by his side a white shrouded old hag holding a tray with bottles. For a few minutes, his eyes closed and he fell asleep.

He is rudely shaken and pulled out of bed. It is Shekar, the ward boy, who is muscular and strong. He commands Ashok to wake up and with his strong arms, lifts him and takes him to the toilet but Ashok finds himself motionless. He keeps staring at the mirror. His face is disfigured. A handsome youthful face looks now haggard, with sullen cheeks, deep sockets and bony. Shekar forces in his mouth a tooth brush and harshly rubs his teeth. Ashok feels pain on his lips. The gums are weak and get slightly ruptured. The white tooth paste turns red and it drips on the sink. Shekar grunts and shouts at Ashok. He pours water in his mouth and asks him to gargle and spit. But Ashok could not do it. The water just trickles and falls all over the place, wetting his clothes. Shekar then wipes his face and holds him to prevent Ashok from falling down. He lifts him and puts him back on the bed and leaves the room muttering. Ashok feels giddy and finds the room spinning. The revolving fan above makes creaking noise; which gives him weird feeling and his imagination again goes berserk.

Just as Ashok is trying to control his senseless mind, he hears a rush of footsteps and an authoritative voice speaks up. “How are you feeling now young man?” He tries to open his

eyes but could not do so. He hears ringing noise in his ears and multicolour lights flashing in his brain. “Did he sleep well in the night, nurse?” asked the man holding a stethoscope and a metallic rod with a black rubber ring. The nurse narrated the patient’s aggressive behaviour last night and how he had to be sedated, besides administering the prescribed medicines. She did not mention about Sekhar tying Ashok with a rope to subdue him. The person in white coat is Doctor Sheshan, a renowned Psychiatrist and Physician. Ashok was specially recommended to him by his close family friend as a son of a retired bureaucrat and an intelligent boy.

Ashok attempting to do too many things, while studying for still higher courses and also attempting to try his hand on odd jobs of selling things in a competitive market; lost heavy sums by the treachery of his friends. He could not complete his post graduate course in M.Phil. and the shame of losing money and failure in exam, had sent a shock wave in him. By his extraordinary keen intelligence, he had attempted to analyse his failure by delving in deep thoughts. Just only to burst out talking endlessly to each and every one and to become restless. He would go all over the town to all his friends and relatives explaining about various phenomenon’s of life. In a moment, he would talk on religion, in another on science, then on his sorrows and failures. He would breakdown and weep. If someone tried to stop him, he would shout them down and force them to listen to him for hours together. He had become a pain in the neck to one and all. His aged parents were feeling helpless. He was a cause of worry to them, a nuisance to the family and friends. Someone suggested that Ashok needed immediate medical help. The reputation of Dr. Sheshan was well known. They found a common friend and he was taken to the asylum; Dr. Sheshan after due examination recommended for his immediate hospitalisation.

Ashok was given electro-convulsional therapy; a series of electric shocks. After the therapy, Ashok would fall into deep sleep and when he woke up he would not know where he was and what was happening around him. He felt lapse of memory but he could slowly realise that his nagging headaches had disappeared. After a time, he was made to converse with the fellow patients. Some of them were little older to him but he found them very understanding and sympathetic. Ashok slowly realised that there is brightness around him. As more and more days passed, he found Shekar to be a good friend, who would talk to him for hours and give him good counselling. The nurse to whom, he felt infatuated was an elderly sweet lady. She felt sorry for the young man who reminded him of his own brother, who died in an accident. She gave her best of concern, love and affection and treated him with lots of courtesies and sweetness.

Ashok felt that the bitterness and anger in him had disappeared. He felt light in his body. He could play Batminton with fellow patients and slowly found strength. His nervousness and stuttering was also waning. In a few days, he was discharged.

Dr. Sheshan advised his parents to immediately take Ashok to a hill station or near Seashore for recuperation. He was sent to his newly married Sister's house who was now living alone with her husband, an I.A.S. Officer posted as a Sub-Div. Officer in a town in Uttar Pradesh. The salubrious climate, the Ganga River passing close-by, the new cultured people and environment helped Ashok to recover fast.

When he returned to his place, he was looking quite charming with chubby cheeks. In a few days, his friends helped him get a good executive job. Initially, Ashok found it difficult to work. But by changing to another Doctor, a more pleasant private practitioner, he could ventilate more of his inner feelings. The pleasant young Psychiatrist, Dr. Singhal, encouraged him with renewed counselling, Ashok could ward off many of his

fears and with improved physical strength and with new found friends he recovered fully. Though now and then he would get upset and feel morose and depressed but he would recover fast by avoiding all such movies, friends and things that would upset him. He found solace in light music, meditation and in playing tennis. He grew up to be a very successful man.

It was time for his parents to think of Ashok's marriage and they broached the topic with him at an appropriate moment when Ashok was evincing interest in several of his office lady staff. Ashok on hearing the word marriage suddenly felt a shudder and the very thought sent a cold chill in him. He began to think, whether he would be able to cope with the stress and strain of married life.

He carried a phobia that he might have a break down and that would be awful for him and would ruin his married life. Sensing a change in his mood, his parents quickly understood his dilemma and changed the topic to enable Ashok to calmly brood over the subject.

Ashok had a sleepless night. Yes, he did feel the need to have a beautiful understanding wife, who would stand by him during an hour of distress and pain. She shouldn't be demanding and nagging. She should be satisfied with what he earned and should be a good housewife. Also, she should withstand his change of moods and sometimes his temper tantrums but what if he were to sink in blues again. How would she feel about it? Would it not cause agony to her? How would she take it, if she and her people discovered about his mental illness? These thoughts caused anguish in the mind of Ashok. He dispelled the thought of marriage, turned off the light and went off to sleep by taking a tablet of calmpose.

Next morning on entering his office, strangely, his colleagues asked him as to when he would be ringing the wedding bells? All the lady colleagues also started teasing him by

calling him a “confirmed bachelor”. Ashok felt quite perplexed. He couldn’t discuss his inner feelings with everyone. He felt the immediate need to seek an appointment with Dr. Signal. In the evening before going home, he met Dr. Singhal and discussed his problem. Dr. Singhal patiently heard him and dispelled his doubts and convinced him that he was normal by all means and shouldn’t think himself to be sick in mind.

Ashok had a peaceful sleep that night. A strange sensual feeling also gripped his mind and he felt a need for a partner to relax.

On seeing Ashok being very cheerful and evincing interest in marriage proposals, his parents found Prema to be a very suitable girl. She hailed from a middle class background being the eldest born of many children. She was a graduate and had done a few other courses. On discreet enquiries by Ashok’s parents, they learnt that Prema was a very sensible girl and in all her neighbourhood she was popular for coming to the help of each of them. In her college days she was Students’ Union Secretary and all her teachers on being contacted assured Ashok’s parents that she was a good match for him.

As the day of wedding neared and the wedding cards were being distributed, Prema’s parents received the disturbing news of Ashok’s mental ill-health and his treatment. Ashok’s close family rivals had met Prema’s father and had broken the news. Prema’s father nearly had a breakdown. He was worried and he could not stop the wedding by withdrawing the proposal. All his hard-earned savings had already been spent on the arrangements. He was known to be a man of his word but his love for Prema was also no less. Prema’s maternal uncles interfered and tried to break the wedding arrangements. However her father thought over and over again. He liked Ashok and found him to be a suitable boy for Prema. He held a very responsible post and was earning a four figure sum. He again went and made discreet enquiries with Ashok’s colleagues.

Everyone spoke very high of Ashok. Though he was satisfied, Prema's uncles and mother harboured some doubts and were worried.

Prema waited for everyone to retire to bed. She knew that her father would be awake still brooding about her welfare and to hide his worry, he would be engaged in some wedding arrangements or the other. Prema stood for long near her father and when he turned towards her, she touched his feet and broke down. Her father turned blue thinking that Prema did not want the wedding to take place but he broke into broad smiles and hugged her, when Prema expressed her determination to go ahead with the wedding arrangements.

Prema did not want to break the marriage. She knew that her father had spent lots of money. The break in arrangements would ruin her further chances of marriage. People might point an accusing finger at her. She had younger sisters to be wedded. She was determined to face the challenge.

The wedding went on well and both couple found each other to be suitable and made for each other.



## THE LIGHTNING STRIKES

Fayaz was squatting on the mat and luxuriously puffing a beedi deeply inhaling and exhaling the smoke. The small tiled tenement was filled with smoke. The dwelling place belonged to Ateef. Ateef Saheb was a renowned Sufi fakir.

Fayaz was just 25 years old and having found no regular job to do found a few of his friends to join him in the business of “real estate agency”. He knew that the expanding city of Bangalore needed new housing colonies owing to acute housing shortage.

Fayaz was a confident estate agent, who was luring people facing evictions or those who dreamt of owning their own house, to buy plots created by the newly sprung up ‘housing co-operative societies’. He assured people of getting clear titles and showed them the site. His companion, an elderly person Rama Reddy posed as a land lord and advocate Chandraswamy as their most experienced expert legal advisor. A clever devise and a chain had been set up for the entire show business of “real estate agency”.

Fayaz and his companion Khader Khan were in the house of Ateef for various reasons. Firstly, they knew that Ateef besides giving them “talisman” to ward off any blood suckers from coming after them would also pray for their success in their venture. Secondly, several people came daily to Ateef with all sorts of problems. Fayaz came to this place to hunt for gullible people and luring them to buy the sites.

Ateef was a good old man and had seen the changing times. At one time, he had attempted to do several odd jobs. He had seen the ups and downs of life and had had a rare

opportunity in life to meet all sections of people in the various odd jobs, he had done but his days were of “milk and honey”. It was a glorious time, as those were days of English Raj besides the benign rule of the Maharaja. The times were regal with royal patronage and with several men of letters around.

Ateef could not cope with the changed times and found strangely that his whole life had turned upside down. Being from a highly religious, traditional and cultured family he found it easy to retire in one such tenement to live and pass off his remaining days.

The hard times had left him high and dry with chill penury befriending him. Now, he turned to his family traditions of helping people by giving talisman, sage and practical counsel and to pray for them. He had lived a truthful and simple life and had been good to one and all. Thus, his place was a meeting ground for several old timers and new ones.

Rehman a seasoned lawyer from an old aristocratic family was one such visitor to Ateef’s place not for taking any of the talismans, “dua” (blessings) or for Ateef’s practical solutions but to maintain the good old relationship running down from generations. He was also a connoisseur of the good old aristocratic ways and was lamenting on the new changed times.

Rehman felt strange peace in meeting Ateef, as he conversed on those nostalgic times and recalled the memory, the tales from Nawab Hyder Ali’s and Tippu Sultan’s times. They talked of hundreds of Saintly men who had donned the robes of fakirs and lived a peaceful life in the erstwhile Mysore State.

Rehman found in Ateef one such old Saintly fakir, a wise man sitting sipping tea, which Ateef’s wife offered to one and all in keeping with the age old customs.

As Rehman took his seat his eyes fell on Fayaz and his cronies. Rehman at a glance gathered that these were the new



flocks who had corrupted the times and changed the very face of the pleasant old Bangalore and the ways of Bangaloreans.

Blood rushed to his brain, when he found Fayaz puffing beedi and filling the small room with smoke. He could not bear it anymore. Rehman in a commanding regal tone asked Fayaz to put off the beedi quickly and sit in a respectful posture.

Fayaz would have none of these sallies from old cronies. He could not bear the insult to his pride in being reprimanded before his “Chamchas”. He questioned the beliefs of Rehman and continued to act in his own sacrilegious ways.

Rehman warned Fayaz of a calamity meeting him, if he didn't mend his ways and start behaving respectfully in front of elders, who were all ‘good-intentioned men’ but Fayaz did not buy all these arguments and homilies. He kept misbehaving and challenging all the superstitious beliefs and started taunting Rehman, Ateef and the Saintly old fakir sipping tea. Rehman could bear it no longer. He got up from the “Charpoy” of Ateef having sat next to him and showing disgust at these young blokes left the place.

It so happened that one day Rehman had to stay back in the Court premises later than normal time. He generally did not work in the after-noons. It was only on rare occasions, he would stay late. All his mounting work was managed by a large contingent of his juniors. Rehman was also a Professor of Law and associated with umpteen numbers of social and cultural organisations. Rehman was compelled to visit the Criminal Court complex. He rarely went there but he had to find Ranga, his old buddy, who was an expert Criminal lawyer. Rehman knew that Ranga would be handing some sensational case in the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court. He went looking for him. He had to climb several stairs as there was no lift facility. On reaching the top floor, he was disappointed not to find his friend Ranga in the Court hall. As he felt tired he sat down in

the Court to catch his breath. The judge knew that Rehman was a noble and aristocratic person and rarely appeared in any matters before these courts. He was quite surprised to find him at the court at the far end of the day and that too at an hour when the police would be producing persons accused of heinous crimes for the purpose of seeking remand into their custody or for interrogation purpose. The Judge out of courtesy made enquiries through the Court clerk to know as to whether Rehman required anything. Normally, Senior respectable lawyers would draw the attention of young Magistrates, as in their eyes the Senior Advocates were highly respectable and noble ones. Rehman explained to the clerk that he had come looking for this old friend Ranga. He only sat in the Court hall to catch his breath.

Just as Rehman was talking to the Court Clerk there was a commotion outside the court hall. A few persons sitting in the gallery rushed to see as to what was happening. Rehman knew that it was time for the police to produce persons accused in sensational cases and that it would fill the court hall with a large number of people, Police and lawyers.

Rehman got up from his chair and came out. He found police had brought in chains and handcuffs several accused persons. The police were particularly harsh with one fellow. They pushed him roughly and with a thud the fellow fell down. He squatted on the floor and the police were holding the iron chains, as if they were holding a monkey to prevent it from doing mischief.

Rehman peered at this fellow while walking past him. The nasty criminal caught the glimpse of Rehman's eye and yelled that he was in this plight due to his curses. Rehman grew curious. He could not have harmed any one. He went close to the person in chains and was shocked and surprised to find Fayaz. Fayaz broke down and started yelling at Rehman. "You

cursed me in Ateef's house and warned me of this calamity. Now I am in this deep trouble."

Rehman wondered as to what could have happened. It was not difficult for him to guess further as his hunch proved right. Fayaz's nefarious deeds had been exposed. He was caught red handed while affixing the false seals of the Registrar on the stamp papers.

Rehman grew pensive and reflective as he slowly walked down the stairs. His belief in the holiness of Saintly fakirs got strengthened. There was a good old saying that anyone showing wanton disrespect to Saintly beings met with a cruel fate and those who respected them with humility and sincerity benefitted by receiving their grace as holiness resided in them. That evening, Rehman went at an odd hour to Ateef's house. Ateef was in a relaxed mood without any visitors. On seeing Rehman at this hour, Ateef and his wife came out to receive him with a surprised look. Rehman just waved his hand and told them that he thought it would be nice for him to visit them at an hour when none were around. Ateef and his wife had a hearty laugh. Rehman grew pensive and in a philosophical mood mentioned to Ateef and his wife about Fayaz. Ateef and his wife broke into a big smile and chuckled. Ateef mentioned that Rehman's "Bhabi" was about to be duped by Fayaz and that Rehman bhai had come at the right time to admonish Fayaz. When Rehman spoke and mentioned about the old wise saying of the holiness of fakirs Ateef laughed and mentioned joking that modern fakirs and Saints were now to be found in buddies like Rehman.



## CLEVER MANEUVERING

Ravi was a simple humble person having built his career by the dint of his own hard work. When he was 14 years old one night a quarrel ensued between his Parents and at the dead of the night his mother woke him up and threw him out of the house. His mother was a domineering lady and his father was a totally submissive person without a backbone. He just saw the happening and turned a Nelson's eye and did not wish to interfere for fear of aggravating the situation. Ravi was practically on streets. He could not think of anything and no one was in his mind to whom he could approach for help at the dead of that night. Only thing that occurred to him was to go over to the Railway Station which was nearest place to his house. He slept on the platform and in the early morning he boarded the train bound for Madras. He travelled as a ticket less traveller. His sad eyes, filled with grief and tears and wondering as to what wrong he had done to deserve this fate. He walked across the station to a Brahmin hotel and with tears in his eyes related his plight to the cashier. The cashier was a kind person. He offered him coffee and tiffin and told him to serve the hotel as a plate cleaner. Ravi was not used to these menial works. He was affectionately taken care of by his Parents except for frequent quarrels between them. His mother thought that his father was over protecting him and always chided his father and advised him that sons should learn to lead their own lives once they grow up. According to his mother 14 years was a big age to be thrown out of the house at the dead of the night.

Ravi served the hotel with all his sincerity. The owner discovered him to be a Brahmin boy. He asked him till which class he had studied. He encouraged him to complete his education. He gave him Rs.300/- and told him to find a place in Bangalore, give tuition to children and accept 'Var anna' (weekly

feeding given to poor Brahmin boys). The encouraging words of the hotel owner instilled a spirit of challenge in the mind of Ravi. He returned to Bangalore. He with great efforts found a room in a congested Brahmin area. He spoke to few Brahmin families and undertook to give tuition to the boys in return for a place to sleep and food. Thus, Ravi with utmost difficulty and privy completed his S.S.L.C. His father discovered his whereabouts. He would stealthily meet him and give him Rs.5/- or Rs.10/-. Ravi was good in Mathematics and accounts. He approached petty shopkeepers, tea-stall owners and hotels and offered his services to write their accounts. With the hard earned savings he would manage to get a few pair of clothing's and also managed to complete, with utmost efforts, his B.Com. degree. Some friends suggested him to take a room and put up a board as a Tax Consultant. Ravi did not lack courage. He was determined to make a career and that too a good one. He opened an office and canvassed for Sales Tax and Income Tax work. He found the work to be easy one. He only required to prepare the returns and produced the book of accounts to the concerned inspectors. He befriended them and they were more than willing to help him for some return of monetary consideration. Thus, Ravi gained good work. His gullible illiterate clients knew very little of Tax work. They meant business and they would give enough money to Ravi to send away the 'leeches' and settle the matter amicably.

Ravi enrolled for LL.B course and it was conducted only in the morning. He had no difficulty in attending the classes and also combined it with his accounts work and Tax practice. Thus after his completion of his Law Course, a few good Brahmin families noticed his entrepreneurship and found a good girl from a reputed family. Ravi was always helping men in distress. Most of his clients were Muslim hotellers and shop keepers. They would pay whatever money Ravi asked and he gained good friendship and relationship with them. As time passed, Ravi bought about 10 acres of dry land and built a small farm house, fenced it and put up a nice garden, lawn and orchards. He

bought a car and his loving and understanding wife helped him in the farm work.

Ravi would take his well to do marvari clients to his farm house on week-ends for picnic and share with them some light drinks. His life style became a cause of envy. One such hotellier and lodger Veer Chand suggested to Ravi to help him get a few acres of land so that he can also develop it into a good farm house.

Ravi contacted the local politician, a ruffian of first order, who was sly, cunning and a cheat. He with his gullible and sweet talk made Ravi agreed to buy lands allotted to poorer segments for Veer Chand. Veer Chand believed and trusted Ravi. Ravi also thought he would get a nice commission, which the local politician Ramaiah agreed to pay. When the lawyer of Veer Chand pointed out to certain legal hurdles, Ramaiah pounced on him and warned him not to interfere in the matter but simply prepare the sale deed. After the transaction was over, Ramaiah made his son file a suit for injunction restraining his father from selling the lands as also because the land could not be sold being allotted to lower strata and segment of society. Thus by such clever and cunning moves the land could not be parted. Ramaiah used all threats to expose Ravi of having taken huge cut of commission. Ravi was totally perplexed. When he confronted Ramaiah and pleaded with him to see reason, Ramaiah merely chuckled and laughed. He would say that marvaries were rich and they would not loose anything if the land did not go to them. Thus, by clever maneuver, the transaction was not completed. Veer Chand lost all his money. Due to his running around after lawyers and courts, he suffered a heart attack and died. His son could not peruse the matter. They lost their money but Ramaiah grew fatter and fatter by further cheating other persons and his political connections helped him from being caught by the long arms of law.



## **A SEARCH OF A LOST BOY**

On a fine summer day, Sunder a prosperous business man found his only son Keerti playing on computer. Sunder was keen to see that Keerti should be doing his homework and studying hard to get high marks in his X standard annual exam. He did not like Keerti whiling away his time mindlessly. In a stern authoritative tone he shouted at Keerti to shut off the computer and be on his study table and commanded him to do his math's for the evening. So saying he left for his club activity as was his usual routine. Keerti did not like this nagging by his Parents and their insistence to keep his back stuck to the chair and devote all his time for study. In a rush of blood he just got up from his chair rushed to his bed room and grabbed his haversack bag, put in a few clothing's, he then opened his mother's almira and found a few hundred rupees. He grabbed it and off he left his house in a huff. The guard at the gate finding him going out in a casual dress thought that he must be going for some shopping. After a while Keerti's mother Radha returned home and found Keerti not on the study table or in the computer room. She also found him to be an obedient boy and thought for a while that he must be in the toilet but finding the house empty, she grew suspicious. He asked the guard as to whether Keerti had left home. On learning about his carrying a bag with him, she grew suspicious and called Sunder on cell phone. Sunder mentioned about his chiding Keerti for playing always on the computer and had asked him to sit down for studies. Now it dawned on both the Parents that Keerti had left home. She asked Sunder to rush back home. Both rushed to various places to find Keerti but at the usual places of his jaunts he was not found anywhere. They called on all the relatives and friends but of no avail; they rushed to bus station and railway station but he was not found anywhere. All friends by now grew panicked and gathered at Sunder's place.

On an earlier occasion, Keerti had left his School and he was found in a long distance train by the ticket collector. On his enquiry Keerti could not explain anything. The Ticket Collector finding him in a School uniform questioned Keerti and grew suspicious about the Keri's conduct and did not believe the story that he had been abducted. He restored Keerti to his Parents. This episode had been flashed in all the newspapers. Sunder being a prominent citizen faced severe embarrassment. Now everyone thought that Keerti is again up to his old game and they could not believe that he could have been abducted.

All his well-wishers and large circle of friends were sympathetic to Sunder and Radha. They gave different advices and counsel. Everyone was anxious to please them, for they were very prominent and well-known people, charitable, hospital and courteous. Their popularity and fame had caused heart burns too and there were several persons lashing their tongues and speaking ill of them. Some gloated gleefully and wondered what was still in store for this lovely and lonely couple.

Sunder had large circle of bureaucratic friends. They called on him. Someone took him to Deepak the DIG of Police of that area who incidentally knew Sunder and his family. He suggested Sunder to lodge a FIR in the local Police Station and assured Sunder of all his help. A wireless message was flashed to all the Police stations including the photo of the Keerti. Sunder expected Deepak to accompany him to the police station. Deepak looked aghast at this suggestion. How could a high ranking Police officer accompany a complainant to the police station? At best he could send his private secretary with Sunder to the police station, which he did so but the expectation of Sunder from one and all was very high. He wanted the heaven to come down and help him find his only dear son, which in the circumstance did not appear to happen.

Some well-meaning friends suggested pasting missing posters in and around the city with the photograph of Keerti and with a message that finders would be rewarded. Some suggested



for putting a photo without his surname in all leading newspapers. This was done. Everyday Sunder would talk to the police and have a word put to them from someone important higher official so that they can take more interest in searching for the missing boy of 13 years.

All the relatives combed all the theaters, clubs, hotels, casinos and in each and every corner of the pink city but of no avail. As days passed the anxiety of Sunder and Radar grew more and more. They became desperate. They were prepared to share any fortune to get back their son. The grief knew no bounds and they hardly ate or slept. They would rush to any place if someone would say that they had spotted Keerti there; places as far as Tirupati, Mysore, Tumkur and Mangalore were combed. It was a great puzzle and required only some mysterious forces to unravel the mystery.

Well, that is where this story begins. Superstitions flourish and rule its roast in such circumstances. Someone deep in superstitions suggested them to meet a Tantric Swamy Gundu Raoji. He looked into the charts mumbled something burnt camphor and looked into a black spot on the betel leaf and said that the boy has taken Sanya's and will not come back for another 7 years. This unnerved the couple. They rushed to Mastan Sab's darga. There the Muzawar gave a talisman and told them to burn it in the clothes worn by the boy in his bed room for 40 days and within this period, Keerti would return back. Sunder's sister knew a tarot reader who gave a cup of coffee and told her to think of her problem and drink it leaving some portion of coffee in the cup. Well the predictions were awful! The boy had committed suicide!

Sunder was asked to sacrifice 10 goats to Mahakali and do special pooja to disprove the prediction. He faithfully did it. By now Sunder had lost all his concentration in his business. He would weep and weep and curse his destiny for his hasty act in reprimanding his son.

On a fine day, Sunder's brother rang up to say that Keerti has been abducted by a rich lady to make him act in a movie and this news was given to him by a well-known (Naadi Jothisa) leaf reader. Sunder checked his bank but there was no extra deposits made by anyone else in his account. In his club there was a rich lady. Radha rushed to her house and attempted to check all the rooms to find Keerti but of no avail.

A Moulvi Sab known to be an occultist gave eggs written with Arabic script and told Sunder and Radha to burn it in the Keerti's room. This was also done but nothing happened. Sunder's sister-in-law knew an astrologer of repute. She got a horoscope of Keerti made and took Sunder to the astrologer Sheshadri. Sheshadri was a sincere person, deeply read in astrology and his predictions were known to have come true. He told them not to worry and predicted that after 3 months 10 days Keerti would telephone one day and return on his own and by that time no power can restore him. He suggested them to meet a Baba in Therta halli near Hassan district who would be able to say something. Sunder and Radha accompanied by his sister went in the car straight to that place where the Baba is said to reside but did not find him. They were disappointed. Someone suggested seeing a Tantrik in the nearby Temple. He also read some slokas and predicted Keerti to be with the friends in a place near a sea shore on the western coast line. It was too vague a clue to search. Just as they were consulting, two constables entered the room of the tantrik and showed the photo of Keerti to establish his whereabouts. Sunder was perplexed and wondered as to how the police also chased a wild goose.

Some friends in high investigative posts suggested that Keerti must have been in the company of hypies, gypsies and drug pedlars. Being fair, he might have become a victim of brutal sexuality. All these talks took the wind out of Sunder and Radha. They tried each and every clue to find the whereabouts of Keerti. They made pilgrimages to Temples, Dargas, soothsayers, tantriks, occultists and others.

Well, patience too has its own limits! All these errands exhausted them. They were faced with humiliation, jeers and taunts. They would tell people that they would know their position only when they get stuck in such a quagmire situation. No amount of words of consolation and predictions would give them any solace. They were panicked. They made umpteen vows to perpetuate each and every god but in a circumstance like this, what could be done?

Keerti was handsome and a lovely person. He straight away dashed to bus stand and boarded a bus which was leaving the city right then. On reaching the destination, he took up lodging and went round to find a job but someone suggested that he go to another place. He did so and found a job just merely because of his good looks. Again he changed places until he landed in Goa in a five star hotel. He spoke good English. Well, he was recruited as a bearer. He found shelter and good food. In the evening, he would go to the beach and looking at the stars he would weep remembering his parents and his only sister. One day he fell sick, he developed abysis as well. His mates took him to the hospital. They discussed his back ground. One nice fellow Ashok, who was struggling to make his both ends meet and to complete his education felt very bad. He took Keerti in his company and every day counseled him to return home to his parents and be a good citizen.

Just as Sheshadri had predicted after 3 months 10 days, Ashok telephoned to Sunder and told him that Keerti is with him. Keerti also spoke but in a firm voice. Sunder broke down and begged him to disclose his whereabouts. Keerti did not do so. He promised to return next day, which he did. Thus ended the turmoil of a great search to find Keerti but the tongues were still lashing and in the meantime, the poojaris, tantriks, occultists, astrologers and Police made a good fortune for themselves.



## **A MURDER THAT COULD NOT BE SOLVED**

This is the story of a cold blooded murder of a money lender's son in a broad day light in a busy thorough fare of a spiraling business city. It was common among money lenders to engage the services of touts and brokers to get them the customers and that they would part with a small commission to them.

Suresh and Ramesh were two idlers, working as bus ticket agent and bearer in a lodge respectively. They would booze a lot and do all sorts of odd jobs including pimpery. Their main source of income was to threaten the gullible money lenders and collect their daily 'mamools'.

On a fine day in the morning they went to a money lender's shop. They found the young son of the money lender. They were in an inebriated mood. They demanded their daily 'mamool'. The young teenager was not aware of the system of paying the protection money. He refused to give anything as he knew nothing of the deals these fellows had with his father. These two guys threatened the boy. When the boy showed resistance and defiance, one ruffian picked up a knife and pumped it straight into the heart of the young boy, while the other held the little innocent chap. They pulled the shutters and with the knife wrapped in newspaper which was lying in a corner and ran to the main road. They jumped into a parked auto and told the driver to drive them to their lodge. On the way they found a desolate place, where they asked the auto to stop for a while and went out and threw the wrapper with the knife in an abandoned compound and rushed to their hotel. A neighbouring shop keeper who was their rival noticed the two fellows in blood stained clothes and felt that these chaps were up to something.

Next morning, the murder of the money lender's young son was flashed in the newspapers, which caused a grip of fear among the money lenders and traders. It was a very daring broad day light murder. All the traders marched to the Police Commissioner and lodged a strong protest and impressed upon him to form a team of investigators to track down the assailants. Initially, it was reported that the pledged jewellery and pawned items had been stolen and that it was a case of dacoity and murder but later investigations disproved this fact. It was a plain murder but the best of Police team which was forced to investigate could not find out the motive. It felt that it could only be revenge but for what reason was not forthcoming.

Several days of investigation, did not give a clue. It was totally clueless murder. There were no finger prints. Due to heavy rain the dog squad could not make much head way. The traders were panicked. They felt that some political agents may be behind the murder to scare the pawn brokers.

As the things stood thus and days passed, the Police control room got a phone call indicating that the assailants could be this two persons namely Suresh and Ramesh working in the lodge. The police lost no time to take them into their custody. They had injury on their person. They explained that while cleaning the glass panels, it broke and they got the injury. While in the custody they feared harassment and beating hence on close questioning they broke down and admitted about murdering the boy. They told the Police that they were drunk and did not want to commit the murder intentionally. The pawn broker owed them money. They went to the shop to collect the same. Since the boy acted arrogantly and threatened them with the knife, they snatched it from him and one held him tightly and the other straight away pumped it in the heart. They pulled the shutter of the shopkeeper and ran away. The neighboring shop keeper watched them pulling the shutter. Later the blood was flowing outside the shop. Growing suspicious they called the Police and

it turned out to be a murder. The Police started gathering all the information, examined large number of witnesses including the neighboring shopkeeper, the autorickshaw in which the two assailants escaped from the place of murder was also seized. The dead body was sent for autopsy and for post-mortem. The knife was also picked up from the place said to be having been thrown in the deserted place. Thus the charge sheet was filed and the trail began.

Suresh's sister was well employed. Her husband was also a Public Sector employee. They could afford to engage a Senior Criminal advocate, while Ramesh could afford to engage only a raw junior. The fresh junior was very enthusiastic and made a complete study of FIR, statement of witness, mahazar, postmortem and case law.

The case was built both on eye witness and on circumstantial evidence. There goes a legal maxim that men may lie but circumstances do not and a case built on circumstantial evidence is always reliable and strong and ends up in conviction.

During the trail it was shown by Prosecution that the boy had his only meal at 12 noon and had gone to the shop to relieve his father. The boy's mother spoke about this fact but the FIR stated that the murder had been committed around 11.30 a.m. and the assailants were spotted by the neighbouring shop keeper at that hour. The Shop keeper could not identify the accused in the court and pointed out to the wrong person. The Doctor who did the autopsy stated that the stomach was full of food particles, it was undigested one and that the rectum was empty. Thereby the death had occurred immediately after the meals. The Doctor fixed the death as half an hour after the meals. As per the mother's testimony the meal was taken by the victim around 12 noon and the death could have happened around 12.30 p.m. By this evidence which could not be disbelieved, the testimony of the shop keeper was rejected on the ground that the Police had planted them to support the case. The wounds on the

dead body had been measured and it was 6 inches deep made by a sharp prolonged double edged knife but the knife said to have been recovered was only five inch long. It was shown that a knife of 6 inches should also have a handle and it could be only 9 inch long. The seized knife did not have double edge nor was it pointed. Hence the Doctor rejected the seized knife to be the weapon which could have caused the injury.

Thus, by the clever management of the case, the counsels could demonstrate that the Police had messed up the case by planting wrong witnesses to prove their case and had produced a wrong weapon and were more interested in implicating two innocent persons, though they might be history sheeted fellows but they were innocent of the crime. The mahazar drawn for seizure of auto and knife was also assailed and the mahazar witnesses broke down and confessed that the mahazar was not drawn in their presence. Thus the case ended in an acquittal but the truth remained that the assailants had committed the offence but faulty investigations lead them to freedom.



## **HIGH RANKING OFFICER AND HIS ERRANDS**

Mr. C. Sekhar, I.A.S. was Divisional Commissioner having reached the pinnacle of his success and rose from the post of Assistant Commissioner of Revenue in a service spanning 28 years. He joined in the State Service by the dint of his merit and was picked up for conferring IAS and proudly adorned the seat of Divisional Commissioner.

He was not a happy man at both the fronts, in the office as well as at his home. He had a nagging and a demanding wife besides being blessed by two foolish Sons and a daughter, though somewhat intelligent and had post graduate course but had created a mess of herself in her personal married life and forced her husband to abandon her comfortable house at Australia and join her father with a little baby.

Sekhar was known for his intellectual caliber, for his brilliance and administrative ability. He had a checkered career. He had a brilliant School life but due to his patron's passing away he was suddenly faced with turmoil. His father was away having married after the death of his mother but his grandmother took charge of him. She took him away to Bombay and kept him in the protection of his uncle, a petty officer in the Army. Sekhar was very profound in Hindi and was capable of versifying as well. He impressed the State Director and got a petty job of a script writer. The fertile mind of Sekhar questioned all the beliefs and he delved deep in political Science, Philosophy and literature. By his private study he completed his graduation and post-graduation. He gave tuitions to meet both his ends. He took a separate room and lived a separate life. Kamala was a student who fell in love with Sekhar but it was a



short lived one. His grandmother forced him to go over to Patna and against his wishes married to a girl half-witted however she made a good house wife. On return to Bombay they could not make both the ends meet. Hence his in-laws forced him to return to his home town Patna. He begot three children in succession. His in-laws passed several comments and gave him pinpricks. He was forced to find a small tenement with the help of his good friends. He had gained proficiency in Hindi; he was employed as Asst. Editor for a leading Hindi newspaper but the banya Editor hardly paid him. He was compelled to take competitive exam by his well-meaning friends. He came out in flying colours. His physic was poor yet the Doctor cleared him in the Medical Test and thus he got his enrolment in the Civil Service.

Sekhar was very enthusiastic, he served well in several stations and developed high credibility and he became a blue eyed boy of his Superiors. At last, he became Deputy Commissioner of a major metropolitan city. With his keen intellect he could detect several sensational cases pertaining to land scams. One such was about the sale of forged stamp papers. But there were several inimical forces to hush up the affairs and he was transferred to a remote place. Before he could be transferred, he arranged a 'Communal Harmony Week' to bring in an understanding among the various committees. This made him a very popular person but they were many tongues lashing at his gimmicks. This would hurt him a bit. He would be pained at his own colleagues who tried to pull him down. Being a literary person, he would organise 'Poets' Meet', and cultural meets and thus he would be invited by many literary and social forums to preside in their functions.

At one such meet, someone suggested that as he had a flair for writing, why he should not start a literary magazine. The idea clicked and he brought out literary works which were all well received but his friends suggested that he should bring out something in English. It is here that Sekhar got into problems.

He started a magazine in his wife's name. Though it was very good one and was liked by one and all however he had no sponsors. He had to engage the services of highly paid Editors. All his savings were dried up. He borrowed money on heavy interest but the other competing magazines did not wish his magazine to flourish. They were several attacks. He withstood it but could not cope up to the inefficiency of his Sons who lacked the art to manage it. At last, it folded up one day but leaving huge debts on his head. He had to sell his house which was built through office loans to clear part of the debts.

As his son was unemployed, he made him to start a restaurant with a game parlour but his son was very lazy and would hardly evince any interest. His son was backed by his insolent mother. Due to mismanagement and heavy loans, the creditors started knocking at the doors of his office and house. He completely lost his peace of mind. There was no friend left from whom he had not borrowed money. He was yet to clear the bills of his daughter's wedding and those of his Son's wedding. He was cornered from all sides. Slowly and steadily, it came to be rumoured that Sekhar was compelling his staff to stand guarantee to him to take loans. This created a bad atmosphere and ultimately Sekhar was transferred to an insignificant posting.

Sekhar was a stickler, he managed his personal affairs with his salary but his life style raised many eye brows. Hardly anyone knew that it was borrowings and more borrowings which had led him in to the debt trap. A few tongues lashed. A few trips to western countries were done by him by withdrawal of money from his provident fund account. It was mistaken by his friends. His boss knew the truth about Sekhar functioning strictly as per rules and by taking permission from his superiors to go abroad but the car loan, house loan, LIC loan and loans from every nook and corner made the life of Sekhar miserable. He would try to find solace by visiting and in reciting prayers till late in the night. He would visit holy men and request his good well-

meaning friends to pray and pray for him. Sekhar though had many opportunities to amass wealth by accepting gratification but he held his hands away from all such temptations. He believed in scruples and wanted to show to the world that one can live honestly yet can live life to its brim but such high status life could not be lived on borrowed money with warrants for non-payments. Sekhar never lost hope. He hoped and hoped, prayed and prayed for with some venture to click, so that he can come out of the debt trap.

Shekar was forced to take voluntary retirement much before the date of super annuation to clear the debts. A highly merited officer lost many opportunities to make a name in the Service due to straying away from the straight path and trying to live beyond his means. He could not manage life in a proper disciplined manner thus leading him to debt trap which ruined his personal and official life.



## **POSTING IN NORTH BLOCK, NEW DELHI**

The governments come and governments go and with the frequency of elections, with millions of rupees being spent, the administration becomes lax. It is today's lament about corruption spreading to a large extent and eating up the vitals of the entire system. But there is a glimmer of hope and for every dark cloud there is a silver lining. Although the flag of integrity and honesty is required to be kept flying but it is not without deep sacrifices and at personal losses of a miniscule number of dedicated officers. Their commitment, sincerity and loyalty are beyond one's imagination. It is the sacred zeal enthused in them to devote their lives for the public cause at all costs that keeps moving the wheels of the government's machinery smoothly.

Here is a story of present times which for many of us may ring true but it is a fictional one and has no reference to any living character.

Ramakrishna a brilliant bureaucrat was deputed by the State government to work in the Central Government. Although he had not directly entered IAS, he was conferred one, because of his outstanding service. Unfortunately he belonged to the backward class although his features were very handsome and he hailed from a middle class family comprising large number of children. His father had also served the State govt. and so also his grandfather. He had the zeal to excel as he felt that he carried the family traits to serve the public.

There were hundreds of officers who hoped to be nominated to this unique posting but the Chief Secretary an honest upright IAS officer from Assam would not bend to any political pressures and thus Ramakrishna was to represent the Karnataka State as a Joint Secretary at the Central Government,

New Delhi. He felt that being in such a coveted post, he would be given a red carpet welcome by the Department where he was posted. He had sent a message in advance of his arrival and for booking a place in the State Guest house.

On his arrival at New Delhi airport, he was in for a shock. Neither was there any protocol nor was he received by the department officers. He had no occasion to visit New Delhi and the entire city was new to him. He was so hopeful and confident of the arrangement that he did not carry any addresses of friends nor bothered to book for a reservation in any other guest house.

He was spotted by an acquaintance Sastry who was placed in a similar circumstance. A benign Rajya Sabha Member of several years standing, freedom fighter and a person championing several worthy causes was acquainted with Sastry. Ramakrishna always kept a respectful distance from politicians, practically avoiding and refusing to get entertained by them or anyone else including his close relatives and friends. All the three boarded the airport bus and reached the guest house.

It so happened that the State Legislature had been dissolved and it resulted in a large number of MLAs and MPs rushing to New Delhi. The resident officer could not cope with the rush and failed to make arrangements in the small guest house. He refused to even meet these officers and sent word asking them to fend for themselves as he was helpless. Seeing their plight, the benign MP offered to share his room with them but they politely declined. Sastry had a local friend and phoned him. His friend readily offered his place and asked Shastry to bring along Ramakrishna also but noticing Ramakrishna, his friend had doubts about his caste. He put a direct question to Ramakrishna to detail his antecedents. Sastry felt embarrassed. His friend politely requested Ramakrishna to look out for another place. Both of them pleaded with the host to allow them to stay as it was midnight. Sastry's friend agreed to Ramakrishna

staying for a night. He was offered the sofa in the drawing room to rest for the night.

The next morning both the officers left for the North Block. They had to pass through a hassle. The Security Officer wouldn't care who they were. The letters of appointment, the State Identity Card wouldn't serve the purpose. They needed to get verification from the concerned department about their appointment to let them inside. After the completion of formalities they were let in. Both the officers had to go to different wings and departments to report to their respective sections.

Ramakrishna was in for a further shock. The PA to Additional Secretary did not even offer him a chair, let alone reply to his polite greetings. He had to wait for a full one hour to enter the chambers of his boss Sri B.K. Sharma IAS. Sharmaji, as he was popularly referred to looked at Ramakrishna and questioned his bonafides and refused to look into the papers sponsoring him. He just plainly told him to wait in the lobby till all the formalities were completed as they were yet to get the gazette notification and there was no communication to them from anyone.

Ramakrishna was in a fix. He did not expect all these setbacks. He was not even given the courtesy of a hand shake nor greeted nor offered a chair. He wondered what more was in store for him. He made several attempts to speak to Kultar Singh, the Sardarjee PA to contact the concerned department and get the file, so that he could report for work. Kultar a wily fox would only nod his head or insolently reply in monosyllables in Hindi. Ramakrishna was resigned to his fate.

He did not know where to get a glass of water since he was feeling extremely thirsty. He just kept walking in the lobby. He noticed a water cooler, just outside the toilet, meant for class IV servants. The parching summer made Ramakrishna stick out his

dried tongue. He just dashed forward and drank the water. Slowly Ramakrishna realised that he is inside the dome of power and had no other option but to bear the brunt patiently. He understood that none would care for a mere Joint Secretary, although a brilliant IAS Officer, in such a place like North Block.

At last, he got the necessary papers to sign to join the central posting but what about the chambers? Kultar Singh just threw up his hands. “Sir the PA to be allotted to you has been withdrawn and posted to Home Department”, so saying he left his chair and disappeared. It was 4 pm. he attempted to enter the chamber of Sharmaji. But Sharmaji stared and looked down at Ramakrishna in such a manner that he felt humiliated. Yet he was emboldened to speak politely, “Sir where shall I occupy my seat”. Sharmaji refused to look up or answer. A cold chill and shudder went up in Ramakrishna’s spine. He did not expect this awful response from his boss or such a treatment. After all he was an IAS officer and deserved to be received well at least with minimum courtesy.

Ramakrishna stood still for sometime. Sharmaji’s negative response and lack of camaraderie shocked Ramakrishna. As he was still thinking as to what could be done, Sadhu Ram, the peon entered with a bundle of files. After placing them on the tray he just signalled to Ramakrishna to accompany him.

Sadhu Ram had been working in the North Block for more than two decades. He knew every nook and corner and the entire ‘who’s who’ of it. He politely asked Ramakrishna in chaste Urdu “Sahab are you Madrasi”. Ramakrishna just nodded his head. Sadhu Ram again blurted out in Urdu. “Sahab everything goes on like this, you need to have Himalayan patience; No one cares unless ....” He stopped speaking half way. Ramakrishna felt desperate. In broken Hindi, he pleaded with Sadhu Ram for finding a way out to get him a chamber.

Sadhu Ram knew the concerned officer in the Establishment Section. He took him and pulled a fast one on that officer saying that Secretary Saheb in front of “Mantriji” has ordered him to get a chamber allotted to Ramakrishna. “Mantriji” is from the South, so you better see that the work is done fast”. The officer immediately on hearing the word of “Mantriji” looked up and asked Rama Krishna “Sahab you are a Madrasi?” There was a tinge of sarcasm and irony in his look as well as in his talk. After some time, he offered a chair and got Rameshakrishna, a cup of tea. Ramakrishna blessed Lord Muruga. This was his first cup of tea since 8 a.m. and he was feeling thirsty and hungry. As it was 4.45 p.m. the Establishment Officer asked Ramakrishna to see him in the morning as it was too late to do anything.

Ramakrishna felt depressed, lonely and awful on returning to Sastry's friend's house. Sastry was more enterprising. He had several contacts and cleverly managed everything. Sastry's posting was in a more focal and pivotal place. He got everything done within an hour and had lunch with his South Indian boss. His PA was an efficient stenographer from Kerala. He also filed all the papers for allotment of a house. A car was also allotted. Sastry was floating in the seventh heaven.

As Ramakrishna was musing over the day's happenings and what was to be done next, Sastry came up and in low tone told him to take his dinner in the ‘Dhaba’ outside the house and make arrangements to leave his friend's house next day. Ramakrishna felt a lump in his throat. He coolly went to the “Dhabi” and asked for something to eat. The kind Dhabawala, a Bihari asked Ramakrishna whether he wanted “Bhojan”. Ramakrishna was in a stupor, he just nodded his head. A plate of rice, chappati, “sag” and curds was offered to him. There was no place to sit and rest nor water to wash nor his hands nor a spoon to eat with. He just ate hurriedly closing his eyes. He asked for a glass of water. The Bihari “Dhabawala” brought him



water in a bronze glass dipping his finger. Ramakrishna uttered thanks. He did not drink the water. He paid Rs.50/- for the insipid tasteless food and returned to Sastrys' friend's house.

When he reached Sastrys' friend's house, he found a party going on inside. He waited in the portico. It was late in the night, when the party broke up. He just fell on the sofa, but he couldn't get any sleep. There was no fan or a cooler. He felt awful and sad.

Ramakrishna got up early at 3 am. and entered the bath room. As he was taking bath, Sastry's friend kept thumping the door and asked him to come out soon. This was the third consecutive day, when Sastry's friend had repeated it. On two earlier occasions Ramakrishna had entered the bath room at 5 a.m. and 4 a.m. It was a clear signal for him to leave his house. He had no other choice but to pack up his things and put it in the office car. The driver Gautam from Bihar sympathised with Ramakrishna.

It was again Sadhu Ram, who came to Ramakrishna's help. He found a place in Karol Bagh, a single room to share with another South Indian office of a lower rank on payment of Rs.3000/- p.m.

Ramakrishna was approached by his Superintendent and politely informed, "Sir this is Rajdhani, here nothing moves unless you push the green chips".

Ramakrishna was shocked to hear this statement. He was in for more shocks, when Mr. Iyer, the Deputy Secretary detailed his experiences and how his staff had told him, "nobody is honest here sir, no one lives on his salary Sir, unless you learn to live and let live you can't survive here, sir what cannot be cured should be endured Sahab".

For Ramakrishna, it was a herculian task to get each and every sundry thing done like the obtaining of ID, CGHS card or

even getting a transitory accommodation. But his desire to get a seat for his children in Kendriya Vidyalaya was only a dream. Despite his best efforts he could no get admission for his children in any school. At last, he put his children in a School run by Karnataka Sangha. It took a long time to adjust with the wayward life of Rajdhani.



## NEW DELHI – A CITY OF DJIN

New Delhi has been a seat of power for a millennium and in this city near Old Fort (Purana Qila) was fought the most famous Kurukshetra war. The soil of Delhi is mingled with the blood shed from the veins of millions of people. The barren soil of Delhi seeks not the heavenly water but the sacred blood of its gentry. Delhi has euphemistically come to be known as “A City of Djinn”, it being their capital, as well. These invisible Jinnies are blood suckers and millions have infested the city. At the command of their King they can turn the minds of the people suddenly towards violence. The occurrence of violence at particular intervals in a period of time is a recorded history. From the recent memory of Sikhs massacre and killings during partition of India and migration of large population of people, an eerie jinx has gripped the City. Bloodshed is a common phenomenon in Delhi. The effect of Sipoy Mutiny led to the massacre of thousands. Nadir Shah’s invasion also led to the massacre of a large portion of the population.

Only a few of the majority of the population living in old Delhi near Chandni Chowk, Darya Gunj, Pahargunj Sare Kale Khan, Hazreth Nizamuddin Darga, Chirag Dahelvi and Mehereli can boast of being settled for ages but their population is thin. Today, New Delhi is the most cosmopolitan city in the world with refugees settled from every neighbouring Country. The city accommodates all the embassies of the world besides a large number of University Students from every region of the world studying in New Delhi which adds to the glitter and glamour of the city.

India is proud of New Delhi as it is representative in character. You will find hundreds of cultural organisations many of them having their own cluster of colonies. The ancient graveyards with monuments and gardens laid out by bygone

Kings remind you of the splendour and glory of the ancient Bharat.

One thing you will begin to realise after your settlement in the city is the hard bargain that is required to be done for every commodity you purchase in any market of the City. You may think that you have purchased the item after a good bargain but you will be in for a shock when a shopkeeper just a few shops away quotes the price of the same item almost at fifty percent of the bargained price.

People in Delhi are very glamorous and decorative. They like to put up a show of everything and a pauper speaks as if he is a King. A person after settling down in the City, after some period of time, starts behaving like the local people.

Murder of lonely old people, fatal accidents, child rape, dacoity, extortion, theft, cheating, of false and dishonoured cheques, bride burning, dowry deaths, matrimonial discords, drugs, promiscuity, corruption, kidnapping and terrorist attacks are the bane of the City.

The most common feature amongst the old and new settlers is that they turn highly superstitious. Even one begins to feel that they are possessed by evil spirits and they need to exorcise them. As a result, you find exorcist in very large numbers at every Darga and Temple. An ancient roadside grave will become a place of veneration. There are any number of Temples, Gurudwaras, Mosques and Dargas. This belief in the ancient superstitions has encouraged tantra, black magic, astrology, numerology, palmistry, face reading and what not! Several people claiming to be "Peers", Sadhus, fakirs, and yogies are flourishing in large numbers. They are patronised by hundreds of Politicians' businessmen, bureaucrats, doctors and common gullible people.

Another important feature of the city is spreading of rumours like a wild fire. From where and how it emerges will always remain a mystery. A few years ago, it was rumoured that the idol Lord Ganesha is accepting the offering of milk from the

devotees. A million litres of milk went down the gullets of Lord Ganesha in every temple and in homes. Likewise, it was rumoured that President Shankar Dayal Sharma had passed away. Special TV and radio announcements were made to deny the rumours and the President had to make an appearance on the TV screen to show that he was hale and healthy.

A couple of times there were air crashes and accidents. It was rumoured that the ancient Baba's grave within the precincts of the Airport had been neglected and that was the cause of the accidents. Well! Now the ancient grave has become a place of pilgrimage. Likewise, it was rumoured that a similar ancient grave of a Baba within the precincts of the residence of the Late Rajiv Gandhi had been neglected and it was the cause for his assassination.

One officer residing in Netaji Nagar, a residential officer's colony had built a glass pyramid like structure in his compound and would go into a trance. During weekends, hundreds of people would stand in a queue to have his Darshan and to seek predictions from him. This went on for years till the press broke this story behind the man who had by now grown a beard. He was an I.P.S. Officer who had taken 3 years study leave to escape transfer from the city and continued in his new found profession.

A few government servants living in residential quarters turn into pimps. Their quarters are a good cover to live luxuriously sans payment of rents, enjoying all comforts and facilities. The local Police, it is believed, get their "mamools" from these people. Even gullible officers' wives have become victims at the hands of their dangerous maid servants.

Kaka Ram, a Private Secretary in an office, was being harassed by his boss. Someone suggested to him to meet an exorcist near Chand chowk, who asked him to get an owl sold in cages nearby. It was not difficult to fetch small birds, bats, frogs, black chickens for the purpose of performing black magic. These fear ridden people lose hundreds of rupees in paying the

exorcists and magicians, who claim to be possessed with curative powers.

A few officers harbour the false notion that in order to be in the good books of their bosses, they should procure for them Sex workers besides catering to other needs. If one happens to go very early to one's office say at 8.a.m. or even before the 'Safaiwala' reaches the office one would find bottles of rum, beer, whisky, lying all over the corridors including used condoms. During lunch break, Class III and IV servants will all gather in nearby parks and will be playing cards and boozing. A sense of nausea grips a South Indian for whom a sight like this is sacrilegious. So also one can find in every park and even on the residential waysides young couples indulging in love making openly and unabashedly.

A gentleman working in a Central Govt.office gained popularity with his knowledge of astrology. He gained access to several politicians and top bureaucrats. On one occasion he suggested to a gullible fellow to go to a Swamy in charge of a temple for performing a "homa". That wily Swamy instilled all sorts of fears and cleanly palmed off more than Rs. 2 lakhs for performing the "homa".

You will find in the Dargas, several such self-proclaimed 'fakirs' and Peers claiming to possess spiritual powers to heal and give you a talisman for every woe, of course only after duping the gullible devotees to the extent of huge sums.

Even if you are the first person in queue at the reservation counter of a railway station, having stood since 3.00 a.m. in the morning, yet, you will have the counter clerk tell you in a monosyllable that all the tickets are sold out. You will be in for a shock. You will find touts, agents of these nefarious clerks, who will get you the ticket at a premium of Rs.500/- Likewise, for allotment of govt.quarters; sub-tenancies, for getting gas connections, admission in schools, hospitals, transfers, promotions, one needs to carry bundles of green chips.

Among the most common persons every day to knock at your door are the Sadhus and fakirs, who would perform a trick or two; make a wild prediction and palm off huge sums from gullible housewives.

Admissions for children in Public schools are yet another Herculean task. In case you are posted after the annual exams, you are just shut out. For admission in Kendri Vidhyala, you need to get a recommendatory letter from a MP or a Central Minister, which is next to impossible. The racket of private tuitions is another case in study. A tutor charges for one hour of coaching in Math's at a fee of Rs.400 to Rs.800/-.

You will find scores of officers in every office to share information from any file but only for a price. The Judge would be still grappling with a complex case to decide and give his judgement but every word dictated by him will be known to the counsels! You find counsels claiming expertise in any and every field. A lady wanted to get a divorce from her husband, the counsel quoted a fee of Rs. 2 Lakhs as advance payment, an instance to quote.

The complexity of the connivance between the police, criminals and lawyers is an interesting phenomenon to be studied, but there can be no heavenly formula for its eradication.

The people dreaming of owning a flat are duped by several "Housing Co-operative Societies". Some lucky ones who get the allotment of a flat or a house through DDA gets a woeful gift of pains and tribulations, to contend with.

The power cuts during examination times and also during peak of summer or winter with acute short supply of water appears to be a perennial incurable ill of the city.

Our New Delhi has been rightly named as "A City of Djinn". (Written in 2003)



## DIVINE RETRIBUTION

One day a short, fair complexioned elderly person stepped inside the office of a young barrister known for his scrupulousness. He introduced himself as Wadood Khan and mentioned the reference of the barrister's clients.

Wadood Khan had come to India with his brother from the North East frontiers. Initially, they were trading but later bought lands and started cultivating. They grew mulberry leaves and commenced sericulture business. They grew prosperous and bought a few houses in the main bazar street of Maldarpet. It so happened that when they were to collect the annual crops, the farmer grew aggressive and abused them. One of Khan's brothers snatched the sickle from the farmers' hand and struck him hard. The farmer fell on the ground with a shirk cry. All the Khan Brothers ran away from the spot. The police apprehended them but because of lack of any evidence or eye witness, they were acquitted. Nature had its own ways to dispose justice. They fell in bad times. They could not go near the lands being mortally afraid of their lives.

They were carrying on the business in silk looms. Due to shortage of raw material, the business ran into debts and a time came when all the brothers had to part their ways. They entered into a family settlement to divide the houses they had acquired with their earnings.

Wadood Khan approached his brother Fareed Khan to part with his portion but Fareed Khan would not relent. He would plead that the house itself was too small that it would be difficult to divide it into two portions. Wadood Khan was in chill penury. He had no place to hide his head. As his persuasions did not yield any result he was directed to the young barrister for relief.



The young barrister was from a noble family. He did not relish undue litigation among the siblings. Hence he suggested Wadood Khan to call for a conciliatory meeting through the Mosque committee. Wadood Khan was very skeptical and knew that it would not cut the ice. Efforts were made by neighbours and well wishes for a settlement but Fareed Khan would lament on his condition.

Wadood Khan again returned to his lawyer and pleaded for initiating legal action but the lawyer suggested that he write a decent letter to Fareed Khan explaining his plight. This also did not yield any result. Wadood Khan was getting annoyed at the lawyer for not taking any action. The lawyer warned Wadood Khan that if he issued a legal notice; the repercussions would not be good. Wadood Khan wondered as to what a simple legal notice could do. The shrewd lawyer knew much more than what ordinary people knew. He had depth of knowledge of human psychology and human affairs. The lawyer took an assurance from Wadood Khan that he should not be held responsible for anything that may happen. Wadood Khan wondered what could happen. The lawyer bluntly told him that the day the legal notice is served on his brother, his brother's heart would break and he would die. Wadood Khan pooh-poohed the claim of the lawyer, whom he considered as an immature and a novice person. After taking assurance from Wadood Khan, the lawyer issued the legal notice to seek the share of his client. Lo and behold the day the notice was served on Fareed Khan, he was so shocked that he kept moving in his room restlessly muttering that his brother had issued legal notice to him and he is being pulled to the court, "what a shame what a shame". In the morning Fareed Khan developed massive pain in his chest and before anything could be done, he collapsed.

Wadood Khan was informed about his brother's death. He rushed to his lawyer holding a copy of the notice and kept muttering, "Haye Haye, Kya ho Gaya" and lamented on his

foolishness. He asked the lawyer to explain as to how he guessed that his brother would die on receiving the legal notice.

The lawyer explained that he could see some mysterious force behind them after the murder of the innocent farmer and as to how they were reduced to chill penury. Further, the brothers were much attached to each other and were united in all their matters and being one in their thick and thin. They had never quarreled or climbed the steps of a Court. Normally in such a situation, the blood being thicker than water, the legal notice creates a friction and breaks the heart into pieces. Heart is the mirror of love and emblem of affection. Legal notice is like a bullet which can pierce and shatter the fragile mirror, hence, the lawyer explained that he was hesitant to take to legal recourse and suggested conciliation. Thus, the curse of the innocent farmer's death was vindicated and Divine Justice was delivered.



**PART II.**  
**ARTICLES**



**HIS MAJESTY, HIS EXCELLENCY,  
HIS HIGHNESS, HIS LORDSHIP,  
HON'BLE SELF MR. I**

His Majesty and Excellency, His Lordship, His Highness, His Honor and Hon'ble Mr. I is no other than our ego and our Id. In Arabic it is referred to as 'Nafs-e-amara', the animal consciousness which is ever ready to raise turmoils and tsunamis of anger and jealousy in the self. It is ever ready to raise its poisonous hood to strike one to death. The ego is harder than a diamond and titanium and rarely does it melt into butter. It controls the mind and intelligence and brings in suffering, misery and pain to the individuals. It is in the rarest of rare cases that it yields and subjugates itself to dictates of reason, justice, humanity, simplicity, sublimity and humility. It is then wisdom dawns on such minds. Unless ego is subjugated, divine light will not shine, nor beauty and truth gets revealed.

The rarest beings who subjugate their ego and Id to the point of zero are the Prophets, Nabis or Swamis, Sadhus and Sants and great Mahatmas, Saints and Gautams and Buddhas. Their entire personality becomes unique and their souls shine with divinity and they carry a halo. Such personalities become true saviors of humanity. They lead humanity to salvation and Truth and they show a clear and straight path; so as to avoid waywardness and prevent the 'I ness' from going astray and leading the self to path of destruction.

There is contrast in the 'I ness'. The very ego becomes subtle and sharp, whereas in other cases it is rude, boisterous, rough and crude. When we compare the ego of Mahatma Gandhi with his opponent MA Jinnah, we notice both of them

being strong characters. While M.K. Gandhi adopted the external appearance of simplicity, MA Jinnah was egocentric, megalomaniac with pomp and style. But ego of both individuals was very strong and unyielding. M.K. Gandhi was introvert and also extrovert, while MA Jinnah was extrovert, stylish, self-centered, rude and stubborn. M.K. Gandhi was a stickler and unyielding in thought and philosophy. He believed in Ahimsa and Dharma; while MA Jinnah supported British during world wars. The point to be noted here is different dimensions in the 'T'ness' of two personalities. Though each of them was egocentric and unyielding in their stand, yet both individuals were different in temperaments. If one was religious and superstitious, the other was rational, legalistic with scientific and fiery in temper. The same ego in human self has different dimensions and in each soul it has its own peculiarities and reflects unique and different rays and colors.

Where a personality and self is meek, humble and submissive, it is matched with wicked and oppressive personality like in the instance of Lord Jesus and his oppressors the Jews. The majestic personality of Pharaoh with might and power is contrasted with a power of a single soul of Prophet Moses.

A humble street painter joins army as a soldier with his egoistic personality climbs the ladder of power and becomes the father of the Nation like in the case of Hitler, who becomes head of military and a dictator to rule and cause ruination.

A person raises his ego and self to highest limit either to dictate over submissive masses or a person with his magnetic charm and personality rules the hearts of humanity as in the instance of Gautama Buddha, Mahavira, Prophet Zoroaster and Prophet Mohammed (pbuh).

Where the will of the masses constitutes power in few individuals, they rule with might and super self in the form of State power. They pass legislations as Supreme authority to

subjugate the will of masses with power to punish and snatch their liberties and freedom in the name of democratic rule or socialistic or communistic rule. The individual will and self merges in the will of masses or the collective consciousness. Individual consciousness gets submerged in the voice of collective consciousness. Moral authority of the masses prevails over individual authority. Thus, power corrupts absolutely and absolute power corrupts absolutely.

The individual self has motives and actions which are basically selfish and self-centered for one's own survival and for one's own pleasures, joys and mirth. Where actions harm other personality or self then such actions are deprecated by will of Society with sanctions on such actions with punitive punishments to restrain such acts, demeanor or behavior. The concept of goodness and evil is recognised. Thus, virtues and sins are conceptualised.

The aim of human life is to achieve individual happiness to the greatest extent and eschew pain and suffering, frustrations and losses. The Soul would like to perpetuate goodness and good deeds in the form of Dharma for salvation and to achieve maximum peace, solace and tranquility but the 'I'ness' in the individual is prone to either suffer by self-flagellation or cause pain and suffering to others. The individual becomes sadist by taking pleasure in causing harm to his oppressors or inflicts pain to his own self on account of oppression by others to seek pleasure like a masochist. Human personality is thus very unique. It is just not one's own I'ness and self which motivates an individual to act in a peculiar manner but one's impulses are guided by hereditary, environment and social causes and selfish motives.

Where an individual raises himself above his self and acquires higher degree of virtues like love, beauty, truth, graciousness, mercy, compassion and does acts of goodness, charity, benevolence, forgiveness then an individual is said to

have raised himself to higher self or divine self or godly self. To rise to such a level then one needs to give up his selfish ego, it requires the selfish ego to be subdued and submerged in the higher self to achieve higher goals in life. It is then the human being achieves peace and tranquility and can attain Moksha or salvation or divinity. It is then an individual's bad deeds or bad karmas are deemed to have been dissolved and erased from the soul.

The collective self or collective consciousness should seek collective happiness and joy by collective acts of goodness and acts that cause greatest benefit to mankind. An individual who has raised himself to the highest degree of goodness can achieve greatest goodness with his generous humanitarian acts for the humanity like Mother Teresa. The great people of nineteen and twentieth century have with their individual efforts contributed to the collective goodness of the humanity. This group includes Scientists, Scholars, Poets, Artists, Social workers, Philanthropists, Saints and Sadhus. The list is very long and their beneficial acts have saved humanity from destruction and loss. New innovations, new thoughts, new ideas have been employed for greatest good of mankind.

If evil and harm to humanity has to be curbed then each and every individual has to raise himself to highest goodness by perfection of manners. This is achieved by elevating the soul, mind and heart to the highest degree of purity.

The collective self and individual self-have to strive very hard to help each and every suffering soul and individual egos to shun their evil acts. Only then peace can be achieved by humanity.

It is the "I-ness" and ego which pursues to achieve its own benefits at the cost of other's welfare. An example is mining of jewels and precious stones and yellow and white metals from the bowels of the earth. The poor miserable miners are left high and



dry by the payment of petty wages. The mine owners and traders create a lure in the minds of wealthy at the cost of poorest of the poor. The collective consciousness should realise its harm to mankind. They should exercise the collective will to stop such mining and trade. So also, in respect of arms, weapons, drugs, alcohol, tobacco and all such things which cause greatest harm to the environment and mankind.

Each individual self must raise its ego to perfection with high ideals and all should collectively work for the common goodness of mankind.

For peace to prevail the rendering of Justice in mankind must be cheap and expeditious. All disputes of individuals and corporates are required to be resolved by arbitration, compromises and Lok Adalats.

Early disposal of disputes will be a boon to mankind. Justice delayed is Justice denied and it causes greatest harm to mankind and destroys peace and happiness.

These principles apply to disputes between Nations and inter States too. Peace is not a wayside flower. It requires great sacrifice and that is by shunning individual and collective pride, ego and greed. Nations are required to resolve their disputes by arbitration and collective efforts and with sincerity to solve the problems affecting them to achieve greatest goodness for mankind.

Each individual Self and "I-ness" should respect the pride and dignity of another person. That can be achieved by tolerance to each other's thoughts and ideologies.

An individual "I-ness" should shun violence and acts of terror that can happen when the state adopts passive spiritual, religions and ethical values to be enforced through educational systems. Moral values have to be collectively enforced or else

each individual “I-ness” and ego with selfish motives attempts to harm the other.

No enforcement authority can bring greatest goodness to mankind. It is only collective goodness and those persons who have elevated their soul to highest degree of goodness can influence Mankind. They alone can bring in a change. Such instances are plenty in the history of Mankind but fanaticism of individual ego and of ‘I-ness’ should eschew its proclivity to harm the collective goodness of mankind.

All those harmful laws, customs, traditions, myths and mythologies and absurdities in societies should be done away by the collective will of all individuals. The legislatures and Parliament are vested with the power by the will of people to act in this regard. Laxity, lethargy, ignorance and vested interest have done great harm to mankind. Every now and then saner elements raise their voice on such illogical laws and ideologies and practices, but collective will of mankind and deep vested interests come in the way of bringing the greatest good to mankind. Several individual lobbies comprising of drugs and arms lobby, liquor and tobacco lobby are acting for the destruction of the common good of mankind. The individual and collective will of mankind should overpower these forces. Corruption of the soul is the root cause of destruction of goodness in mankind.



## **OUR HIGHNESS, LORDING HON'BLE SELF**

Our Majestic Lordship Hon'ble Self Mr. I is a personification of both virtues of angels with angelic beauty and the making of a devil; embodiment both of virtues and evils. The inner devilish self, our shadow, our mischievous slave, an ingenious one is an innovator, creative. Our own inverted selfish egoistic self is always arguing within, with show and pelf. Controverting, stubborn, digging heels, hot headed, a glutton, careless and ruthless and this mischievous self is to be dreaded. The devilish self acquires deep learning but with scurrilous pen and possessing long fiery tongue to cause immeasurable pain to persons of Mankind. The devilish Self is merciless with a heart of stone and having a polluted mind, always looking for an occasion to create dissensions, confusions of every kind among his fellow beings. Our inner devilish Self is always disobedient, forgetful, unholy and without ethical and moral values with cheap tastes, full of lust, chicanery and wickedness. The devilish inner egoistic Self is always changing sides, hypocritical, a turn coat, liar and ambitious. Unmindful of other's concerns always hurting his fellow beings like chameleon changing colors, deceptive and sinning.

Our Majestic lordship, our Excellency, our egoistic self holds within his bosom, dark secrets and refuses to carry a forget and forgive attitude and is always cunning. The egoistic self is scheming and never works for good of his fellow beings.

The inner devilish Self creates in one's self a supreme being, a lordship meant to lord over others, to make slave of petty, humble and gullible people. The devilish Self seeks from fellow men glamour, show and wish to live in piety and glory, always seeking pomp and show; seeking praise and self-

glorification. The Hon'ble Self become his own enemy refuses to be subdued and become humble and compassionate and benign. The Hon'ble Self is quick in temper, anger, spite and venomous and shows jealousy at the progress of his fellow beings; never allows anyone to come close to him or to be happy and smiling. The Hon'ble inner lordship is full with covetousness and greed. Our inner Majestic highness never humbles and always with chin-up and with high nose puffed up with false image of himself. Our Highness cannot marvel at nature's beauty; cannot learn to live in harmony; cannot live with love and grace; cannot wish to see the poverty of mankind nor share their woes and pain; nor care for the lowly suffering destitute. Our Highness, our lordship relishes sumptuous meals', grabs all the material wealth and is never satisfied of his selfish wants; likes glorification and to ever live in pomp and style. Our Highness selfish Self wish to be dressed in silk robes, bedecked with gold, diamond and jewellery studded with precious stones. Our Highness Lording Self lords over his fellow beings mercilessly with whimsicality and eccentricities. Our highness and glorious self-centered Self refuses to acknowledge the best in others and is enemy of all good things of life and enemy of his own soul. Our Hon'ble Self is sadist and egomaniac.



## SAJJADA NISHIN

Sajjada Nishin is the custodian of a Dargah of a Sufi Saint. He is a Sufi belonging to a particular Sufi lineage to which the buried Saint in the Dargah belonged. He heads the Dargah as a spiritual head combining in him secular, religious and spiritual functions. He is also Mutavalli (administrator) of all the properties of the Dargah and for maintenance and management of the affairs of the Dargah including performance of annual Urs ceremony of the Saint of the Dargah. Sajjada Nishin being spiritual head initiates murids (disciples) in the Sufi Order and guides their spiritual growth and for purification of their soul, body and heart to perfection for final merger with Lord of Mercy and Compassion.

Now in these times, Sajjada Nishins of various Dargahs located in Ajmeer, Delhi, Gulbarga, Penugouda Kadapa, Baba Budan Hills and in hundreds of Dargahs in Indo-Pak perform an important spiritual function in upholding secular functions of uniting mankind and members of various religious denominations in the country.

As is the case, they face onslaught from various sects of Islam like Salafis, Wahabies, Ahle-hadis, Tabliqi Jamaat and Jamaat e Islam on the ground that no one can act as an intercessor between man and God and each individual is responsible for his moral upliftment and to answer for his own moral conduct.

Sajjada Nishins are totally dedicated to Sufi activity and do not employ themselves in worldly activity by any avocation. This being the case, it invites criticism from non Sufis on the ground that they are dependent in the income of their disciples or on the charity and offerings made to the Darga. However, there are

Sajjada Nishins of famous Shrines of Indo-Pak region who are highly regarded and respected for their spiritual attainments and for their services to the society in general. The Darga of Gesu Daraz in Gulbarga runs several educational institutions including Medical and Engineering College and hospital.

Sajjaada Nashins are apolitical and stay away from politics and worldly affairs or for that matter involving in commercial and business activity. They are dedicated to spiritual learning and moral and spiritual upliftment of their disciples and for those who are devotees of the Saint of the Darga.

Among their teachings is the total effacement of the Ego and for total merger in the Murshid – the Guru i.e. the Sajjada Nishin who acts as or a spiritual guide (murshed) for the mureeds, his disciples. The total dissolution of one's Ego is an important step in the spiritual growth and for reaching the highest point of spirituality. The Murshed recognises the various consciousness's working in a self and dissolves his selfish ego and 'Iness" to achieve spiritual and divine consciousness.



## **RISHIES, SWAMIES, SADHUS, ACHARYAS, YOGIES, MUNNIES AND GURUS OF INDIA**

They are the most ancient practitioners of spirituality, knowledge and wisdom handover from ancient times. They have mastered the Vedas and various techniques of Yoga. They follow a 'Satvic' life full of prayers, dedication and longing to meet the Divine by them achieving the position of becoming an Avatar and Bhagavan. To reach the pinnacle of being an Avatar or Bhagavan is not so easy said than done. The training starts from young age of a toddler and they belong to an ancient tradition handed down from generations. It requires huge training and cultivating the inner Ego and 'Iness' to supreme perfection and elevating the Self to divinity.

In our country there are hundreds of muths and thousands of Swamies, Sadhu, Acharyas, Gurus and Yogies. They preside over their muths and head their religious organisation. They have a set pattern of Satvic living with dress code and mode of worship with millions of followers.

Among such divine persons arose great Masters with millions of followings like Sankaracharya, Kabir, Meera, Guru Nanak and succession of 10 Gurus; Sree Ramana Maharishi, Sri Rama Krishna Parahamsa, Swami Vivekananda, Shirdi Sai baba, Satya Sai Baba, Sri Maharishi and his followers.

Their main aim is to achieve moksha by practicing Dharma and Ahimsa. Their spiritual practices are intense and fine to elevate their soul to highest degree of perfection with Satvic and fine living. They become saviors of humanity and guide the masses for dharmic living practicing ahimsa and peace.

India has been very fortunate in having multitudes of these spiritual souls who have become beacon of light, to shed spiritual enlightenment to all and sundry irrespective of caste, creed and religion. Their life style and living is an example for their devotees and followers and for all those who would like to follow their spiritual and secular life. Their spiritual, educational and social work centers and their volunteers have been elevating the well-being of the masses. Their selfless service to Mankind has brought people to divine path and help usher in peace and prosperity in our nation. Their dharmic and pure way of living with practice of principles of Satya, Shanti and Sundaram has been a perfect example for their followers who in turn help in the cultural and spiritual upliftment of the masses.





## **A FAKIR, A SADHU, A MENDICANT AND A RAG PICKER**

A common thread which runs through a fakir, sadhu, mendicant and a rag picker is that their ego is smashed and broken and they have no desires, fantasies, frustrations, depressions and wants. They are free from hopes, worldly positions and opportunities and anything concerning wealth and fortunes.

A beggar looks for charity, accumulates all coins and currency notes but leaves it under his blanket when he breathes his last, while a fakir and a Sadhu never keeps or accumulates. They live for the moment and time and hence they are referred to as 'Sons of the time' (Ib nul waqt). They have a Master to lead them to the path of nothingness and to reach the pinnacle of spiritual goal and that is by shunning the ego and curbing all the desires and to bring in to zero. They have no desire for heaven nor fear of hell nor desire even for moksha or for merger with Supreme Being. They just loose all that is there in their consciousness to reach the light. They have a goal but not a rag picker or a beggar. Thus, they enlighten themselves.

A rag picker and a beggar are homeless with hopelessness and dejection and may be with frustration enveloping them but not so of a Fakir and Sadhu and religious mendicant. They are always in a state of joy and ecstasy, free from worries or fear of any kind. They are recluse and at best wanderers, owning nothing nor requiring anything from any one. Our Prophet Mohammed (pbuh) who is considered as the greatest fakir and he would declare that 'poverty is my pride' and possessed highest dignity, courtesy and full of virtues of simplicity, sublimity, humility, grace, benevolence, charity, silence and being meditative, generous, open hearted and possessing a heart of

gold. Such is the case with fakirs who emulate the example of Prophet Mohammed (pbuh).

Fakirs, Sadhus, Gurus and Swamis sit in deep meditation and go in trance; their transcendental meditation takes them to great heights of spirituality and they are attained souls and enlightened. This is the case with Jain munnies and Buddhist monks; Mahavira and Siddhartha gave up their thrones and became Gowthams and Buddhas. They thereby reached divinity and achieved a halo. Purity of mind, soul and body is the aim of Sufis but all Sufies do not reach the highest echelons of spirituality barring a few in a given time. They are all free from duality.



## **THE PERSONALITY OF A MOTHER**

Mother is personification of love, compassion and kindness. Hence mother in many cultures is considered as an Avatar of god and goddess. She is godmother as She loses her complete identity in the person of her child. She bears the child in womb for nine months and as soon as she gives birth to the child, milk of human kindness flows from her breast for the new born to suck till the child can grow up and feed on cow's milk and other nutrients. She burns the candle of her life for the well-being of her child totally forgetting about her comfort, bearing all the pain of child bearing cheerfully and gleefully. Night and day she sacrifices her comforts, her leisure and gives her everything for the wellness of her child. This continues till she exists and her life is for her children and for their welfare. She takes utmost care of her child and bestows best of attention with deep love. She burns midnight candles for the upbringing of her child. She is constant in her love and nothing can shake her from loving her child and many more children she bears. Each and every of her children are her favorites and she does not distinguish her children from one or the other. She inculcates best of culture, manners in a child and furthers the child's mind with pure thoughts and moulds the child's character and conduct. Come rain or summer shine, she is at the beck and call of her children and bestows her best attention in all times to come till her last breath. This sacrifice of mother is possible because of effacement of her ego and 'Iness'. It can happen only when the heart has turned golden and mind glitters with love and deep affection. 'Mother is love and love is Mother'; caring, comforting, pacifying, creating hopes, applying balm to the wounds and restoring ruffled feathers. She suffers sleepless nights to give comfort to her children. She protects her children

all through from adversaries. She takes away all the grief, sorrows and pathos and protects the children from parching Sun; from rain and storms; covers with blankets for warmth and to prevent from shivering of cold. She goes hungry and suffers thirst to feed her children at all times and seasons. She prays and prays for grace and love to fall on her children. She sucks away all the poison from the wounds of her children so that her children can live in happiness. A mother has shunned her identity and becomes nameless, faceless to give succor to her children. So rightly it has been said that heaven lies below the feet of mother. If one needs benediction then one needs to serve one's mother. It is the mother's prayers and supplication that brings success and glory to the children.



## DON QUIXOTE: THE JUGGLER

Don Quixote is quite a marvelous fellow. He is known to be a high-brow, bald, fat with a squint eye, always deliriously laughing, chuckling, sneering at all and sundry. It is his habit to pull the legs of everyone and make fun at every opportune moment. He would put everyone in deep embarrassment with his pungent and comical comments and make everyone in the company to burst into peals of laughter, leaving the person to whom he pokes fun go into deep embarrassment. He came to be known as a 'joker' the fun master.

He acquired great talent to know about the various delicacies of food items, of every specialty in every small and big place. Not just that he would speak at length on the varieties of silk sarees and the taste of ladies for fancy items, jewellery and the way they dress, throw glances on machos, about their temperaments, tastes, likes and dislikes.

Don has smattering knowledge of astrology, palmistry of 'Vedas', 'Doshas', 'Yoga Kaarakas' and 'Sani Dhirishti' about omens, signs, Amulets to be worn and poojas to be performed to ward off the evil effects of the enemy planets, of 'grahas' and 'gocharas'.

He has a smattering knowledge and claims to have learnt all Indian languages and about having attained its five thousand years of history and its cultures too He became an ardent 'Baba' devotee and would visit the mutt of every 'Swami'. He would spend his evenings in the Bar and drives home at midnight in his car. He would have his morning walks in his half pants and practice yoga postures of every kind after his morning coffee, he scans the share-value in the "Financial Express". He would dress his conversation with gaudy jokes and spun-out fables, whether

at home or at his work place. Posing as an intellectual he would seek every opportunity to peep into the hearts and secrets of any lovely women by befriending them with his jokes, funny manners and songs and presenting fragrant colorful roses and jasmines. He at last for his quixotic manners, behavior came to be known as 'Don Quixotic', the joker of the latest kind. He has his own whimsicalities and temper, unreliable, slippery and untrustworthy. Sometimes, he would make himself a dumb stupid fool.



**PART III.**  
**POEMS**





## POEMS ON THE POSITIVE NATURE OF MAN

### WOOING TRUTH

Truth being crystal clear,  
Needs no eulogy or praise,  
Its effulgence and brightness it showers  
On loving and compassionate souls.

Truth pursued with sincerity and humility  
showers its spiritual grace and bliss.  
Truth is complete only with Love,  
Compassion, Mercy, Charity and Justice.

Truth is eternal and surpasses  
All barriers and is beyond nothingness.  
Truth is infinite and dwells in hearts  
Pure and simple, humble and kind.



## **O! TRUTH!**

Oh, long-awaited Truth! Descend from heaven above  
And shower on me thy mercy and thy love.  
My failings have stamped on me their black-mark;  
Please light up my conscience, gloomy and dark.

Self-pity has enveloped my whole being  
And blinded my eyes, preventing me from seeing  
The path of Growth and, in others, Belief.  
From my shortcomings help me find relief.

Whenever my anger roars and thunders,  
It makes me commit all sorts of blunders!  
It crumbles my will to do good deeds,  
Makes me look small, and to shame it leads!

O Truth, pure and ever sublime,  
To drive away my passions and guilt, tell 'Time',  
Cool my senses and light up my mind  
So that a home in my heart, LOVE may find.



## SIMPLICITY

Isn't Simplicity Divinity profound?  
In it is sincerity found.  
Shining Truth radiates its glory;  
It's lustrous light tells its own story.

It admits not an iota of lie;  
It lets not calmness ever die,  
It gives Tranquility its due,  
And patience is its main virtue.

Profound it is in goodness,  
And quick in its forgiveness.  
Steady and straight is its path,  
Its thoughts, in purity take a bath.

All promises made, it keeps up,  
With knowledge it fills its cup.  
Simplicity is humble and modest  
But never bows to pride's behest.

It always remains without fear;  
It everyone it's always dear.



## **A BORN LEADER**

It was the crying need of the times that projected him;  
A find, blessed with all good qualities by nature –  
To sail with the wind or against it whenever necessary,  
To read the pulse of the people and to respect their sentiment,  
To distance adversaries, to act tough with scoundrels,  
To be generous to friends, to tap available talent,  
To make amends or compromise whenever due,  
To fight when it's a must and lie low in bad times,  
To let the rein loose or pull it tight when required –  
A born leader with good quality of head and heart,  
A courageous man with a tough and iron will.



## A MESSIAH

A founder of a great movement is he,  
The uplift of his countrymen is dear to his heart,  
Schools, Colleges, Hospitals, and Societies,  
He struggles to motivate his people to start.  
Mingles with all irrespective of class,  
And silently works for their betterment  
With a glowing face and a flowing beard,  
He's well groomed and dressed, though not showy.  
A harbinger of peace, amity and friendship,  
Is this pious man of sterling character.  
He's a man of his word, firm and dedicated  
Who loathes to see his people in penury,  
Though he is hailed day in and day out  
He remains humble despite praise and fame.



## A BORN MAHATMA

A Mahatma is an institution  
Of culture, good breeding and nobility.  
He's always a treasured gift to his nation \_\_  
A gentle person of integrity.

Love is stocked in his noble soul  
For the well-being of man and nature  
He moves steadily towards the goal;  
Profoundly learned, he's a good teacher.

Determination is his weapon main,  
Patient in failure, humble in success,  
He seeks not flattery nor ever grows vain;  
The more his fame, his pride is the less.

Among the nobles he's a prince,  
A sparkling sun among the scholars,  
Of Right and Virtue bold in defense,  
He's broad in vision with a mind secular.



## TOTAL SURRENDER

I love HIM, respect HIM and honour HIM;  
Each breath of mine is spent in His service.  
Day and night merge and I slave forever  
Out of dedication, Love of Labour.  
Neither vagaries of weather, ill health  
Nor desires, nor slumber can deter me.  
With deep devotion, I burn the Candle  
Of my life at His feet in total surrender.  
I have no complains, demands, compulsions,  
No grievances, grief, or pain.  
Undoubtedly, I am captured by HIM;  
I am now left with no will of my own.  
My Master's service is my main motto  
I wish I were a dog to befriend HIM.



## **POWER OF CREATIVE PEOPLE**

There are some people who create  
Material goods for one's pleasure,  
Another kind make musical instruments,  
And sports goods to enjoy at leisure,  
Some others create great works of  
Art and literature, which are a treasure.

Creative men have always a following  
Of supporters who, by their works, are thrilled.  
They not only praise but propagate their works  
Which encourages them to become more skilled:  
Even their enviers are soon subdued;  
Admiration and aura in them are instilled.

Thus creative people, over others, tower;  
The world bows down before their power.





## **SIMPLETON**

A simple straight-forward person is this man,  
Who calls a spade a spade without mincing words,  
He does not mix drinks. Ever ready to help friends,  
He's always truthful, forgiving and kind-hearted,  
Though his plain-speaking sounds sometimes harsh,  
Showing genuine concern for the distressed,  
And sharing his meal and purse with the needy,  
He's a man with simple habits and a golden heart.



## **A SECULAR PERSON!**

A highly religious person,  
Superstitious, a believer in astrology  
In omens and amulets. Visits temples  
Dargas, churches, gurdwaras.  
Prays to every deva and devata.  
Regularly fasts on 'ekadasi', offers  
Prasadams to every deity. Seeks  
Solace from sadhus, saints, seers, fakirs.  
Participates in every pooja function  
Is a member of umpteen committees, for?  
Upkeep of religious rites and rituals.  
A very secular person indeed!



## **A BALANCED PERSON**

He never takes at once what is offered. But  
Attends to it cautiously, studies it.  
Consults, weighs its pros and cons.  
A deep person but always, still and calm.  
Takes his own time to decide a matter.  
With forethought, insight and depth.  
Takes failures in his stride.  
Success does not enter his head.  
He is a well-balanced personality!



## **LIVES IN HIS OWN WORLD**

He is a very cautious one.  
But a doubting Thomas.  
Never trusts or believes in any one  
Person. He works with a single minded devotion.  
A man of books, burns midnight oil.  
Listens patiently, goes to the roots,  
Of the matter, to uncover truth.  
Never boastful, but minds his business  
A virtuous person, living in his own world!



## A MAN OF PATIENCE

You would not know, what he keeps in his mind.  
Silent, calm, steady, always in deep thought.  
Never interfering, minding his own business.  
Always with a book or a newspaper or an  
Umbrella in hand. Old fashioned, punctual, disciplined.  
When dissatisfied, gives a cold look.  
Listens to classical music, but never expressive.  
A disciplinarian, fastidious of things and orderliness.  
Frugal and simple in habits, never boastful.  
A man of few words and patience



## A CITIZEN OF THE WORLD

He is a man of iron-will  
Firm in mind, soft in heart,  
Agile, active and restless  
Bold and quick in decisions.  
Forces his enemies to silence.  
Surrounded by friends, always helpful  
To distressed, moved by poverty  
And sorrows of mankind. Makes  
Amends quickly. Loving, never hurtful  
Tolerent and God fearing. Social and cheerful.  
Generous, magnanimous and sympathetic.  
He is a man of words, keeps his promise.  
A citizen of the world.



## **A PERSON PAR EXCELLENCE**

So many people come to him  
To pour forth their woes,  
Their miseries, their platitudes.  
He silently listens to them.  
Shares their sorrows and joys.  
He is a person par excellence.



## **BE OPTIMISTIC**

You need to have a clear mind,  
And should know what you want  
From life. A lot of things happen  
Around you. But you need to  
Be alert all the time. Lest you  
Go overboard with the sensations,  
Bickerings, scandals, scams,  
Criticism, condemnations and quarrels.  
You need intuition and act with  
Spontaneity, improvisation.  
Be sure and above all have  
Immense faith in yourself.  
And be optimistic, all the time.





## A GENTLEMAN

He is thoroughly professional,  
A thoroughbred and cultured.  
A noble soul, a gentleman,  
Honest, hardworking and he knows  
His fundamentals and basics.  
A person of charm and quality.  
Light of step, with an open, soft,  
Gentle smile, large lively eyes.  
He exhibits enormous integrity.  
A clear mind with firmness  
Of character and good conduct,  
Finesse and personally congenial.



## **DIVINE MOTHER**

O' Mother divine! You are a virgin dove.  
Of virtues, righteousness, purity.  
You have nurtured faith, courage, sacred love,  
For the selfless sincere humanity.

O' sweet daughter of an humble chosen one!  
With heart of gold, lovely hands of Mercy,  
Feeding hungry rags, lepers with milk and bun.  
Though, thankless world has gone mad and crazy!

You cuddled in your arms, the dying souls.  
Receiving them with cheer and smile on face,  
Though, they never aspired for heavenly goals,  
Yet, sparkling divinity, charmed them with grace.



## A KIND LADY

The lotus of her heart opened up  
Emitting sweet smelling scent  
And fragrance floating in the air  
The twinkling eyes sparkling light.

Her gait was lovely and charming  
Pleasantness surrounding her  
With motherly concerns, heavenly.  
Disarming smiles and honeyed tongue.

With open arms receiving one and all  
With deep understanding sharing sorrows  
Sharing her meals, with loving manners  
A divine lady, a rose among thorns.

A picture of peace, with milk of kindness.  
Everyone yearns for her affection.



## A TRIBUTE TO A TEACHER

A teacher is a beacon of light  
Like a luminous lamp beaming bright  
Enlightening the dull, insipid minds,  
With knowledge of every kind.

An embodiment of love and affection  
Taking personal care with deep devotion  
Sacrifices pleasures to give all he knows  
So that the mind of the pupil grows

In return, a teacher, seeks goal wishes  
To see the youths, practice, what he preaches  
Like a lovely stream with endless flow of milk and honey  
Bring silver lining to dark clouds give poor his money.

Gentle in manners, courteous, with gifts of virtue  
Brings peace and teaches violence to eschew.



## FREE YOURSELVES

The age old caprice, the bias  
The colours given to the mind  
The jaundiced eyes, prejudices  
Inculcated through ages and times.

From elders, learnt and gathered  
Imbibed hatred, absorbed rivalry  
Made to believe in inequality of man  
Made to believe superior to one and all.

A different life style, walks and gait  
A different dress code, hairstyle, beard;  
Tuft, or turban or cross or a tilak  
To ever remind and keep the hatred alive.

Shun, erase, remove, recoil from the mind  
Purify the heart and glorify it  
With recitation of the pure Names of the Lord  
To free for ever from shackles of every kind.



## A RARE FIND

What a marvelous human mind is?  
Creates fantasies, myths and terror  
Lies, hypocrisy, deception or fraud  
Goes berserk, loses its balance, is mad.

The same mind becomes creative  
Of civilisation, culture and music,  
Art, literature, science and fiction.  
Builds cities, towers and places of worship.

Mind indulges in mirth and pleasure  
Passions grip it to unleash their power.  
Anger overpowers as fire to destroy.  
Pathos and grief overwhelm to subjugate.

A mind pure, simple and crystal clear  
Reflects on mysteries of man and nature  
Ponders, thinks, evaluates and brings peace  
A rational mind with compassion is rare indeed.



## SAINT WORSHIP

It is true that the saint is dead  
Buried, mingled and has become  
One with the soil, dust unto dust  
He was one like us to passby.

It is also true, that person  
Faced all the human weakness  
Body aches, pains, diseases,  
Squalor, poverty, hunger, privation.

But the saint was a person  
Par excellence, brilliant spiritually  
Great in thoughts, deeds and virtues  
He was personification of all kindness.

Nature bestowed on him rare gifts  
He sparkled like a fine cut diamond  
We pay respects to his purified soul,  
And sing paeans to Lord, the Benefactor.



## HANDLE HER WITH CARE

She is flesh and blood with zest, zeal  
Enthusiasm bubbling in her  
With desires, rhyme and reason  
With delicacy, taste and beauty  
With dreams of a lovely garden  
With flowers to grow aplenty  
With fragrance and scent spreading  
With charms and sense of humour  
With sweetness or bitterness  
With jealousy aplenty, gossipy  
That is a woman with frailty  
Inhuman, it is to ravish or desert her.  
Respect her sensibilities and intellect  
Handle her like delicate china  
Lest she break under rough handing  
And life loses all its joy and mirth.





## WHO AM I?

Is there a world beyond the five senses?  
Beyond perception, thoughts, ideas \_  
Beyond imaginations and fantasies  
Beyond your own consciousness?

What is it you ought to know by this –  
“Who am I – discover your own self”  
Is yourself, a complex inner psyche?  
Of conglomeration of composite cultures?  
Learning to meet situations of life  
Learning to live a successful life.

Are you to discover your inner strength  
Inner weakness, inner potential  
Your mirth, pleasures and joys  
Your sorrows, platitudes and grieves?

Is it to raise yourself by deep meditation  
Seeking release from attachments  
A composed mind sans sensations  
Transcending frontiers of time and space  
And see universe in a grain of sand  
And raise yourself above your selfish self!



## REMEMBERING MOTHER

When you are left exposed  
Unprotected, unsheltered  
In the parching sun

When you are left in jungles  
Infested with deadly snakes  
Hyenas and dangerous beings

When you are left alone  
To drown in the storms  
Cyclones and tempests

When you are left alone  
To shiver unprotected in  
Cold wintry and snowy nights

You remember and call  
Your mother to return again  
To shower those kisses and fond love.



## 27 MY MOTHER

My mother took away all  
My grieves, sorrows and pathos  
Protected me from parching  
Sun, drenched in rain and storms.  
Protected me from shivering  
Covered me with blankets for warmth  
My mother went hungry and thirsty  
To feed me, suffered aplenty.

Prayed and prayed for grace  
And love to befall me  
My mother sucked away  
All the poison from my  
Decaying body, so that I  
Can live in peace and happiness.



## O! MOTHER

You are the whisper of the leaves,  
As I walk down the garden,  
You are the smell of fragrance,  
In my freshly-laundered clothes.  
You are the cool hand on my brow,  
When I am sick and unwell.  
You are pearl in my tear-drop.  
You are my first love and affection.  
You are my barometer and senses,  
You are my breath and health.  
You are life-star to guide me forever.



## SINCERITY

Sincerity touches the heart  
Touches every one indeed  
Touches infinity surely  
Sincerity is pure and simple.  
It has no choice  
It shows no undue favor  
It has no prejudice  
It has no hate.

Sincerity is for all  
Sincerity is everything  
Good and sublime  
Sincerity is rare in its kind.

It has no beginning  
It has no end  
It flows and flows  
Like a crystal clear stream



## MIND

The mind, the human mind of every kind  
On birth soft like a pudding, growing  
Tougher and tougher, yet remaining silken  
Iron melts, stone cut to smithereens pieces  
The mind, crystal clear, reflecting rainbows  
Multi-color dimensional of various hues  
Kernel in a nut, but toughened, strengthened  
Like a diamond, a graphite, unyielding  
Unbending, unbreakable, with profoundness  
To outreach beyond infinity and still beyond  
The very mind like a swine falling  
In gutters, rolling in filth and decaying  
You need a diamond to cut another  
One kind meets the other of like one  
Either to befriend or turn to a foe  
To join and shake hands or to wrestle.



## **MASTANI MA – THE GREEN ONE**

On a fine summer day, a high profile friend.  
A devotee of an centurion lady saint,  
Took me in his car, to the town of Chittoor,  
Passing through a forest and hilly track.

It was past noon, when we reached the place.  
A mausoleum of white stone, with chambers.  
Masons, Stone cutters were dressing and chipping stones.  
Giving finishing touches and laying the floor.

In a corner sat, the holy one in green kurta pajamas.  
We fell on her lotus feet to seek her blessings.  
She opened her Tiffin carriers and served us  
With sumptuous rice, sambar, vegetables, pickles.

To all low and high present, she greeted,  
Offered them food with a sweet smile.  
Child like innocence radiated from her being.  
Though, she has been fasting over half a century.

She spoke softly to say about herself.  
Of her penance on three hundred sixty hills.  
Showed us a room with pebbles of various colours,  
Collected from each hill, where she sat in prayers

She examined my pulse and said, I suffer  
From illnesses, which were unknown to me.  
Of evil effects of foes and black magic.  
Of my inner sorrows, pangs and bitterness.

In low tone, she blessed me with sagely advice.  
To be true to Lord and recite His Names.  
To love all His creatures with compassion.  
To shun being enemy of my own soul.  
*To raise new gardens, with new hopes.*  
To give fresh lease to a decaying land?





## MAN ARAFA NAF SAHU

“Man Arafa Naf Sahu”, “Know your Own self” is the main slogan Of “Tassawuff” (Sufism). The huge Cosmos and the intricate design Of nature is stupendous and Marvellous. This is of the outside the Inner being is equally harmonious and meticulously designed. Despite Our mental confusion, lack of proper understanding and clear logic, The internal system works in perfect Harmony and precision. Million thanks and praises to the Great Creator, Whose bounty is vast and unlimited. First is to see the signs or signature Of Allah in nature, in oneself and His total command over us and our helplessness and despondency. The more we reflect on oneself and on Allah the more praise is uttered by the Tongue and breath.



## HOW TO REACH THE TRUTH?

Please tell me as to why it is difficult to  
Reach the TRUTH and so easy to lie?  
Truth is a steep mountain, slippery  
And difficult to climb. It requires courage  
Of conviction. Faith is its foundation  
and Certainty is its wheels. Love is  
Its engine and prayers is its petrol.  
It has to confront obstacles, rough  
Weather. It requires sacrifice. It has  
to face hunger and thirst. Sometimes  
it loses face and has to face humiliation,  
insults. TRUTH is let down by one and all.  
It has to stand above like a scare-crow  
in a rice field. TRUTH is always simple  
and most humble. It fulfills all its promises  
and oaths. It is never deceptive neither it  
Camouflages. It is open-minded and open-  
Hearted, never secretive or suspicious. It is  
generous and hospitable and charitable.  
It is quick in forgiveness and in repentance  
It is fearless and crystal-clear. It shed tears for  
Sufferers. One who is truthful reaches ETERNAL  
Light and LORD i.e. Reality.



## WHAT IS KHULUS?

I want to know from you as to what  
Is “Khulus” and who is “Muklis”?  
Satan is afraid of “Mukliseens”.  
Those are most humble, God-fearing  
And most simple ones. Is simplicity,  
Sincerity profound? In it humility  
resides and Divinity descends. A sincere  
Person is a most humble person, is  
Without ostentations, without pride,  
prejudice. He does not put on airs,  
he is never arrogant and haughty.  
He walks with softness.  
His speech is honeyed-tongue.  
He has no roughness.  
He is gentle to the core.  
He is forgiving and does not mind  
taunts, criticism and humiliations.  
He suffers pain, agony with light –  
hearted humour. He is not angry  
But jolly and extremely good,  
good and good and full of love.



## MEMORY

Memory is a most precious gift to mankind,  
Coupled with intelligence; Less intelligent  
Persons have poor memory. Loss of memory,  
Alas! Is a divine disfavor to an individual  
Had Adam not forgotten his promise to  
His Lord and momentarily fallen prey to his  
Temptation then he would not have suffered.  
But Destiny had already decided for him  
Progeny and worldly abode as a test  
For him and for his descending  
Generations. We fail again and again  
Flounder again and again commit  
Mistakes after mistakes because of  
Failure of memory. See how Brahmins  
Have succeeded. It is because they take  
Every little minute care to preserve  
Their memory and have fashioned their  
Daily living in such a way that  
Memory is preserved and becomes their lasting gift.



## HUMILITY AND SUBMISSION

Only those who submit with humility to the Lord  
Will free themselves from pride, anger and ego.  
The Satan has promised not to trouble the humble.  
What are the characteristics of a humble man?  
He is truthful, simple in manners, talks and dress.  
He is gentle to the core in his speech and gait.  
He is never harsh to the less fortunate ones.  
He is courteous to his parents, relatives, friends.  
He walks with softness with eyes on the ground.  
He never complains of his misfortunes and woes.  
He is always thankful for the Bounties received.  
He is pleasing to all to whom he addresses.  
He is full of self-control with twinkle in his eyes.  
He is patient and exherts himself to maintain it.  
He recognises the good done to him by one and all.  
He performs his duties cheerfully without complaints.



## **EVER SUBMISSIVE**

He is a man of love, unspoken, unheard.  
Calmness descending from his being.  
Silent like a cool free-flowing streams.  
Welcoming with open arms men of all hues.  
With sparkling eyes and welcoming smiles.  
With graceful gait and soft spokenness.  
With gentlemanly manners and lovely looks.  
With butter words and pleasing speech.  
With warmth in heart for one and all.  
Ever submissive to the Lord's call.



## GOOD AND EVIL

One who lays down his life,  
For Truth, is truly a martyr.  
Life cannot be bargained  
When bare-chest receives bullets.  
A Mahatma is born as a saviour  
Dies with Name of Lord on his lips.  
To remind the sunken humanity,  
That truth shall shine forever.  
A puny man of purity and love.  
Is made to drink hemlock.  
Great Man died on the cross,  
To wash the sins of humanity.  
“I am Truth”, proclaimed Mansur Hallaj.  
Only to be guillotined and dismembered.  
O Man! Thou art angel and Satan too.  
Ring out the evil, embrace the good.



## **TYRANTS VS. PROPHETS**

Some kings need to wage wars;  
Burn the towns to rescue  
The hostages and henchmen;  
They slaughter the opponents mercilessly.  
Prophets though blessed with miracles,  
Divine powers; yet bear the brunt  
Of opponents, enemies and disbelievers.  
They never avenge their adversaries.  
Prophets, saints and their followers,  
Are totally surrendered to the Master.  
Humility and sublimity are their hall-marks.  
With golden heart full of mercy.  
While tyranny grips the minds of dictators.  
They pursue good people like predators.





## **GOLDEN HEARTS**

We have blurred our visions,  
Colored our thoughts with  
Quixotic ideas. Now we want  
To give a fight like Arjuna.  
To reach an imaginary goal;  
Closing our minds and eyes,  
And crying at the dense darkness  
Oblivious of march of Time to a new era.  
The Great One's have said: God can't be found  
In hills, mountains, plains and in Temples,  
Mosque, churches, gurudwaras and synagogues,  
But only in sublime, purified golden hearts.



## SAINTS AND RISHIS

“Chased by celestial beings.  
The sun hid in my heart.  
The moon in my mind.  
And stars in my eyes.  
Nor Tsunamis, nor quakes.  
Nor tornados nor storms.  
Could now shake me.  
I am planted firm in cosmos.  
Beauty and luster flow through my eyes.  
Million lights beam through my self.  
Fire from my tongue can burn my enemies.  
Nothing is hidden from my gaze”  
Such were the claims of the Saints and Rishis.  
Can we hope to have their glimpse now?



## MY GURU

Yes, I have my Guru.  
Who is blessed.  
Who is innocent.  
Although unlettered.  
But the Lord  
Has opened His  
Knowledge and His  
World on my Guru.  
My Guru is a kindred spirit.  
He has no peer.  
To equal his excellence.  
His is matchless.  
My Guru does not  
Show tricks and magic.  
Does not call himself as an avatar,  
But is a simple, humble person.  
My guru lives in a thatched roof.  
Open to all, at all hours.  
Sweet in tongue, gentle and kind.  
Compassionate to the core,  
With bright twinkling eyes.  
My Guru's message is love,  
To embrace the whole humanity.



## ADORING SAINTS

By visiting the graves,  
Mausoleums of saints.  
We draw inspiration.  
From their lives and works.  
Their humanity, generosity.  
Their culture, gentleness.  
Their humility, sincerity.  
Their godliness, simplicity.  
Their silence, benevolence.  
Their calmness, sweetness.  
Their love and affection.  
Their kindness, compassion.  
Their charity, benevolence.  
Their broad mindedness, vision.  
Their learning and wisdom.



## **FREE FROM ALL**

When Saints, Yogis and Sufis shun life.  
They in fact are giving up ownership, over lordship  
Over chattel and property, over persons, things.  
They give up the angry and belligerent attitude.

They have nothing to take, nothing to give.  
They are above all material pleasures.  
Freed themselves of worldly wants and desires.  
So that their heart sparkles bright.

They have unburdened their baggage.  
Without savings or bank accounts, purse.  
Neither they need to give nor to take anything.  
Their relationship is platonic with the world.

Their heart and mind is free from the world.  
So that they concentrate on that Being.



## **O SOLITUDE!**

O Solitude! You reside in the hearts  
Of Saints, Rishies, Yogis and Prophets.  
In the empty hearts of poets, musicians,  
Whose tiny fingers write great works of Art.

O Solitude! You seek company  
In the lonely hearts of the lovers,  
Whose grace, music, romance and love  
Have woven stories, legends to sigh.

Sorrows reside in the temples of silence.  
In the towers of excellence and beauty.  
To sparkle and glow like Venus  
Like full Moon to shed pure light.

Sorrows walk and trample thorns.  
To enable joys to walk on roses.

To sparkle and glow like Venus  
Like full Moon to shed pure light.

Sorrows walk and trample thorns.  
To enable joys to walk on roses.



## O SIDDHARTHA

O my Siddhartha! My darling my sweet one.  
How I longed for you? How my love encoiled  
When my eyes met yours, your eyes were longing  
For something unknown, your anguishes, pain

Unresolved, you had million questions in your mind.  
I put my hands around your neck, your back.  
Met your lips with mine, the suppleness was gone.  
You said you loved me, but loved something unknown more.

One fine morning you vanished like a thin air  
Leaving my bed cold and the whole palace was rocked  
The golden palanquins were stationary  
So also the mighty horses and carriages.

You left the high and mighty empire for jungles.  
To meditate, contemplate on the obscurity.  
To find answers to your ever puzzling mind.  
To quench the thirst for knowledge of the unknown.

O my darling Siddhartha! Misery and suffering moved you.  
Sorrows of the world burnt your heart, rend your mind.  
You sought solutions to the suffering mankind.  
Your deep meditation, silence of mind found answers.

You found deep attachments to desires and ambitions  
Are the cause for unhappiness, sorrow, disarray.  
Right conduct, right action, right speech, right thought  
And eight fold path would relieve man of his soul's burden.

You showed man kind to relieve inner conflicts,  
Inner burdens and ways to avoid sins.  
To achieve happiness, bliss and 'Nirvana.'  
To be ever light in body, mind and soul.





## “NIRVANA, MOKSHA”

One cannot embrace death on its bidding,  
But can make efforts to succeed  
In dying, before death can call on you.  
It is the dying of passions and impulses,  
You purify your inner consciousness  
Of all negative feelings and emotions,  
You reach the shore of a calm sea,  
To merge as a drop in the ocean.  
To become one with reality.  
The truth dawns with its effluence  
And you get enlightened, elevated.  
The meandering of the monkey mind  
Stops and mind becomes calm, tranquil  
You achieve a glimpse of ‘Nirvana’, ‘Moksha.’



## HOW TO ATTAIN MOKSHA, NIRVANA?

Planets wealth in the hands of  
Diabolical satanic devilish men  
And in genies of various kind  
With diabolical designs and means  
To loot, crush and destroy  
The mute, silent, harmless  
Mankind, faceless mankind.  
The enormous diabolical, unimaginable  
Uncountable wealth in these  
Hands of men of tyranny.  
To keep in grip the mankind's  
Intellectuals, parliamentarians,  
Judiciary, law and justice, and men  
In all walks of life. Can  
One free himself from these forces?  
To attain 'moksha' and 'nirvana'.



## **GODLY BEHAVIOR**

When the mercy, compassion  
Charity, tremendousness  
Of the Lord, transcends  
In to the divine consciousness  
A person of purity of mind  
And heart becomes Divine.  
He displays Lord's qualities  
And humanity gets benefitted.  
The tongue of such a person  
Utters profound truths.  
The eye watches Beauty,  
The heart sparkles with love.  
The gait changes to innocence.  
Christ like behavior becomes explicit.  
A Midas touch turns sand to gold.  
A healer, a teacher, a Buddha.



## WHEN THE HEART TURNS TO A STONE

When might and terror take hold of him  
When justice is flayed and is lost  
When humaneness is totally surrendered  
When harshness overcomes that person  
When the hurt turns to a stone  
When love and affection bid bye to him  
When charity has lost all its meaning  
When sympathy is shunned and given up  
When shame deserts that person  
When kindness refuses to accompany him  
When mercy and compassion fly away  
When sin becomes a simple game for him  
When awe and wonder do not strike him  
When he refuses to communicate with nature  
When he refuses to forgive his fellow men  
When he refuses to respect the aged and elders  
When prayer and repentance do not appeal to him  
When he refuses to bow before the Almighty.  
He is lost in a purgatory blinds.



## PANACEA FOR ILLS

A mind with crystalline purity  
Sharpness of a shining sword  
With soaring imagination  
And capacity to pierce the dark veils

Such a mind filled with knowledge  
Having panoramic view of the world  
Of affairs of men and matters  
And capacity to perceive the trends

Such a colossal mind with insight, depth  
With foresight, wisdom and intelligence  
A rare gift and a boon to mankind  
To salvage men from the abyss of misery

A mind without fear, bias and prejudice  
Just, with compassion, with strength of steel  
A born leader of men, a genius  
A cosmic scientist, a panacea for ills.



## BACK TO FOLD WITH ZEST

The ancient man continues to live in us  
With a dub in hand, bare skin, long claws  
Unkempt, unclean, polluted, uncivilized  
Barbarous, man eater, crud and wicked.

He can't be at peace, with himself, for long  
Up to mischief for one thing or the other  
Needs to hunt for food, fight for a place  
Grab a lass to deflower, at any moment

He needs symbols, idols, icons to ward off  
His fears, to take courage, to gain strength  
A bully, hot headed, accursed  
With fire in belly, blood shot eyes, terror.

He covets other's mate, steals at a wink  
Stinks, faithless, a cheat, a moron  
March of time has made a full circle  
Man, now has returned to his fold with zest.



## INNER PEACE

Look to the inner voice  
Its light is eternal  
Its joys are multiple  
Its grace is divine  
It is soothing and pleasing  
Its voice is melodious  
It has motherly concern and care  
It knows your anguish and pain  
Listen to it  
Sit in silence  
In meditation  
In calm stillness  
Close your eyes  
In your heart – recite –  
“La illaha illAllah  
Mohammadur Rasool Allah  
Allah hu hu Allah, hu hu  
Allah hu hu Allah hu hu”.



## NINETY NINE NAMES

Realise the Ninety-nine Names  
Ninety-nine themes, units and pulses,  
Of the Lord surrounding you.  
Of the Holy Prophet within you.  
The light upon light lights all.  
Enlighten your being with it  
Repeat the Names on your lips  
Inhale Him, to surcharge you.  
Let the streams of Love,  
Flow within, to cleanse the being.  
Let the cream of charity  
Flow thro' your hands for goodness.  
Purify the mind with crystal thoughts,  
Honey-tongued glorify the Lord,  
With His guidance tread your path,  
Melodious songs thrill your heart





## NATURE GOOD SAMARITAN

Nature doesn't betray those:  
Who are loyal and true  
Who are trustworthy  
Who are humble and honest  
Who are kind and affectionate  
Who keep their words and promises  
Who are silent and golden  
Who are simple and sincere  
Who are soft and melodious  
Who are compassionate and charitable  
Who do not over step their limits  
Who do not swear and bear grudge  
Who do not back bite and covet  
Who observe the rules of the game  
Who observe fairplay and are just  
Who are magnanimous and forgiving  
Who are grateful and contended  
Who are patient and tolerant  
Who are thankful and merciful  
Who are loving and sweet  
Who obey, perform duty as sacrifice.



## DESIRE AND FANTASIES

Does every desire, unmatched with reality  
Become a cause for frustration and anger?  
Does it lead to disharmony?  
Does it lead to unhappiness and misery?

Is not the attachment to desires?  
The sole cause of discontentment  
Unreined, unbridled, unchained desires  
A source for leading man to grief!

Desires are temporary passions  
An eruption of emotions and feelings  
For a pleasure and a gratification  
For a joy and a passing glee.

Fantasies and dreams are unreal  
Dwell not in them, it is a mirage.  
Can you catch a cloud or air?  
Desires, fantasies, dreams are to pass by.



## **DESTINY-'KARMA-MOKSHA'**

Does man live on fervent hopes and dreams?  
Does life revolve on needs for existence?  
Either way, to find peace and solace  
One needs to look within for realisation.

To eat more than your need is gluttony  
To eat to appease hunger brings satisfaction  
To earn to live, is to fulfill your "Karma" (Destiny).

Only reality is birth and death  
In both there is certainty.  
Harmony or disharmony, good or bad.  
Right or wrong are terms to define good living.

Life's vicissitudes are multiple.  
Rein in evil desires and streamline good ones.  
A right balance in daily living  
Is an art. Thus, civilize to achieve 'Moksha'.



## LOST GENIUS

Oh! His grief and woes are oceanic deep  
Quite different from ordinary anguishes  
It is too difficult for one to understand  
Pathos and distress reaching its zenith  
No, he isn't a crazy man or ill  
He is too conscious and sane  
He is on a high intellectual plane  
With a broad prophetic vision.  
With an insight reaching infinity  
He has clear solutions for all ills.  
But his brethren hardly understand him.  
They are sans sight, hearing or mind.  
They can't see, imagine or hear  
How can they change anew?  
To eternally transform a new Nation  
Lo! A genius is born in a wrong time.



## IN NOTHINGNESS

To grow blooming gardens in your inner self,  
To spread fragrance all over  
To fill sweet scent in the air,  
And to make the eyes to twinkle like stars.  
To enlighten the whole being.  
To be charming with smiles always  
To disarm your enemy and worst foe,  
To change the tides in your favour.  
To discover new vistas of knowledge.  
To tread on fresh paths.  
To lay in calmness, when storm blows  
And for patience and virtues to overwhelm you.  
The only golden rule  
To shun being enemy of your own soul.  
To rule over your own self with controls  
Is to drown passions and anger in nothingness.



## **EXPOSE YOURSELF**

Let us go down the memory's lane.  
Deep inside the consciousness  
Discover all our hidden secrets  
Our deep prejudices, bias and hatreds.  
Let us recall all our joys and mirths  
Sorrows, successes, achievements  
Events, our quarrels, squabbles, fights  
Our impressions of people and life.  
Let us etch ourselves each of these memories.  
In the form of symbols, icons, idols.  
Picturise, paint these scenes  
To get a clearer view.  
Its colour, its shade its reality,  
To know your own self, its pranks,  
Let the inner images, ideals, thoughts,  
Memories get reflected in the mirror.



## MASTER AND SERVANT

Each one of us have  
Our own galaxies  
They are satellites  
With our sun.  
They reflect the splendour  
Of the everlasting light.  
When the darkness descends.  
The cold moon without habitation,  
Moves round and round its master.  
Waxes and wanes again and again.  
To create time, a path to tread.  
Both the master and the servant  
Work in unison and in harmony.  
To create unlimited and unseen seasons.  
For man to reflect and ponder upon.



## DAWN OF ENLIGHTENMENT

“Forty’ said my Master, when I was in teens.  
You should cross forty summers of life.  
And undergo its vicissitudes  
You should cross bridges, rivers and storms.  
The senses should fail, eyes glitter  
The ears should sharpen and tongue lose its taste  
The swiftness should slow down  
Calmness should descend upon you like dusk drawing.  
The mirth and pleasures should wane.  
The burning sun should descend.  
The heavy monsoon downpour should end  
The rashness of your youth should decline.  
Then the tranquil moon will shine  
The cool breeze from the sea would blow  
To soothe the senses and balm the wounds  
The Inner Light will spread all around.  
The being will bum with brightness  
Mind canvas will be filled with beauty of Nature.





## FAKIRS

Chill penury begets pain and shame to them  
But their minds are crystal clear like diamond  
Profound thoughts overflowing and oozing out  
Like fountain and mighty waterfalls  
Creating gardens to bear fragrant flowers  
Their wingless souls are sans pangs of suffering  
Glittering gold and currency through enriching,  
But to ennoble the mind, it seldom helps.  
When soul and mind dampens and meanders  
Poverty pinches and living does become hard.  
Faceless, nameless and homeless, they ever be.  
As “Fakirs” and “dervishes”, they move about free.



## **A SPIRIT**

A spirit of inner illumination, vision.

A spirit of knowledge, enlightenment.

A spirit of domineering and over powering.

A spirit of persuasion and passion.

A spirit of sacrifice and generosity.

A spirit of spirit and aggressiveness.

A spirit of righteousness, patience and tolerance.

A spirit of fore thought, to foresee future.

A spirit of commanding, seeking obedience.

A spirit of love, affection and compassion.

A spirit of forgiveness, give and take.

A spirit of compromise, camaraderie.

A spirit of togetherness and brotherhood.

A spirit of fellowship and companionship.

A spirit of sociability, affinity and team spirit.

All are features of a great Prophet, a leader of men.



**IF ONLY.....**

If only you fill my heart with love and love.  
If only you return my love with many smiles.  
If only seasons change with showers of flowers.  
If only truth triumphs and falsehood seizes.  
If only bright Sun shines on a cold wintry day.  
If only we could set sail to shores of beauty  
And waste not a moment in vain talks and quarrels.  
If only we can raise like phoenix for peace  
And let bygones be bygones, forget and forgive.  
If only we can wipe tears of grief and loss.  
And raise hopes for multiple gifts and cheers.  
If only we can inspire desolate hearts  
With courage and will to face hardships.  
Life is worth living to share moments of joys.



## HOW TO SOW SEEDS OF LOVE?

Oh! What can I give to win Dame Love?  
To conquer hate and win hearts  
To display my glittering heart  
Sparkling with compassion  
Which I hope to disarm those  
Who carry venom and weapons.  
Can I be that Buddha to win Asoka?  
To spread Ahimsa, like Gandhi,  
Mandela and Martin Luther King.  
Oh! If I can wipe tears of widows orphans.  
Of maimed ones, of shattered beings.  
Of homeless facing stormy weathers.  
Oh! Can I kindle faith in love and in sharing.  
To create fonts of hope and cheers.  
Oh! If only I can help someone,  
Who has Magic wand to turn sorrows to joys.



## SELF ILLUMINATION

You refused to be dragged into a dialogue.  
The light has refused to dawn on us,  
Despite my best efforts to lit candles  
Of love in the forlorn, dejected hearts.  
Your assumptions about me, my persona  
Is based on some deep rooted suspicion,  
On hearsay, on your spite, anger;  
You were groping in the dark to make sense.  
But O love! Deep compassion  
Flows like milk, honey in inner self;  
Sublime, pure, uncorrupted, fresh  
Springs should erupt and reach  
The outer self and consciousness  
To purify and enlighten the self.  
Then the 'Karuna' exhibits itself.  
Then the joys and ecstasy of life erupts.  
Then the life becomes fulfilling.  
Then the self-illumination is complete.



## SELF EXAMINATION

I need to escape from angles,  
Triangles, Hexagons, Circles  
Squares and need to reach the point;  
By walking on the straight line.  
How bogs my mind? I scratch my head!  
Do I need to abandon life?  
By renunciation as Buddhist term it.  
As 'Sanyasi' to sit under a Banyan tree.  
But I am already encircled  
With myths, ideologies, with corrupt mind.  
My heart is corroded like dead wood  
Though not stony yet coarse.  
I bereft of imaginations and creativity.  
How do I get rid of these illusions?  
This 'maya', these desires and attachments.  
Can running away to woods help me?  
The burning stomach would cry and wail.  
My weakening muscles in my arms  
May not help me escape the writ of life.  
The lightening, thunder, storms may scare me.  
I wonder and wonder how Jain munnies  
Sanyasies, sadhus, fakirs escape life.  
My raging passions though subdued  
But the nagging past memories haunts me.  
Robbing my mind of solace and peace.  
The old steam engine shunting up and down  
With loosened bolts and nuts has derailed.  
Now I turn inward to empty myself  
From that devastating ego, which shuts light  
To reach my heart, mind and soul.  
What else can I aspire at the end of the journey?

Than for silence of mind and tongue.  
To keep aspiring to reach the Great Self.  
To whom whole cosmos looks tiny and speck.  
Let me now dissolve in the blue canopy  
And evaporate like a vapor and cloud.  
I stand nude shedding my inner self.  
I look up to Thee for Mercy and Grace.



## **PARDON AND ILLUMINE ME!**

I am that Adam who stood alone,  
My eyes transfixed on His feet;  
My paramour Eve with tearful eyes.  
I am in that state from ages, centuries,  
Millenniums, eras, from billion years.  
I am that Shiva, that Mahavira,  
That Buddha, those Prophets, those Saints.  
All emerging from me, I in them.  
I was belittled, brought down  
From the pedestal of honor,  
From prestige, from glory,  
To this dismal position till eternity.  
Every one of my progeny in every era,  
Has been guilty of hate, passion,  
Have hanged Truth on the cross,  
Have stoned them to death,  
Guillotined, bombed, and destroyed.  
Yet have not found humility,  
To seek pardon for shameful deeds.  
O Love! The Cherisher show Thy face,  
Thy effulgence to illumine me.





## TRUE SELF

The past 'Karmas' haunting you,  
Subduing your self  
And avenging for past deeds,  
Be shaming you.  
Evil eye casting its spell,  
You feel belittled, ashamed.

Your mercurial nature  
Your quick temper  
Green eyed jealousy  
Overwhelming your consciousness.  
Passions ranging.  
Greedy hands laying on everything.

Dissatisfaction in your self  
Making you unhappy, sick.

You need to overcome lethargy  
Sloth,unsatiable palate.  
Struggle every moment  
With Dharmic and Satvic living  
Cream of charity flowing  
Through your blessed hands.

Wash your sins with good deeds  
Of eternal happiness,  
With surrender to Great Self,  
By subduing your evil self.  
Conquer your animal nature,  
Infuse Divinity  
In your benign consciousness.

Then the light dawns.  
Flood light of knowledge  
Flashes in your broad mind.  
Illumination in every cell  
Of the being is attained.  
'Moksha' becomes a reality.  
'As-Sakina' and 'Baraka' is attained.



## WHO ARE THOU?

Who has given You these thousand Names?  
How did it occur to the human mind?  
When the jungle man is free from it!  
How did one realize You with these Names?  
Is it the interplay of Nature and mind?  
The mysteries surrounding the person.  
Our feelings, our hopes, our sorrows,  
Our disappointments, our grieves  
Built in us an urge, a voice, and a song.  
For someone Unseen who guides  
Our destinies to success or failure.  
Our evil nature is fire to engulf us.  
Passionless splendor sprouts springs  
For raising perfumed garden of love.



## LORD KRISHNA

When evil spread like virus and passions grew.  
When right was wronged and justice denied.  
When for a pint of milk a child wailed.  
When the seal of chastity was broken and polluted.  
When the sky was darkened with sins of man.  
When the rivers of milk and honey stopped flowing?  
Where was the promised mercy?  
Of Vishnu, the avatar to descend down.  
Pitiful eyes looked for heaven for mercy.  
To rid cruelty and banish terror.  
To soften the stony hearts to butter.  
To enlighten the mind and soul.  
To expand the horizons of wisdom.  
To shower down mercy and compassion.  
To rid the evil of all sorts.

Lo! The heaven thundered with lightning and sound.  
Trumpeting the onset of glory and majesty.  
To take birth in a humble Yadav family.  
To nurture 'Kamadhenu', the Gauri  
To milch milk, butter for whole universe.  
To rid evil from every corner.

To bless keys to open treasure of heart.  
To teach passionless, sexless love.  
To shower on every Gopi, Bhakta  
Ever grace, beauty, peace shanti,  
Prema, 'Jyoti' to light every home.

Now the times are ripe my Lord!  
My Mehdi, my Masiha my love,  
My cherisher, my redeemer  
To descend down to redeem the sins.



## LORD BUDDHA

Emancipated bony Siddhartha in austerity,  
Giving up sustenance, on mere grain of rice.  
In deep meditation to seek release from suffering.  
A damsel of rare beauty and youth  
Offers him as biksha a morsel of food.  
Out of compassion and grace he accepts it.  
Then the flood light of wisdom dawned.  
The cosmos opened with expanding horizons.

A white winged Angel on Pegasus  
Did not arrive to enlighten Siddhartha.  
His deep meditation, struggle from within,  
Self-enquiry immense austerity opened the gates  
To enable him to pronounce the whole Truth,  
Of Ahimsa, Karuna, abstinence,  
Of eight fold paths of righteousness  
To break the chain of rebirth to reach Moksha;  
Nirvana and absolute peace.  
Release from suffering to enjoy ever bliss.

Buddha's message is to break rituals,  
Superstitions and create bonds between man and man.



## WHITHER GREAT MAN

A long awaited Great man  
Is a great disappointment  
To the hungry weather beaten  
Populace with gripping poverty.  
Leprosy, with slavery around.  
He was a humble unknown  
Undescript carpenter  
Without a foot ware or a comb,  
Homeless, moving freely  
With his home spun  
Simple, humble teachings  
“Turn your other cheek”  
“Sell your shirt and feed the poor”  
Many of his new gospel  
Annoyed the Jewish priests,  
Tax gatherers, usurpers.  
They were inflamed.  
Turned hostile to the Messiah,  
Led him to crucify him.  
Messiah disciples spread his words.  
Through love and compassion,  
Mercy, milk of human joys  
Spread far and wide  
Opening the hearts to Divine light.  
Million bosoms were filled  
With love, tenderness, blessings.

Now the times have changed  
Freedom, liberty has ushered in.  
Places of worship are deserted.  
Hearts are empty, turned stony.

The Great man's teachings  
Turned to winds, to melt away.  
iconic figure on cross  
Dangling in chains around necks!  
His statues erected.  
But none with bare feet,  
With overflowing compassion  
To uplift humanity to grandeur.





## **ALL WILL DISSOLVE**

*(Poem based on Sufi, Buddhist, Jain and Vedantic Philosophy)*

Love calls for mutual adjustment  
And deep respect for each other's views.  
Love is total submission to GREAT MASTER  
And love is to please HIM.  
In love there is no grievance, grouse or complain.  
Just accept what is happening around cheerfully.

While ageing body withers and dissolves,  
One need to accept the losing zest and zeal.  
The creaky bones, the tasteless tongue,  
The troubling bowels, the poor eye sight,  
The lethargy, the forgetfulness.  
The anxiety, the sleeplessness  
Are signs of witheringness.  
For inner light to glow and flow.

Bells of oblivion are ringing for me.  
Reaching the horizons  
The rainbows are visible on dark clouds  
The cold freezing hands are about to touch me.  
The past events corrodes my mind  
With deep regrets and sorrows binding me.

My soul utters sighs and yearns for release.  
I yearn for total peace, tranquility and solace.  
Free from jeers, insults, worldly burdens.  
Throw away the heavy Atlas on the shoulders.  
Unborn tomorrow, dead yesterday,  
Why worry about it when this moment be sweet.

Let me have sweet moments free from all.  
No more anxieties, no more headaches.  
No more worries, no more burdens.  
No more questionings, no more pains.  
No more injuries, no more complains.

Let all be gone, bygone be bygone.  
O Soul, return to abode of peace  
Leave this decaying body  
And sorrowful world and greedy  
And complaining dirty dozens in the mind.  
Throw away the baggage on the shoulders.

With lasting love and memories  
Let progeny live in peace and happiness.



## POEMS ON THE NEGATIVE NATURE OF MAN

### A CORRUPT PERSON

He amasses wealth with both hands,  
A corrupt person to the very core,  
With umpteen bad habits, he drinks  
Like a fish, womanizer and gambler,  
He dresses gaudily and flaunts his money,  
Having high connections, he calls the shots,  
Foul mouthed and quickly angered,  
He uses power to liquidate adversaries,  
He makes a great show of wealth,  
Without the least qualms or conscience.  
A corrupt person of such a kind  
Is a contagious disease threatening mankind!



## **A FOOLISH PERSON**

He never keeps anything to himself,  
With a loud mouth he blurts out everything,  
Everyone's secrets unmindful of harmful results.  
With a dare-devil attitude he rushes where angels  
Fear to tread and takes hasty decisions,  
Being quick tempered, he makes fiery speeches  
But often regrets them at his leisure.  
A spendthrift, he freely entertains one and all.  
He's friendly but boastful, sometimes buckles-up  
And humbles himself before every one.  
He shamefully confesses and reveals his own sin,  
A kind soul but a foolish person he is!



## SHOCKING BEHAVIOUR

He is always interfering in  
Whatever you do. Criticizing,  
Passing unwholesome comments  
Condemning, making fun, poking  
His nose in every work of yours.  
Never remaining silent, pulling  
Legs, short-circuiting good work,  
His behavior is always shocking.



## OLD BANDICOOT

He makes faces every time I pass by him,  
Throwing lustful glances and winks at me,  
An old bandicoot with insatiable  
Lust for wine, food and women.



## A COLD LOVER

He never praises or appreciates me.  
As cool as a cucumber, unexpressive,  
He silently turns his face away  
Whenever I happen to look at him,  
There is neither warmth in his love making;  
Nor does he enjoy my company,  
I'm dazed desolate, feel dejected.  
Lovers yearn for passionate feelings



## LATE SUCCESS

He is a writer of great merit,  
With tremendous knowledge and insight  
A multifaceted personality  
Combining wisdom and experience.  
A kind soul with plenty of patience,  
Who achieved success in the evening of life.





## **SIMPLETON**

A simple straight-forward person is this man,  
Who calls a spade a spade without mincing words,  
He does not mix drinks. Ever ready to help friends,  
He's always truthful, forgiving and kind-hearted,  
Though his plain-speaking sounds sometimes harsh,  
Showing genuine concern for the distressed,  
And sharing his meal and purse with the needy,  
He's a man with simple habits and a golden heart.



## **MAN, THE DESTROYER**

Your arguments are triggering  
Passions, hate, anger.  
Uncontrolled emotions, smashing  
All social norms. You, a destroyer.  
Of values, customs, ethics and morals.  
A Volcano from Mother Earth erupting.  
To avenge the destruction of Natural  
Surroundings, of peaceful valleys, everything  
Beautiful, assiduously built over ages.  
Now, the perishing, decaying  
To form vicious gas, the damage  
To suburb, humanity is earth shaking.  
O Man! You a vicegerent on earth, protect  
The Nature's beauty, to enrich good living!



## MAN'S EXISTENCE

You want people to look up to you as a god,  
For your so called attainments.  
Your 'successes against all odds.  
For your proud lineage,  
You being a peerless person,  
Of social standing and heritage.  
All that is mighty has to bite the dust.  
A child grows up to reach old age.  
Mighty sun gives life, yet it burns.  
Desires are many, but it is a mirage.  
Beauty is an expression of life's perfection.  
Like a flower to wither away with its fragrance.  
Eternal is Everlasting unseen Hand  
Which churns, what appears worthless to eminence.  
To appear in multiple endless Forms.  
For man, to realize Him in life's existence.



## A DEPRESSED PERSON

He is a moody person. Always  
Depressed, lonely, melancholy.  
With imaginary fears of hate,  
Of body harm, of diseases and poverty.  
Sometimes smiles and laughs, but  
Seldom enjoys the beauty of Nature.  
Of life's variety, its colors and mirths.  
To him, world is a woeful place!



## **PERNICIOUS**

There, he is, a short man,  
With stubby nose, moving about  
Quickly, with closed fists.  
Bespectacled, with eyes cast down,  
Always suspicious and jealous.  
Dissatisfied with everyone and hateful.  
Incoherent in talk, quick in temper.  
Frown on face, without a smile.  
Jeering, taunting and teasing everyone, a bully.  
Hissing like a cobra, stares like an owl.  
A pernicious individual to be shunned.



## **SHORT SIGHTED**

A person, who hardly bothers about others.  
A glutton, eats and sleeps like a hog.  
Oblivious to others' feelings and needs.  
A crasher, cuts the lines and overlooks  
The bystanders. A greedy person,  
Short sighted, mean and debased.



## A WORRYING PERSON

A highly pessimistic person, seeing  
Darker sides, a cynic. Believes in  
Dooms day being round the corner. Boring  
With long monologues. Talking of bygone days,  
Of past glories, of yester men's learning. Of  
Falling standards, miserable living and  
World going awry. Of hot headed  
Youths with riff raff behaviour. Of cheats  
Round the corner. Of diseases and double standards.  
A person always worrying about everything.



## A DANGEROUS PERSON

Cunning like a fox, more poisonous than a snake,  
A sly person. Though with benign looks,  
Sympathetic and kind eyes. But,  
Heart filled with hatred, cruel and ruthless.  
Always showing concern, praising others with silvery tongue.  
But ready to mislead and gobble the wealth of others.  
Untrustworthy, but never allows a slip for others to know.  
Secretive, well dressed and mannered. Show of  
Religion, with a caste mark and being a 'god fearing' person.  
Beware! Never befriend him, a dangerous person!





## DISGUSTING

Tall, balding with hollow cheeks,  
Square faced deep furrows below eyes.  
Moving and shaking his hands furtively  
Fidgeting, restless with hungry looks.  
Smacking lips with long tongue, on seeing  
Fairer sex, throwing lustful glances wildly.  
Egoistic dreams, boastful, dropping names  
Of big and sundry. Creating impression of  
Knowing everything, of holding high bank balance,  
Owning cars of latest model, being fashionable.  
Speaks of being a good Samaritan,  
In distress, showing chivalry to damsel  
Expects the high and low to look up to him.  
He is a snob, a bore, foolish, simply disgusting person!



## A TIME SERVER

He talks of high ideals and simple living.  
In evening, spends his time in Service Club.  
With a glass of Whisky and Scotch.  
An expensive cigarette, a game of bridge or rummy  
With stakes for every point.  
He is a connoisseur of everything best.  
Appreciates beauty, and art  
Takes delight in music and dance  
All, at the cost of favor seekers,  
Friends, bootlickers and time servers!



## **A SHAME TO THE FAMILY**

A lecherous person, mean, debasing  
Fraudulent, a petty thief, a scoundrel  
A wolf in gentleman's garb. A drunkard,  
Never keeps his word, Wife beater.  
Borrows money, never returns. Pleadingly  
Begs for favors. A cheat, tongue twister  
Never returns a favor. He may be your  
Brother, brother-in-law or a close kin.  
A shame to the family!



## A BOHEMIAN

He carries a “don’t care attitude”  
Throwing all cautions to the wind.  
Burning candles at both ends.  
Bohemian and enjoys life to the brim.  
Heartily laughs at the sorrows and grieves.  
Make amends and quickly buys peace.  
He carries a whiff of joy for everyone  
Light hearted, good humored Samaritan!



## A SATAN

He carries a holier than thou attitude  
Stiff lipped with collars up without a smile.  
Cannot bear to see a smart fellow.  
Shuns good company; carries lots of gall.  
Moves slyly to cause heart aches and burns.  
Instills fears and despairs, when face to face.  
Holds a grudge and tries to settle the score;  
For an imagined wrong, without a cause.  
Is he a Satan in human garb?



## **FUTILE TALK**

It is frustrating to talk to him.  
Can you believe what he says.  
You cannot make sense of what he tells.  
Rumblings of abracadabra.

He is only trying to break  
Your mind and make you a wreck.  
To achieve his objective of robbing  
Your beauty and put chains around your neck.



## SAVAGE INSTINCTS

The Sun disappeared, lonely night in sight.  
Benign Moon did not desert me,  
To shed a little light on my dark soul.  
White Moon nestled in thick layers of clouds,  
Gathering storms to beset grief in me.  
My life boat in shambles, I, in self-doubt,  
Caught in an ocean, in a violent turmoil.  
Lingering hopes to reach the mother soil.  
Buried in tempest of furious waters.  
Powerful sucking force swallowing me.  
The desire to give in was magnetic.  
But, savage instincts to survive prevailed!



## A 'SARDAR' AMONG HIS PEERS

He is a person born with a silver spoon  
An aristo, of high-brow and creamy layer  
Brought up with delicacy and good groom.  
Classy, trendy and he is a time server.

He needs to keep all his fears away.  
Avoids poverty-ridden relatives,  
They are 'sore thumbs' pricking him day by day.  
A false pride puts up his nose in his prime.

He is a 'Sardar' among his peers.  
Shedding company of people low born.  
Priding on his lineage, and of being seers.  
A person of fiery tongue and looks of scorn.

Time may bring change of heart in men  
Love and Eternal Truth unite every one  
Save those who shun commandments Ten.  
A Pharaoh can never be won.





## NO ONE TO DELIGHT

You never lend your shoulders,  
To weep, to place my arms.  
To hug, to embrace you.  
You never put your arms  
Around me, never cajoled me.

You never lend your  
Soft and soothing voice to me.  
To console and to cheer me up.  
All the yearnings, all the feelings,  
Have all now dried up, fossilized.

The birds sing in chorus,  
So does the honey bee.  
During every season, flowers  
Of various hues and colors  
Bloom and emit fragrance.  
They charm and please everyone.  
But, my dear one, does not delight me anymore.



## YOUTHFUL TIMES

Indignation and doggedness of the youth.  
Make every action and utterance uncouth.  
Like a snake, they are so soft to touch, but  
With fangs deep and poison in the mouth.

Clamoring for might and power.  
Thundering at every step, without light.  
Sans smiles and fragrance of flower.  
Chaos ranges, sans concern for other's plight.

Flexing every muscle to fight with arms.  
Without fearing death and pangs of pain.  
Quick in temper, set to revenge and cause harm.  
Boasting of Herculean strength, with disdain.

Sowing oats wildly without a sense of shame.  
Riotous nature and passion's poesy;  
And all their actions bring them infamy.  
Youthful arrogance defies the Hands of Mercy.



## MAN'S INSTINCTS

Miseries make one somber,  
Moods reflective and changing.  
Gripping the mind with melancholia.  
And overcome by grief like tumultuous sea.  
Mark the golden Sun on dawn,  
Turning fierce and churning,  
Burning the desert sand.  
The full fury of monsoon,  
Hurricane, tempest and storm,  
Destroying all the beauty of Nature.  
Does man's instincts and emotions,  
Reflect Nature's glory, its seasons  
Floods, whirlwinds and myriad colors?  
Does man's humaneness match his ignominy  
Shame, tyranny and oppression?  
Does the deep power of harmony,  
And a spirit to create joys and hopes,  
Bring meaning in man's life?



## DEEP PAIN

Sufferings of man end up in deep pain.  
Sorrows, dejection and in ultimate death.  
Eternal blue sky displays unconcern;  
Infinite disregard for a pitiful and  
Lonely funeral of a forsaken rag.  
Chants of empty and high sounding words,  
Are to lull the grieving soulless heart.  
With only a cold blooded priest taking part.



## BRIDE FOR LYNCHING

You promised her the Moon,  
Showed her heaven in your palm.  
Eloped with her merrily at noon.  
Like, eruption of storm without calm.

You derived pleasure on plucking a rose.  
But, fragrance was not to last forever.  
For one addicted to opium's dose,  
Roving eyes seek more, when urge stirs.

Withered, cast off, pealed now decayed  
Her ceaseless tears, can't take away the stench.  
Robbed of jewels of hopes and love betrayed  
Delusions dashed. Now in her bridal dress for lynch.



## FOR OPPRESSED SELF

You expect the world to honour you,  
When you break the idols of their hearts.  
Their icons, their symbols, their monuments,  
When their lovely dreams are shattered.

You expect the world to respect you,  
When you fling on their innocent face,  
The word of honor, respect, without grace.  
When you refuse to show courtesy, which was due.

You expect the world to sing praise for you.  
When you dishonor their kith and kin.  
Damage their reputation, when they cannot sue.  
When you openly and daringly commit sin.

You carry a stain of blood on your brow.  
Mind you, Sir, you reap, what you sow.



## DAMAGED HEARTS

Only the poor suffer from storms,  
Thunder and lightning  
The tempest, the fire that destroys –  
Their dwellings, their hut and their belongings  
Again and again, and yet again.

Only the oppressed face the bullets, lathies,  
Gas chambers, killings of their innocents.  
They are mute witnesses to the annihilation  
Of their culture, their language and monuments.

Only the heart can bear the pangs of separation  
From the loved ones, dear ones and related ones.  
Only to suffer immeasurably and unconsoleably;  
The damages, ravished, destructions of the TIMES.



## AH CONSCIENCE!

“Listen to your inner “voice of conscience”  
Quite often advised by one and all.  
In these days of turmoil and strife  
With a cheat around each corner  
With men with pelf and power,  
Behaving like beasts and devils  
Even they repeat the same term  
Even Hitler acted as per “Conscience”  
To liquidate millions of ethnic jews.  
The white’s rule over blacks and brown,  
Was justified on the “Voice of Conscience”  
A rebel leader speaks of “Conscience Vote”  
In saffron or in red, they demolish  
Ravish, kill, loot all in the name of “Conscience”.





## SIBLING RIVALRY

Ah! This sibling rivalry!  
Sans friendship but jealousy  
Inseparable like flowing water  
Yet gets polluted to stink.  
Passengers and strangers  
Part ways happily.  
Colleagues and friends  
Remain together for years.  
But, these bloody links  
Are fighter cocks  
With boiling rages  
Like volcanic eruptions  
Like shaking earthquakes  
Like sudden cyclone, storms.  
To rip the daily happiness.  
In dreams, lovely ones,  
Childhood memories  
Fond ones get repeated  
For yearnings to meet and mingle.  
But growing years fights and quarrels  
Favoritism shown to one  
Or the other by either parent.  
Some receiving more gifts,  
More affection, more attention.  
Would be a cause  
For mental break down.  
Oh! Sibling, sweet rivalry  
Lie low, rest for a while.



## “VICTORY MASTER” OF HINDUSTAN (VEERAPAN)

My whole being has turned hostile to me!  
Why should anyone show mercy to me?  
My mind meanders, goes berserk and awry \_  
My tongue lashes acerbic abuses and words.

My heart covets and carries malice  
I carry gall in my entire system.  
My hands are deft, slimy and bloody.  
Body oily, shiny, muscular, with strength.

My cunningness, dare devilry is legendary  
My terror tactics, my stealth, my movements  
Can outwit, your most foxy sleuths,  
None dare capture and make captive of me.

I have out beaten chambal raja Gabbar Singh,  
Rani Phoolan Devi; Robin hoods of any ghats!  
I fool the police and the armed forces!  
Modern gadgets can't trace even my hair.

Men in pelf and power beg mercy from me.  
Men in chill penury seek succor from me.  
My reign is supreme like a Sultan's  
I am named “Master of Victory” in Hindustan.



## TYRANNICAL LIVING

Aren't these men, who refuse to follow religion.  
Behave arrogantly without any rhyme or reason  
Meaningless meandering in the grey region  
With pranks, bawdy jokes and foul mouthed.

Aren't these men in power and pelf or in penury  
Singing their own songs, dancing to their tunes  
Subjugating, subordinating ruthlessly powerless men.  
Sucking blood, strength, sans paying a penny?

Aren't these men, who pretend to be blind, sightless?  
Not a hair stirs in them on seeing a crime.  
Every moment they relish with joy on watching porn.  
Scenic beauty of Nature doesn't please them.

Stony heart, baser minds with roving eyes  
Stinking, polluting bodies with diseased souls  
Men, women, sans yearnings of heavenly goals  
Tyranny writ large on them, when they die.



## DUBIOUS PEOPLE

Prepared to launder to any extent –  
Currency in rupee, dollars, pounds,  
For the joy of worthless pleasures  
Of body, mind, for pomp and show.

A dear one's need when pleaded before them  
The rich and haughty ignore it  
And say "poverty is a sin to suffer  
To wash off your past sins".

The same rich make a beeline  
To banks, float dubious companies  
Shares, debentures, alluring the poor  
Innocents to invest, to be duped.

The fleeting moments of passing glee  
Joys, ecstasy are gained at other's expense  
They suck blood like parasites  
And hold the poor country to ransom.



## A DECEPTIVE LADY

She peeps into my eyes intensely  
And attempts to read my mind closely  
Cleverly puts up a face of innocence  
Laughs and jokes and creates hopes falsely.

Every move and body movements, she observes  
An intelligent woman, with gifted sense  
A ring-master for some, an enticer for few  
Plays with her mannerism and tunes.

She knows that art to draw sympathy  
To confuse matters and to create fears  
At times aggressive, at times polite  
She can be cold, sarcastic and cruel.

She has an uncanny art to divert  
The attention, create storms with lies  
A perfect actor depicting all images  
Emotions; but a deceptive lady.



## A STREET BOY

My home is an open landscape  
And canopied by the blue sky  
I lead a free life sans funfair  
Without a cozy bed or a curtain  
I rest my head upon my arm  
And lie where I find peace  
My friend, my best friend  
Doggie, fallow and lies with me  
He protects me from men and beasts,  
Loves me and plays with me.  
I find food left over everywhere  
Sometimes, I scramble in dustbin  
I find joy, happiness and peace  
I play and play with all my heart.  
Wherever I go, I am looked down  
Except my dear Stars and silent Moon  
Who shed light on me all the time  
And kind wind, blows quietly on me.



## A BETRAYER

He was provoking him, creating a wind  
Spreading rumors and suspicion  
Putting his adversary to defense  
To confusion, tension and annoyance.

He was waiting for a spark to fly  
For a word to be miss pelt  
For a slip of tongue  
For an error of judgment.

This person in whites of low values  
Can dip to any level, change colors  
Befriend enemies with his silvery tongue  
Stab them in the back, to achieve his ends.

Guard yourselves from heavenly wrath  
Let not your inner dark one betray you.



## A DEVILISH SELF

The devil, our shadow, our mischievous slave  
An ingenious one, an innovator, creative.  
Our own inverted selfish egoistic self  
Always arguing within, with show and pelf.  
Controverting, stubborn, digging heels, hot headed  
A glutton, careless and ruthless, to be dreaded  
Deep in learning with a scurrilous pen  
Long fiery tongue, a common kind among men  
Merciless with a heart of stone and polluted mind  
Creating dissension, confusion of every kind  
Disobedient, forgetful, unholy and irreligious  
Changing sides, a turncoat, liar and ambiguous  
Unmindful of other's concerns always hurting  
Like chameleon changing colors, deceptive and sinning.





## LEFT OUT

Meandering thoughts with confusion,  
A feeling of despondency gripping the mind  
And you find being stuck in quicksand  
Or glued to a sofa cum bed for ever.

You yearn for a goal, an impetus, a jerk,  
A charm, like you felt on your first love  
When you felt the thrill of riding a bike  
On your winning a medallion in a race.

You feel weary, like a left over meal  
Or a sour milk You can't now reverse  
Your attitudes, your feelings, your losses  
For, the Times have passed and you are left out.



## OUR OWN ENEMY

Our greatest enemy is ourselves  
Our beliefs, our rites, our icons  
Our behavior, our taboos  
Our superstitions, our manners  
Our ego, our anger, our jealousies  
Our lust, our desires, our hates

Let us cast away, break away  
From these shackles and chains  
Release our hearts from them  
To enable the springs of love  
To flow, to glow and gush  
Life always has a glimmer of hope  
A warmth of innocence, and is also  
Just, compassionate and merciful.



## MAN, A WONDER!

Millions of species of animals  
Birds, insects, flies live happily  
In nature's beauty, with harmony  
Creating a charm and a wonder.

But this Man, living in varied  
Societies, with class and caste \_  
Distinction, with social strata,  
Structures, varied faiths and beliefs.

Cannot marvel at the beauty  
Cannot learn to live in harmony  
Cannot live with love and grace  
Cannot take care of lowly destitutes.

You need wealth to live in comfort  
You need education to earn your bread  
You need talent and skill for a living  
O, Man! thou art a wonder by thyself!



## ANGER

Why do we get angry?  
Dejected and frustrated.  
Suffer immense pain and sorrow!

*Some say it is due to:*

- Oversensitive nature!
- It is Allah's anger shown in humans!
- When pride and prejudice is hurt!
- Due to lack of tolerance and patience!
- It is due to injury to ego!
- It is as a result of hard-heartedness.
- due to lack of mercy.
- It is due to being too disciplined.
- It is due to being too moralistic.
- It is due to sexual frustration.

Some say that:

Anger would lead to madness.

Allah says that:

- Before destroying a person He makes him mad.

Anger lead to madness and to destruction.

Let's seek Allah's protection and Mercy.



## WHY PEOPLE LIE?

Tell me why people lie? Why do they  
Become compulsive liars? It is due to  
FEAR which envelops our being and  
en coils us as a snake. As a child  
you fear your teacher and to escape  
punishment you lie. Allah will not  
ask us but will ask all our hands, tongue,  
For what we have done. They will stand  
against us as a witness. A child is  
Unable to make a difference between right  
and wrong. So also a madman. Hence  
They are exempted from prayers and  
from questioning. So also a person  
in deep sleep. Because at this stage,  
there is no intelligence. Therefore every person  
who is sane should stand the test.  
A "MAJZUB" is totally absorbed in  
His LOVE, for him there is no questioning  
Love is giving full and total attention  
And surrendering yourself to that Person and  
to Him alone. A slave has no personality.  
no rights nothing. Can I be that slave?



"Majzub": God-intoxicated person

## DUALITY

Tell me why there is duality in our minds?  
Why this plurality? This mind playing  
Hide and seek? This confusion between  
Right and wrong, black and white, light  
and darkness. Why do we need a peg  
to hang our coat? A shoulder to weep on,  
And always someone on whom you want  
To unburden your soul? Is it because  
Man is always at daggers drawn? Bitter,  
Cold, sarcastic, angry. His various traits  
Challenge each other, each trait trying  
To claim ascendancy.

The light of wisdom rarely dawns on minds,  
Unless the mind is stilled to ONENESS  
and purified. On confused mind polytheism  
Sets in as milk turning sour unless boiled.  
A Momin is one who controls his mind  
and heart to Allah and His Prophet's path.  
So, for which, you need to practically  
Surrender before a purified soul in this life.



## JEALOUSY

You know my brother it is the JEALOUSY  
Which is the first sin committed in the  
Presence of Almighty All Gracious Allah  
By His Most favoured learned 'Moulvi-e-  
Mulkut', angel, who turned "Kafir" or  
'Iblis' i.e. 'Shaitan'. His disobedience was  
Due to the ill feelings developed by him  
Towards Adam and due to his claim of superiority.  
He felt that Allah Talla has now  
created some one more dear to HIM.  
And he felt that he has lost his importance  
He could not acknowledge that Allah is  
Great, Gracious and Merciful and a Great,  
Judge, who would not favor one  
Over the other. He (Shaitan) lost  
His self-belief i.e. his own IMAN.  
So my brother "Iman" (faith) should  
Be confirmed by "CERTAINTY" (Yaqeen')  
In three ways by seeing, by knowledge, by truth.



Kafir: Disbeliever

## SADISM

As children we were very cruel  
To insects, garden lizards, dogs  
And many plants and animals.  
We would kill them for our sport.

Whenever we found a colony  
Of red stinging ants,  
We would all gather around  
The ant hills, pour kerosene and set fire.

We would catch butterflies  
To feed frogs, tie strings  
To busy bee and play with it  
Kill housefly with fly swat.

Street dogs were target of  
Our missiles-sharp stones.  
Our cricket bats and hockey sticks  
Were weapons to kill garden lizards.

In School, College, University,  
We would dissect animals  
To learn more about their system.  
To learn about mystery of life

As grownups, our urge  
To harm has not diminished any more.





## LAMENTATION OF A SICK MIND

Lo! I am sick of mind and heart  
Unable to bear the burdens of life.  
Unable to bear the vagaries of weather.  
Unable to bear the rigmarole of living.

Oh! How this cruel world views me.  
On slightest pretext I am chained  
In this asylum, where I languish with  
Similar placed persons wailing like me.

For us the world is mad, mad and madder.  
It is hungry for more and more work.  
Rushing daily in sick hurry, quickening  
It space day by day endlessly.

I hardly sleep or eat but my mind and tongue  
Endlessly talk, looking at things in a queer way!



## **ABANDONED RAG PICKER**

The freezing chilling penury,  
In all its glory has engulfed me.  
I am in rags and I pick rags.  
I am a rag picker, in matted hair  
Perfumes have betrayed me, I stink.  
I carry a huge bundle on my back.

Whither compassion, sympathy and pity for me?  
Except my companion, my pet doggy,  
Who walks with me and wags its tail.  
Sleeps where I lie down on the benign earth.  
Men, women, children look aghast at me.  
My anguishes, pains, agony are deep.  
My hunger, my pangs my sufferings are many.  
Love has betrayed me, I am abandoned by all.



## DON QUIXOTIC

There was a time, for two decades,  
 I sat on the bench to render justice;  
 With one such judge drawn from bureaucracy.  
 A most chattering box of unlimited.  
 A person with a squirrel face, rat ears.  
 Short in stature, with eccentricity.  
 Putting questions after questions,  
 To bewilder the counsels, while they argue.  
 He would give a pretext of taking notes.  
 But in fact would be drawing a pigeon,  
 Or a country's map or a ladies figure.  
 Suddenly bursting out in monologues.  
 He wouldn't close the case for judgments'.  
 But would adjourn the case for twentieth time.  
 He wouldn't like any one sitting with him  
 To interrupt, overrule him or take over.  
 Once in a blue day, he would decide a case.  
 But to remand it back to the lower courts.  
 He wouldn't accept his colleagues' orders,  
 But would differ to decide the matter in a quixotic way.  
 Files after files in hundreds would pile up  
 In his cupboard awaiting judgments  
 Or for his opinion on his colleague's orders.  
 Nothing would stir him from his slumber.  
 He wasn't a person to mind his business.  
 A busy body to interfere in other benches work.  
 Run down his counterparts, over rule cases.  
 Take contrary, contradictory views on many subjects.  
 He did all that was required to play politics.  
 Ultimately to take over the institution.  
 But only to pass hundreds of 'fatwas'.

Like an old forgotten Mughal monarch.  
A classic case of 'justice delayed is justice denied'.  
Nothing could move his sensibilities.  
To render justice on the sleepy bench.  
A pugilist, a don quixotic of modern age.  
But fortune would smile on me in one way or another  
To escape from his mechanizations and wrath  
To be shunted to other benches for relief.  
This is the way things go on in court ways.



## PROXY JUDGMENTS

He would come to preside in the temple  
Of justice, truth and last hope for litigants;  
Leisurely with drowsy eyes at his own time,  
Much beyond the hours of the court.  
Suddenly his cell phone rings in his pocket.  
Unabashedly, he would pick it up  
To murmur a long conversation.  
His bewildered colleague taken aback  
Would look askance mutely, helplessly.  
The lazy sleepy beauracratc judge  
Would suddenly seek excuse to go to loo.  
A long spell of silence dawns in court.  
Back again, the work starts at snail speed.  
His PA is busy writing judgments for him.  
PA: personal assistance



## SATAN AND GENIES

For the indigent poor and wretched,  
Where is God for them?  
And decent living?  
Where is the thought for each day?  
They are slaves of the wealthy!  
Their only need is their daily bread!  
To cover their shame, protect  
Themselves from blistering Sun and cold.  
Oh! This self-created gods of desires.  
Are Genie for the intellectuals.  
But these genies and satans  
Subjugate poor wretched fellows.  
And keep them in their grip forever and ever.  
Depriving them from basic pleasures.



## **DEVIL, THE SATAN**

The Satan, the devil, the “devva”  
The diabolical nature of man  
Stole the thunder, the light of the Lord.  
Satan, the genie, an open enemy of mankind.  
He way lays all the members of mankind  
Generates the evils in man, overcomes  
The consciousness, dominates  
Takes over all the wealth, subjugates man.  
He prevents man from humility.  
Never allows to practice sublimity.  
Nor allows man to be compassionate.  
Nor to practice mercy, but makes him passionate.  
Provokes man to anger, creates jealousy.  
Greed, covetousness to destroy man.



## DEVIL SPEAKS

In my anger and frustration  
I bawled out again and again  
“Am I a Satan, a devil  
To be stoned, to be driven away”.  
Lot I heard the Satan speak –  
“I am never driven away  
By men or women; friend or foe.  
I am welcomed with folded hands.  
By men In white and black  
In saffron, in green.  
In yellow in orange.  
To learn from me.  
Every trick from my bag.  
I grant my grace to them.  
On their assurance to follow me.  
To cheat them by showing  
Heaven in my palms’.





## A QUEER LADY

There is a streak of madness  
In what all she does,  
Is it genius  
Or idiosyncrasy?

Sometimes the melody of her songs  
Is ecstatic and thrilling  
Like cool sea breeze  
Taking us to the delightful shores.

Sometimes her wrath and anger,  
Her behavior and conduct.  
Makes us wonder, whether the earth  
Is about to face a quake.

Sometimes the sweetness of her voice,  
The pleasantness and delicacy.  
Surpasses the Monolisa's smile.  
'A face to launch thousand ships'.



## MY FAIR LADY

Oh! My lady takes away  
Much of my attention.  
I need to be all ears to her,  
When she is chattering  
At her beck and call all the time,  
To run errands to fetch her things.  
Not a moment, I can spare,  
To my other love, poetry,  
Envious of my holding books.  
Pulls the blanket off me.  
Splashes cold water on my face.  
Giggles on seeing me out of place.  
But showers her kisses and love.  
When I enjoy her dishes.



## TAME THE WILD CAT

She was ice to my burning fire.  
Torrential rain to my thunder.  
Sweet like honey, soft like butter,  
To my harsh and bitter words.  
Sailing smoothly in the boisterous sea.  
Unmindful of the many dangers.  
Grinning like a new moon.  
With tears in the sparkling eyes  
Carrying a whiff of fresh morning breeze.  
Sweet scented fragrance of cheering roses.  
Handling me like a steaming tea.  
My roaring anger stings like a bee  
I had to purr like a tame pussy cat  
When she places her cheeks on my velvety hat.



## POOR RUSTICS

Oh! I am an uncouth rustic  
Sans knowledge, illumined mind  
Uttering profanity, manner less  
Deliriously laughing with gaudy jokes

But mind you, sir, I am steadfast  
Truthful to the hilt, simpleton  
Sans show, pomposity, gibberish  
Mindful of my business and my work.

Thou I am a poverty ridden hag  
But I lit in my heart candles of love  
To share our woes, mirth and laughter  
To help each other in need and adversary.

We work together with our crude hands  
Sweat and toil, bleed day in and day out  
On farms, factories, lifting loads and garbage  
Run trains, taxies, autos, all and sundry

We don't loot but bear hunger and thirst  
Thou shelter less, sans water electricity and medicines.  
Our fate and condition is destined, we accept.  
Only a poet's pen can write about us.



## A KNAVE

How cruel it is to think of wrongs  
With malice at heart  
With wickedness in mind  
With chicanery and cunningness.

By being sly, secretive  
Towards one and all  
Just to remain in power,  
Position, fame, by hook or by crook.

Creating stratagem, laying traps.  
To make enemies of good people.  
Bereft of sincerity and honesty.  
To cheat any one at a drop of a hat.

To lie, spin tales to mesmerize,  
That is a trickster and a knave.



## HEART RENDING MOMENTS

When wickedness and cruelty seizes heart  
And love, affection abandons man.  
When compassion and mercy says goodbye.  
The result is catastrophic, volcanic.  
Nature turns truant and cruel too.  
When devilish acts seizes mind.  
Godliness disappears from soul.  
When snaky green greed envelops the being,  
And violence roams the streets.  
Ahimsa is given a goby.  
When poverty grips the land  
And with fields lying fallow.  
Then pain, sorrows and affliction  
Surrounds suffering humanity.



## AN ANGUISHED CRY

Caught between the contrast and the sublime,  
Between the pleasures of the self and remorse,  
Between the devil and gentle God,  
Between the broad heavenly vision  
And low disgusting abyss.  
My most unruly mischievous self  
Revolts within when the blanket of Blessings  
Covers my outer selfish self.  
It refuses to be subdued,  
Wishes to be an odd selfish man.  
Projecting an ugly thumb  
With a poking, sniffed up nose,  
Wallowing on the pussy decaying wounds,  
Which refuses to get healed.  
Despite best of antibiotics and treatment.  
I appeal to the Gracious Love Venus  
To grant me Herculean strength  
To subdue the ironic inner demon,  
Who has spread its tentacles  
Like a cancer to destroy myself  
And suck every drop of my blood.  
And destroy me forever and ever.



## GENERAL POEMS (2019)

### I THANK THEE

I wish I could gather pearls  
From the words written on paper  
By Hafiz, Ghalib, Rumi, Saadi.  
But my poor grasp cannot cup it.  
I pose myself as if I love all.  
But my Beloved knows my tricks,  
My cunningness, my stupidity.  
Yet my Beloved bestows upon me  
Whatever I desired more than I deserve.

O Love do not corrupt me  
With Your bounties, Your excesses!  
How can I humble before Thee  
When glory, grace, wealth, pelf  
Surrounds me, I on slippery path.  
I detest hardships, struggle  
Penury, disease, trials and test!  
Let me thank Thee for Your Grace.





## PONZY SCHEMES

The huge bubble burst  
Magnetic hands pulls out currency  
From lockers, safe boxes and savings  
By showing heaven in the palm.  
Enticing, luring, seducing  
In the name of 'halal' projects.

Greed and lure for more profits  
Ignoring caution and rules of the game.  
Of 'halal' and 'haram' by just a call  
From ignorant 'ulmas' promoting  
Ponzi schemes as 'halal' ones.  
Fed on myths, imaginary moon eyed hoories  
Living in fairy world, sitting like 'humpty dumpty'.  
Ignorant, gullible ones rushed  
From all directions to feed the pyre.  
Pied piper with his melodies music,  
Songs could mesmerize the stupid.

Ah! Has the 'Dajjal', the one eyed one  
Descended to fool the ignorant  
To rob their last saved penny!

Ignored your kit and kin who suffered long;  
For a pint of milk, for bucket of water  
Your, lavishness, your vanity skywards  
Now you weep on losing all your wealth!

The Great Merciful has given a doze of purgative  
To purge from the 'ummat' the 'haram'!

*'Halal'*: lawful means; *'Haram'*: unlawful means; *'Dajjal'*: A mythical figure that would appear at the end of the world; *'Ulmas'*: Religious scholars; *'Ummat'*: Community

## INTOXICATING WINE

Each one of us is reflection of love, beauty  
But our shadows create fears  
Isn't it our non real darker side?  
Not a mirror image or reflection!

Spreading of fragrance of rose, lotus  
Refreshing for the love to cherish  
Yearning increases for mingling.  
O Beloved show Thy lovely Face.

To put yearning seekers to swoon  
Like bright round shining Sun  
Drives away the darkness forever.  
Let's sing songs of love to thrill and cheer.



## LOVE'S MANY FACETS

mesmerizes seekers  
Like old intoxicating wine.



## **LOVE IS A GIFT FROM CELESTIAL BEING**

To perpetuate Compassion and Mercy  
For healthy living and marvel on the creation  
Life is for sacrifice and charity i.e. giving.



## LEAVE ME ALONE

With my anguish,  
Let me protect myself  
From your perfidious hopes!



## LOVE

Love should be pure  
Sans jealousy, selfishness  
Love should be for love's sake  
Love is sublime, passionless  
Splendour, beautiful  
With Truth as the armour.  
Love is sacrifice  
Sacrifice is to die.



## CAN I FIND A WAY OUT?

My five senses are not sufficient  
To realize, feel and capture  
Your Glory O my Lord!  
I feel your silent presence,  
Your Beauty, Your Excellence.  
O my Lord! Can I still view  
With these eyes Your Effulgence?  
Can You Bless me Your Grace?  
To sustain my last stage!  
Slowly the candle of life is burning out.  
My soul mate gone in a flash  
Leaving me stun, in grief,  
Feeling like a destitute,  
Friendless; like flightless bird  
Unable to perch from tree to tree.  
Like a blind man finding a way out  
In a dark night, in eerie silence  
My only hope lies in You, in You.  
O Unseen One, Unfathomable  
What good is candle light for a blind?  
Crutches for a crippled, music for deaf!

For long I prayed for my beloved  
To walk along side till my end.  
Alas! She has flown away in a flash,  
Dashing all my yearnings, hopes.  
How can I crawl on a slippery ground?  
Where can I find solace, bliss?  
When pathos, grief is burning in my bosom!

O Love! Bless me silence in mind, heart.  
Let this muttering, chattering leave me alone.  
My dear soul mate is mingled in soil,  
Let her soul rest in peace!





## RESTORE PEACE AND TRANQUILITY

One bloody revolution  
Leads to another.  
We need a Gandhi, a Luther King,  
A Mandela to lead a bloodless coup.  
To bring in peace and a change  
Change for better living, for happiness.  
But greed, annoyance, indignation  
Rules the minds, to let blood, to destroy.  
Creation and destruction work in cycles.  
World wars crippling humanity,  
Withering of love and humaneness.  
The pigeon of peace flies away,  
To yonder place to oblivion.  
Never to return, humanity is crippled.  
Sorrows bind humans to ever weep.  
We need a Buddha, a Mahavira, a Christ,  
A Mohammad to restore peace  
And tranquility for everyone.



## A YEAR HAS PASSED

A year has passed  
And your love, your memory  
Is still green and fresh.  
The music has not died down.  
Your lovely sweet face,  
Your kindness, your passion  
To serve one and all.  
Your humility, your grace  
Won everyone's heart.  
The void created can never be filled.  
Every moment your delectable  
Voice resounds in my ears.  
Tears welling up unabated.  
O my love when do we meet again?  
When will those bells ring again?  
Can that beauty reign again?  
Can that love blossom again?  
Can those times reappear?  
When fountains of love sprang.  
When roses never faded.  
When fragrances spread.  
When cheers and dance  
Tinkled joys and happiness.  
Oh now only gloom  
Has spread my veins.  
Look how I am shrinking.  
Slowly and steadily to melt  
And join you forever.



## ESTABLISH PEACE

Wrapped up in the blanket of sin,  
You look up to the Moon  
To shed its glory on Mankind.  
To lighten the heart and mind.  
But doors of Benign Divine  
Are shut for modern man.  
The jungle man has returned to hunt  
His fellow beings to carry their heads  
As trophy to display the skulls  
And bones, oblivious of Divine wrath.  
Mercy wallowing and shedding tears.

From the blistering desert arose a Prophet  
With resounding voice reaching eternity  
To change the path of civilizations  
With truth on his lips always ever,  
Practicing trustfulness,  
Keeping up his promises  
To create a just society with law and order  
With purity of life, soul, mind and heart  
To lay down life with sacrifice to Lord  
Of Mercy, Compassion and Grace  
To ever remain virtuous and prayerful.  
To change the character of Mankind.  
To the ways of God to ever remain  
Obedient to Him and be Peaceful.

Now can humanity look up  
To a Messiah to relieve its burden  
To achieve peace and tranquility.



## SNUFFING OUT MYSTERIES LIFE

Below the dormant sibling or friendly  
Relationship lies a sleepy deadly  
Venomous snake with fangs deep,  
Simmering to wake up at any moment  
To strike a benign and kind soul;  
To bring to an end a lifelong mingling  
Of loyal, thick and thin relationship.  
To bring a shock to everyone.  
Septicemia or viral infection  
Or food poisoning  
Or sudden heart seizure  
Can put an end to a blooming  
And charming life with happy times.  
So also break of deadly cancer,  
Sudden road accidents

.  
You call it 'Karma', fate  
Divine retribution;  
You look askance at the Divine;  
Puzzled unable to know  
The wisdom of the Super Wise.  
What wrong they had done  
To be smoked out  
From the midst of loved ones.  
To create a vacuum, a deadly  
Silence, for grief to flow  
In the veins of near and dear.  
Destiny has a unique way  
To play its part to move

The wheels of life on the  
Chequered board of snake  
And ladder, on chess board  
Of mysterious and wonderful life.



## EVER EXISTING LIFE

Life and death smoothly flow in the veins  
Gathering as it moves strength  
Or weakness, to survive or to wither.  
The clock of four seasons move within.  
Rays of Sun, Moon, Stars, Radio, Cosmic waves,  
Free flow of electrons, protons,  
Electricity, light and thunder  
Sustains life or its intensity breaks it.  
Evolution and dissolution is constant.  
Moving in its own rhythm, clicking  
Its own clock, leaving a trail behind.  
There is a constant harmony, rhythm  
In all forms of life between  
Material and immaterial objects.  
Play of song and music.  
In silence of one's mind is nonstop.  
A scheme is laid, microns, DNA, RNA, work  
From ions, gathering waves and waves  
Of information, stored within our mind  
Wisdom, experience is awakening  
Of the consciousness, becoming aware  
Of inner self in harmony with outer self.  
Hear the Divine vibrations of music  
Rhythmically playing in the inner ear drum.  
Time your mind to the cosmic flow  
Of life in a peaceful non agitating  
State, unmindful of imaginary  
Failures of your schemes for profit  
And loss in the movement of life.  
The journey breaks, the outer shell  
Of organs, muscles and skeleton

Dissolves it but the solar life lives  
With its cosmic songs by tunings  
The inner consciousness into subtle light.  
Light merges in light.  
A union with solar light to live forever.  
Electricity, energy and light is life.  
Life is light with vibrations of constant music  
Played constantly on the horizons of cosmos.  
Like mother suckling a new born baby.  
A bird taking within its wings  
The eggs to hatch it to bring new life.  
And the process lives on forever.  
Life flows uninterruptedly till eternity.  
So long as benign Sun exits.



## **HAPPY NEW YEAR 2019**

Look at the resplendent Sun with new dress.  
Shedding new light to humanity.  
To wake them up from slumber.  
To shed violence and adopt peace.  
To love and give up hate.  
Let the new rays of bright Sun.  
Bring new light to one and all.  
A new beginning, a new era.  
A fresh breath, lovely seasons.  
Plenty of fragrant flowers and sweet fruits.  
Let the New Year 2019  
Open to humanity peace, prosperity.





## REBELLION AND AGGRESSION

Seed of rebellion implanted in first man  
And in his mate to ever insubordinate.  
The Devil to rebel forever.  
Rebellion is nature of erring man.

But order and harmony in Nature ever.  
Though storms, tsunamis, earth quakes occur.  
But calmness, tranquility prevails.  
Every civilization meets its evil fate.

Man needs to quell his evil nature  
To restore balance in his own self.  
Imbibe within the light of learning.  
Silence in mind, soul is a gate way to peace.

Rebellion and aggression destroys peace.  
Ruins all that is lovely and beautiful.



## FIRST MAN

First Judaic man in his own image  
Sharing all his qualities profoundly.  
But seed of rebellion sown in him  
To rebel in his presence then and there.  
Thrown away from profuse light to darkness.  
To scramble for stale food, crimple and cry.  
Wail and weep, for he has lost the Garden.  
The bliss, the comfort to sit next to the throne.  
Massive civilizations surrounding him,  
The pharaohs, Nimrods, Pharisees and others.  
Power richness, might, pelf surrounding  
Playing gods in pomp and show.  
The first man to procreate after pardon.  
To regain strength intellect and gaze.  
Both inward and outward with miracles.  
To dethrone the splendor and ardor.  
A colossal fight emerged between them.  
Proxy God playing chess with mini gods  
Sphinx losing the battle and wealth.  
Emergence of Prophets, Saints, pious men.  
First man to rebel with all evil forces.  
To bring peace solace for generations.  
His progeny to keep the fight on ever.  
To keep demons, devils and evil at bay.



## PROTECT YOURSELF

God is not created nor can be begotten.  
Human nature cannot be attributed to HIM.  
He is beyond any essence.  
Ancient Man identifies Him with goodness.  
To regain the paradise lost.  
The first Man, a rebel, is an alien  
To this planet Earth to be ever 'Mujahid'.  
To talk ever of 'Jihad', 'Talak'.  
To serve love, to destroy wisdom of ancient man.  
To ever instigate Buddha, Mahavira  
For violence, aggression, 'Loot Maar'.  
For World Wars and ever destruction  
Aliens are already here, protect yourself.  
Peace for mankind is a mere illusion.



## BEFRIEND TRUTH, LOVE BEAUTY EVER

When the Sun of fortunes and luck dips  
 And the light begins to fade away,  
 You are slowly slipping in darkness.  
 A period of gloom and loneliness  
 To befall on you till dawn bring cheers.  
 How are you to sustain your joys?  
 Your mirth and pleasure, your balance  
 To push away hunger, pain, ignominy.  
 An unknown entity sans any merit,  
 Talent, vigor, illumination, zest  
 Would be entering the purgatory blinds.  
 Seek wisdom from Sages and Saints  
 Living or from their books and learning.  
 For they hold the elixir to revive  
 The lively spirits, panacea to illness.  
 They carry a halo insight to restore  
 The dipping spirits, the dying embers.  
 Deep penance, introspection restores,  
 Revives a new path, a new beginning,  
 A new breath, a new view, a new outlook.  
 A vision, a new imaginations, new ideas  
 A reflection of Great Being on inner mirror  
 Life takes a turn towards new beginning.  
 The inner spirit, inner eye unveils.  
 A new light emerges to enrich the soul.  
 Love removes bitterness, moroseness.  
 Darkness begins to fade to restore light.  
 Beauty and grace dawns on the being.  
 A fresh lease restores sanity.  
 A candle light eats away darkness  
 Illumination of soul restores joys.

Patience and surrender revives spirits.  
Look beyond the horizons, elevate  
The sagging spirits with wisdom.  
Slow emergence of light clears dark paths.  
Seek truth, love and beauty ever and ever.



## HEAVEN OF UNKNOWN

Why do I think always of oblivion?  
Like a reed to sing sad songs!  
Of separation from some unknown  
Source, of Deity of antiquity.  
My pain of living, desertion of love  
Of missing goals, hurt and sorrow  
Create an urge to dissolve my being.  
To fly to some unknown destination.  
Where my forgotten aliens live  
In a lost paradise of “hurries”.  
With Moon eyed beauty of rare kind.  
Where milk and honey flows always.  
Where joys never fade or diminish.  
Where sensuousness flows like a stream.  
Oh! Why these urges of a flute’s songs.  
Beckoning me to a long lost love.  
Tickling in me flames of love.  
That enflames me to zest and zeal.  
Frenzy gripping my whole being.  
To whirl like a dancing dervish.  
To bleed my heart with aches and throbs.  
O far away love, flown away from me.  
Return to me on wings of poesy.  
To carry me to heaven of unknown.



## FROM MOTHER'S WOMB

Love is from mother's womb and lap,  
Sucking milk, clinging to her.  
Lisping numbers, every moment, eternal  
Adding to learning, learning every moment.  
Consciousness growing slowly, steadily.  
All elements awakening gradually  
Stored in the deep spaces of mind.  
Day by day adding to knowledge,  
Skills and information stored.  
Memory acts as a gift of Divine.  
Every era creates a new man.  
With new actions, new thinking, new ideas.  
Growth of man is evolution.  
Imagination going berserk,  
To let out dreams into reality,  
Soaring higher and higher in infinity.  
Singly or collectively actions combined  
Collective consciousness in society,  
Moving in space but grounded on Earth.  
Whole cosmos moving in unison.  
Mind exposed to nature and space,  
Absorbing elements from nature.  
Focal and central is the force of love.  
A supreme feeling, an urge  
To mingle, to cling to another.  
Like mother holding a child in arms.  
Man is a child of nature.  
Mother Earth protecting, caring,  
Producing food and wealth,  
Medicine and panacea to illness,  
Joys, mirth and pleasures.  
Love is supreme, love is all.



## DANCE OF LOVE

The spark of individuality of a person  
To sustain him forever, to remain in him  
Till death does him apart and thereafter.  
Affection in relationships,  
Of love to give and share.  
To sacrifice and humble oneself.  
To be compassionate and merciful.  
To let go of vengeful feelings,  
Of revenge and let blood or to harm.  
To be always calm, cool, forgiving.  
To remove in oneself feeling of remorse,  
Of pain and suffering,  
Of boisterousness, vehemence,  
Of stubbornness, heedlessness,  
Of callousness of lethargy,  
Of greed, aggrandizement.  
Mind to remain at peace.  
Then love flowers into fragrance,  
To bear sweet fruits to enjoy.  
Then the music of Divine flows





## ENTHRAL ME

In the silence of my mind and soul.  
In the wee hours of my life.  
The past haunts me like a ghost.  
Hooting like an owl,  
Screeching like halting tyres.  
Projecting me on the screen of life  
My wickedness, my meanness  
My ego, my pride, my foolishness  
My self-centeredness, my bad planning.  
Of how I faltered with wrong moves.  
The light on the stage dimming.  
Throwing dark shadows  
Pouncing on me, throttling me.  
Holding me by the collar.  
I get the punches on my nose.  
I realise that the world is slippery.  
Glittering, with fragrance of a rose.  
Attractive making a slave of me.  
Now when the pleasures of the past  
Have waned leaving me crippled,  
The world makes faces at me.  
Teasing me, making a fool of me.  
Yet I resist its glamour and glitter.  
I have realized its tricks, snares.  
I watch every step in my crutches.  
I pray for light to descend  
And envelop me, to enthrall me.  
My faith is strong. Eyes gleaming.  
I yearn for Thee with all my heart.  
To breath my last with Thy name on lips.



## HOLY SHAIVAITE SAINT OF KOLIMUTH

O Muse granter of lovely verses  
Bless me with your boon  
To enable me to pen down  
My experiences, my emotions  
To stir my fellow being's  
Emotions for delectation.  
For wisdom, for elevation.  
For deep reflection!

On a cool month of winter  
I visited my native  
Salubrious garden city,  
A pensioner's paradise;  
From sultry weather beaten  
Coastal city of Madras  
Where I was presiding  
In temple of Justice  
To deliver with even hands  
Just rulings to dissatisfied  
Grumbling tax laden litigants.  
My benign high placed friend  
Heard my long grievance  
Of harassment in my work place.  
Denied of my lawful rights  
Of elevation to higher Judiciary.  
He was friendly with a Shaivaite Sage  
In Kolimuth in Arsikere, Hassan Dist.  
Took me in his revolving red light car  
To seek his guidance and blessings.

It was a pleasant day  
Reaching the temple and Muth  
At Sunset, a dozen young 'pujaaries'  
Were reciting Holy Geeta nonstop.  
The benign Sage welcomed us.  
Made us sit on the carpeted floor.  
Took out his ancient weather beaten  
Leaves, where was written the destiny  
Of fellow men in distress and grief.

Lo my destiny rolled before his eyes.  
I was in a grip of black hooded  
Magic and I need to dip in the holy river.  
Visit a mausoleum of a holy Saint  
For five Fridays with 'prasadam'.  
Seek help from Divine to relieve  
From the evil doings of a lady Justice.  
Who would undo all my good work,  
With vengeance, wreck my career.  
The Swamy told the evil to befall me  
If I do not vacate the Sea city  
By the Ides of March two thousand four.

My kind high placed friend  
Took me to Makedatu river  
For a holy dip to follow the advice of the Sage.  
I returned to Sea city, visited holy Sufi mausoleum  
For five Fridays with 'prasadam's'.

Lo and behold by fax I received  
Order to move to my Salubrious city  
On fourteen of March two thousand four.  
I left the black magic ridden Sea city  
By flight on same day never to return

Or face it or visit it; left behind  
The evil and its consequences.  
I was afflicted by brain tumor  
And umpteen evils for six years of my stay there.  
The holy Shaivaite Sage's golden words  
Ring in my ears of apathy of high powers,  
Of moral degradation of lady Justice;  
Of evil gripping the minds of people;  
Of suffering of holy men in their hands;  
Of heaping of injustices on benign persons.

The Sage's healing touch saved me  
From his prediction of paralysis,  
Insomnia, loss of memory and  
Evil of every sort to surround me.

O Holy Sages and Saints of this ancient land!  
You are all beacon of peace and good will;  
To assuage the wounded feelings  
Of sufferers and suffering humanity.

