



गुरुप्रीया देवी

**VOLUME III**

Gurupriya Devi



# Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi

VOLUME III

GURUPRIYA ANANDA GIRI  
(Sri Gurupriya Devi)

Translated by Tara Kini



SHREE ANANDAMAYEE CHARITABLE SOCIETY  
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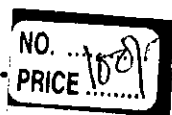
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# SRI SRI MA ANANDAMAYI

## Volume III

### CHAPTER XXXV

Friday, 3rd July, 1936. Today we travelled to Dehradun from Solan with Ma. It was decided that we would again go to Simla tomorrow. By Ma's orders, Jyotish Dada had been in Dehradun all these days, and he now had the darshan of Ma's feet after this interval. Devotees in Dehradun began arriving for Ma's darshan because Ma had returned after nearly a month and a half. She had left suddenly after the festival and no one had received prior information of her departure. Today, hearing that she had come, they were all flocking to her.

Ma ate and after her meal rested awhile. The cold and fever seemed to be worse. When people heard that Ma was leaving the very next day, their joy was cut short but no one can impede Ma's *kheyala* except on some occasions when, on Bholanath's request, some change had been wrought. Late in the night people returned to their homes and Ma slept.

Saturday, 4th July. Ma rose in the morning and walked about in the compound. She was to leave for Simla by the six o'clock train the same evening. Crowds of people poured in for

Ma's darshan and Ma was enquiring about each one's welfare and delighting them with her sweet conversation. She was advising them while talking about ordinary matters. Soon it was time to leave. This time Jyotish Dada accompanied us. Sharada, Lakshmi, Hariram, Hamsa and many others came to the station. All were sad at the thought that they did not know when they would see Ma again. We left Dehradun by the six o'clock train, reached Kalka the next morning and started for Simla by car.

Sunday, 5th July. On the way we met Dr. Joshi at Solan and learnt that the Raja Sahib was going to Simla on hearing that Ma was arriving there. After Ma and we left, others from Solan turned up.

At ten o'clock we reached Simla. Panchu Babu, Jitendra Babu and other devotees were standing on the side of the road and as soon as they saw Ma they delightedly made her alight from the car and took her in a rickshaw. I also went in the rickshaw. We could hear the strains of *nama kirtan* as we went. Ma reached the Kali temple and the devotees sang kirtan more vigorously and joyously. They all touched Bholanath's and Ma's feet as Ma went and sat on the verandah near the place where kirtan was going on. The kirtan was beautiful and Ma sat quietly, controlling her *bhava*. I observed that there was no shortcoming in the organisation of this annual

*nama yajna* which was sung feelingly in Ma's presence. After some time Ma took the ladies and began circumambulating the Kali temple while singing kirtan. The kirtan was concluded in the evening. Everyone followed Ma into her room to converse with her. Ma declared, "You sang kirtan for long and spread great happiness." It was decided that next day the ladies would sing kirtan for Ma.

Monday, 6th July. Ma did not go out this morning. The ladies were to arrive for kirtan at twelve. It was raining heavily and no one could come. Ladies' kirtan under Ma's leadership. Ma's wonderful condition. But Ma was very keen that the decision should be adhered to. Ma, two little girls and I were present. Ma took the three of us and entered the kirtan hall at the stroke of twelve and told me to start kirtan along with the two small girls. As the kirtan started ladies began arriving one by one and there was great joy. Today again, Ma moved about with everybody and sang kirtan. A slight change was visible in Ma's *bhava*. She was dancing, walking and singing kirtan in the company of all the ladies, when her hands and feet became cold and her gaze became steady. Suddenly she fell to the ground. I caught her and steadied her, she was not hurt. She seemed to fall and rose just before she fell to the ground. Her body seemed to be swaying in the wind and felt extremely light, as if it was floating in

air. It was flitting hither and thither like a piece of paper or cloth in the breeze, and wafting and falling repeatedly. Today she stood up very soon, collected herself and resumed the kirtan. She sang the Name herself and made others sing it too. Sometimes she clapped her hands, or raised them as she sang, or put them around someone's neck as she danced. She was ecstatic in *bhava* and her eyes were red and brimming with tears. That state cannot be understood unless it is witnessed. Some saw her as Sri Chaitanya Deva. The kirtan was concluded at five and sweetmeats and *batasa* were distributed.

Ma came into her room and sat on her bedding. Now the gentlemen arrived. The topic of Ma's proposed departure for Solan the next day came up. Many people began objecting. Various delightful conversations between Ma and devotees at Simla One man suggested, "Ma, stay for a few days and establish the kirtan that you have started amongst ladies." Another one pleaded, "How can you leave tomorrow? Yesterday we all sang kirtan the whole day through. Today you sang kirtan with the ladies and we have not been able to even sit and talk to you for some time. If you had decided to leave tomorrow then why did you harness us for kirtan all the day through? We were not able to talk to you at all!" And thus many devotees began objecting to Ma's departure.

Ma replied, "But it is kirtan which is the most important work. Look, when you sing

kirtan you are not able to let your mind wander in any other direction." One person said, "Ma you have not eaten today and you look very weak." Ma replied, "Do not mistake this for weakness resulting from not eating food. Ask them (pointing to Bholanath and me) "whether this body was not very healthy when I did not eat." Someone cajoled, "Ma, for two years now you have been observing this kind of routine regarding your diet. Please start eating everyday from now on." Ma rejoined, "Not eating every day is not any kind of penance. It appears that it was necessary and therefore it is going on thus. I am not living without eating altogether. It is just as you eat once in the afternoon and then at night, after a gap of a few hours. Similarly I eat after an interval of forty eight hours. To me it is just like morning and evening. Therefore I neither give up food totally nor do I observe this as any kind of penance."

To this someone remarked, "Ma what is penance to you now? And what is the necessity of such regulations at all? All this is necessary for us!" Ma responded to this saying, "You are right! Baba, I am not able to explain everything clearly. All this is for you people and it is you who get it done."

Some other gentleman spoke up, "It is true that whatever you do is for our sake; we have absolutely no desire, then why do you make your body weak?" Ma replied, "It may not be your desire, but what is the harm if

I just weaken the body slightly? Alright, I have heard your request. This regulation may get removed soon enough."

Conversation went on thus and everyone pleaded with Ma to stay on for a few more days. But there was just no sign of Ma delaying her visit. She almost always did exactly what she had said she would.

At seven in the evening Pankaj Babu took Ma to his house for kirtan. An erstwhile devotee of Ma (Sri Binay Bhushan Bandopadhyaya of Dhaka) had come to Simla on official business. Kamalakant brahmachari had also accompanied us from Dehradun. On Jyotish Dada's suggestion this time, they sang the name "Ma Ma" during kirtan. All the people present were very sad because Ma was going away. Ma returned at ten thirty p.m. The devotees decided to have kirtan at Pankaj Babu's house on every Monday. A large crowd of devotees had accompanied Ma to the *Kalibari*. At one a.m. they did *pranama* to Ma and returned to their homes.

## CHAPTER XXXVI

Today Ma was to leave but because of certain circumstances her departure was postponed, much to the delight of her devotees. Since Ma was to eat today, people arrived with eatables for her from the morning onwards and Ma pleased one and all by accepting a titbit from their hands. She spoke to each one in response to his attitude, and therefore every individual felt that Ma loved him more than anyone else. Many people even said so. This is a wonderful power which *mahatmas* possess.

In the afternoon all the ladies arrived and Ma finished her meal and went to the big hall in the upper storey of the *Kalibari* where dramas and other activities took place. The ladies followed Ma to that room and laughingly chatted with her on various topics. They gazed entranced at Ma's face. Some of them asked Ma, "Ma how can the mind be steadied? Do tell us this explicitly, for the mind just does not become steady by any means." Ma replied, "You do one thing; while doing *nama japa* fix your attention on your breath. When your mind wanders hither and thither drag it back and entwine it to the rhythm of your breath. You will see that gradually your work is accomplished and your mind becomes steady."

Many other topics were discussed. Ma laughed and said, "Well, I shall tell you a story, listen. A brahmin's son was extremely religious. Though he had no shortage of wealth, he had not got married. He had heard that a guest is verily a form of Narayana Himself and therefore he never ate before serving a guest. Relatives began pressing him to get married but he refused. Finally he was compelled to agree because of their persistence but he declared, "I agree to get married because of your requests, but I have a condition. The day my wife goes against my wishes, I shall cut off her head." His relatives agreed even to this for they thought this was just a lip threat. Would anyone, after marriage, kill his own wife? Reflecting thus, they got him married.

To begin with, the brahmin's son told his wife that she should serve a guest everyday before calling him for his meal. After his meal she could eat. She was also to immediately carry out any orders given by the guest. This was his behest and if this was disobeyed he would cut off her head. What was the poor bride to do? She was a little girl. Everyday she cooked the meal and waited. On some days if the guest did not arrive at lunch time she began feeling very hungry and felt like weeping. But there was no solution for she had to obey her husband's orders or death was certain.

One day no guest turned up. The poor wife sat waiting. It was getting very late when she suddenly saw a man with a terrifying appearance approaching. He carried a stout stick with a cow's head tied to it. Blood was dripping off the cow's head. Seeing such a guest the girl was struck with terror but she had no way out. Remembering her husband's behest, she timidly washed the guest's feet and spread a mat for him and requested him to have food.

The guest gravely told her to cook the cow's head that he was carrying. The girl had never done such a thing before because she was a brahmin's daughter. At the mention of cutting and cooking a cow's head she was repulsed but since she had no alternative she did as she was told and cut and cooked the cow's head and offered it to the guest. Now the guest commanded her to eat the beef first, without which he would not touch it. What could she do? In obedience to the command she was about to place the beef in her mouth when, the guest stopped her and said, "Wait, go and call your husband!"

The girl went to beckon her husband and wondered what mistake she had made that she was being sent to call her husband in spite of doing all that she had been ordered to do. She feared that her husband would finish her off if she had made a mistake. Yet she thought, "Never mind, I have to obey my husband's behest at any cost." She told her husband about the

summons from the guest. The husband enquired if the guest had eaten. The wife replied in the negative and said that he had asked her to call her husband instead. The husband was sure that there had been some shortcoming in the service of the guest.

The couple reached the place where the guest was being served his meal and saw the twin images of Radha and Krishna on the *asana*. These were the deities worshipped by them. As soon as they had this darshan they attained liberation."

Ma explained this story saying, "Work is accomplished only with firm adherence to one ideal. And it is imperative to obey orders without thinking."

Ma narrated yet another story. "A man was a professional thief and burglary was his livelihood. He once went to a *sadhu* for *diksha*. After initiating him, the *sadhu* commanded, "Now you must never tell lies, nor must you steal." The burglar stopped stealing in accordance with his Guru's command and he also gave up uttering falsehood. But he had no other means of livelihood. A few days later the *sadhu* observed that the burglar's family was dying of starvation so he said, "Alright, maintain your family with your burglary, but do not tell lies." The man resumed burglary but, as instructed by his Guru, he did not tell lies.

The second  
story narra-  
ted by Ma

One day the burglar went to burgle the King's palace. The King heard the footsteps of the thief and assuming the garb of a commoner went to him and said, "Listen brother, I have also come to burgle but this is my first day at this job. Therefore you teach me what is to be done. You take two parts of the loot and give me one." The thief agreed and posted the King outside the treasury while he went in and broke open the chest and brought out a bag of gold coins. He calculated the number of coins so that he could give exactly one third to the King. As dawn broke out he hastily rushed out of the treasury, handed the King's share to him and ran away with two thirds of the loot. The King witnessed the entire incident.

As he ran, the thief was arrested by the King's men. The next day he was summoned to the court and the King was to decide upon the punishment to be awarded to him. The King asked, "Have you committed a theft?" The thief replied, "Yes, Your Majesty, I have burgled." The King questioned, "What have you acquired?" The thief declared the exact number of coins that he had taken with him. The King noticed that the man was speaking the truth and had announced correctly the amount that he had stolen. The King now asked him what had happened to the rest of the gold coins. The man described all that had happened and said that the other man had been standing outside and he had just handed over one third the number

of coins to him and run away. The King asked for those coins and confirmed that the thief had not uttered even a single lie.

The King enquired, "If you had so desired you could have retained the amount you had stolen without giving it to your companion. You are a thief and burglary is your profession, then why did you not take more?" Then the thief revealed, "Yes, Your Majesty, I am a thief. But my Guru has forbidden me to speak falsehood and therefore I do not tell lies. Since my Guru felt that we would not be able to survive without the only means of livelihood that I had, he gave me permission to steal but forbade me from telling lies. Because of this I could not belie what I had promised my friend. Nor am I uttering a single untruth to you."

The King was impressed by the man's truthfulness and faith in his Guru and announced, "From today I shall take on the entire burden of your family's sustenance. You can give up burglary also." The thief gave up stealing and bowed to the King and went away. He spent his life serving his Guru and obtained liberation."

After narrating this story Ma said, "Look, having taken absolute refuge in truth, this man was protected on all sides by truth itself. If you catch hold of one thing, everything is achieved gradually."

Ma narrated one more story which was as follows :-

"Once there lived a king who had enough wealth and prosperity. But he had absolutely no peace. He had heard from people that if one acquired a *mantra* from a Guru peace could be attained. So he went in search of his family preceptor. Till then no one had bothered about this Guru and the poor man was living in dire poverty. He was immensely pleased to know that the king had remembered him and convinced the king that if he received a *mantra* from him and practised austerities and *japa*, he would surely get peace. The Guru chose an auspicious day and conferred a *mantra* on the king, and incidentally the Guru's economic condition improved, but though the king practised austerities as required after taking initiation, he failed to attain peace.

So he summoned the Guru again and said, "See, I took initiation as you told me to. You had promised that if I performed *japa* with the *mantra* I would get peace. But in spite of doing *sadhana* as enjoined by you I have not attained peace. I shall now give you seven days' time. If you cannot show me the way to peace within these seven days, I shall have you and your family executed."

On receiving this ultimatum, the Guru became very worried and lost all inclination for food and sleep and seemed to be approaching death through sheer anxiety.

The Guru had only one son who was also a great fool. He did not know to read and write for he just did not like studying. He roamed around forests the whole day long and came home only for meals. One by one six days of the seven given to the Guru passed by. On the seventh day there were no signs of lunch being cooked in the Guru's house. The Guru and his family were lying half dead with worry. At this time the son returned and found no signs of lunch. He flared up and in return was severely scolded by his parents. He then enquired what the matter was and why they were lying down without preparing food and were shouting at him instead. The father then explained the entire situation and concluded that if, by the next day the king was not shown the way to peace, they would all be finished off.

The son heard the story and declared, "What is there to worry about? I shall show the king the way to peace. You get the food ready now. When the king asks you, present me to him and I shall speak whatever is necessary."

The next day the father and son went to the palace together. The king said, 'O Gurudev, today is the last day. For the last seven days I have practised *sadhana* just as you told me to, but I have not gained even the slightest trace of peace. Today if you are unable to show me the way to peace, you will all be executed!'

The Guru said, pointing to his son, 'O king, my son will answer your question.' The king asked the son, 'What, can you solve my problem?' The son replied, 'Yes, your majesty, I shall answer your question. You will have to do whatever I ask of you and as soon as you do it you will attain peace.' The king agreed.

Then, as commanded by the boy, the king and the Guru followed the boy to the forest with a rope each. After going very far they saw three huge trees growing near each other. The boy announced this to be their destination and securely tied up the king to one tree and his father to another, with the ropes. Then he climbed up the tree and began singing and rocking merrily. The king, tortured by his bondage, called out to the boy and asked him to untie the knots. But the boy did not even glance in his direction and kept up the singing and dancing as if there was no limit to his glee. Then the king looked at his Guru and requested, 'You please release my bonds.' But the Guru replied, 'When I am bound myself, how can I release your bondage?'

Screaming with frustration, the king suddenly had divine knowledge. He thought, 'Why do I aspire for peace when I am in the midst of bondage? And how can one who is himself bound free me? Reigning over my kingdom, ensnared by the lure of sense objects, I desire peace and long for liberation - how can I be as foolish as this?' The king then

beckoned the Guru's son and said, 'Release my bonds now. I have obtained the way to peace.' The Guru's son removed the king's bonds. The king, however, did not return to his home, but became a *sannyasi* and went to the forest.

Summing up the story Ma said, "Only when the pain of bondage becomes unbearable the path to peace is revealed. The meaning of *samsara* and *tapasya* If you are bound by sense objects how can you get peace? I do not say that all must go to the forest. You can attain liberation even when you live in *samsara*. *Samsara* is sorrowful only for those who mistake '*sang*' for '*sara*'. And those who realise that we have only put on this '*sang*' (clown) role and that this is not our true nature are not affected by *samsara*. *Tapasya* is performed to remove the agony of the threefold *tapa*. I say that *tapasya* means '*tapa*' + '*saha*'. By accepting one *tapa*, another *tapa* or sorrow can be destroyed. By acquiring good bonds we can destroy bad ones and finally everything is given up."

## CHAPTER XXXVII

Ma conversed thus till about one o'clock in the afternoon. The Raja of Solan arrived and Bholanath took him upstairs to meet Ma. Ma informed him that she would leave for Solan at eight or ten the next morning and the Raja was delighted to hear this. He immediately arranged for a car to take Ma the next day. Ma spoke to the ladies and came downstairs at four. She went outdoors for a stroll and returned soon. Devotees arrived for darshan. The topic of Ma's departure to Solan was discussed and many resolved to follow her there during their holidays. Binay Babu was to return to Dhaka the same day so he expressed a desire to speak to Ma in solitude. Ma sat with him in the corner of a room and after talking for some time she came and sat on her *asana*. Everyone left at about one a.m. Haridas Babu stayed on near Ma's feet and did not go home.

Wednesday, 8th July. Early in the morning devotees arrived for Ma was leaving today. As they took the 'dust of Ma's feet they expressed their desire for Ma's darshan soon and prayed that she would grant it soon. Bholanath gave everyone his blessings and assurance.

At nine we left the *Kalibari* accompanied by a large crowd which surrounded the car that Ma was to travel by. Everybody's face was downcast as Ma left. They repeatedly garlanded Ma and took the dust of her feet and yet did not seem satiated. Ma smilingly bid farewell to them and the car started. At eleven we reached Solan.

The Raja of Solan, his doctor and others arrived. Ma sat on her bedding and spoke to them all. When they all left Ma lay down. In the evening the Raja, Rani and Rajmata arrived and spoke to Ma till eight. At ten p.m. Ma lay down.

Thursday, 9th July. Today again Ma went for a short walk with Jyotish Dada. When she returned I washed her face and as she was to eat today I fed her with a little milk and fruit. Ma strolled about in her room and then started conversing with those present. After the noon meal Ma rested awhile and then devotees began arriving again. Ma spoke to them. At five p.m. the Rani arrived and all others left. The Rani left at eight and Ma kept sitting on her bedding.

Dr. Upendranāth Bandopadhyaya from Mirzapur had been accompanying Ma from Dehradun. He was trying to practise

About Dr. Upendra-  
nath Bandopadhy-  
aya of Mirzapur

*sadhana*, living away from *samsara*. Many a time he had renounced worldly life and come away, but he had young children and his wife, so his mind grew restless in between compelling him.

to return to them. He was a very good man and his countenance evoked regard. He must have been between fifty and sixty years of age. This time again, by Ma's orders, he had come from Mirzapur (before the festival) and was living in solitude.

He had come to stay at Solan for some time but he was restless again and after the Rani left he, Jyotish Dada and others went and sat near Ma. Ma looked at Upendra Babu and said, "Where do you want to stay? How do you like this place?" Upendra Babu's wife had written to him requesting him to return home. Ma said, "Write home immediately and ask if Ma (that is your wife) will agree to come and stay with you to perform *sadhana*. Otherwise what is the use of coming and going like this? Nothing will come of this. Time has gone past, now it is necessary to do something. Some arrangement will be made about the younger children. Write just now, do not delay."

I have observed that sometimes when Ma says something she has it done immediately. She then remarked, "I see that Ma's advice to devotees with special reference to Upendra Babu all of you are indifferent. You claim to do this and also keep going there. Let me see you start at least one thing with determination. Perhaps you are unable to work at anything whole heartedly. I would like to find at least some who will undertake *sadhana* towards That with determined effort. Do not

run after the fruit. Just perform *sadhana* regularly."

After speaking thus on many matters, Ma slept at eleven. I spread my blanket near her feet and slept.

Friday, 10th July. Today Ma went for a walk in the morning. I heard that she called on the Rajmata on her way and that they talked together. Ma returned and refused to have her face washed, saying that there was no rule and that it was not necessary to wash her face and hands and change her clothes. She sat on her bedding with Jyotish Dada, Swami Akhandananda and Upendra Babu seated around her. Bholanath was seated on a cot in the next room. She spoke to all those present and then slept at one. When she awoke at four she was in a very lively mood. She rose and asked Bholanath, "When will you go from here, tell me?" He signalled to say that he did not know. Ma said, "Then whatever I say will happen." Turning to Jyotish Dada she said, "Say, where will you stay?" He asked, "What, shall I not go with you?" Ma replied, "No, can all people stay together always? Is anything certain about where I stay and where I go?" The talk referred to leaving Jyotish Dada at Solan.

A little later the conversation with Jyotish Dada turned towards enjoyment of pleasures. Jyotish Dada opined, "I feel that craving for enjoyment should be indulged in and finished off.

It is not right to shut the lid." Ma remonstrated, "Then even a lifetime will not be sufficient in which to finish off these cravings." Jyotish Dada argued, Let it not be enough; they can be satisfied in the next birth".

To this Ma declared, "I do not agree with that. The solution for ending cravings for sense enjoyments does not lie in merely satisfying them; that only increases attachment. Renunciation of *bhoga* is proper! Just as a person suffering from stomach ache will never be rid of it if he asks only for food and is given it. Eating will not alleviate his pain. By renouncing as much as possible, the mind and body remain healthy. Gradually, take on those actions which increase attachment towards craving for the Real enjoyment (*bhoga*). You shall see that if you renounce, cravings for enjoyments drop off by themselves. You will indulge in enjoyment (*bhoga*) but with a sense of renunciation (*tyaga*). Just like the new leaves of a tree which eventually fall off, even when the tree is being cared for. Whereas, if the leaves are plucked off by hand, the tree may be destroyed. Similarly, neither should one do anything forcibly, nor should there be total indifference. This *samsara* is a place of action. Destined actions have to be controlled and regulated."

After this conversation, the Raja, Rani, Rajmata and others arrived. The Rajmata asked Ma, "Ma, what is the method of controlling one's

nature?", Ma replied, "To become attached to just That One Nature. Without accepting That One

Ma's wisdom Nature, outward propensities will filled advice in not go. Keep aside a set time, as answer to the much as possible, for That. If Rajmata's question you do not appoint a set timing for your two meals, the meals do not seem alright. Similarly understand this also to be just so. Then whatever you eat during the rest of the day, like betel leaf, betel nut and fruits, you can munch even while talking. In the same way, *nama-japa* or whichever other form of worship each one has, can be observed even while doing one's daily chores. But the mind becomes healthy if one sits with concentration, away from all other work, in solitude and worships Him.

Everything is in you. That which is expressed (*vyakta*), that which is not expressed (*avyakta*), that which is infinite (*ananta*), is all within you. For example if someone asks you, 'What is this flower like?'. Whatever you can describe is that which is expressed (*vyakta*). And your true emotions on beholding the flower, or the real nature of the flower which you cannot express in language, is that which is not expressed (*avyakta*). And now for *ananta* (infinite). Suppose you are asked to recall all that your mind has thought over in the last ten minutes. If you are asked where all it has gone you will not be able to tell. The distance it has travelled in these ten minutes, and all that it has thought about is limitless. See this is the infinity which is within you.

And look further; if I hold any limb of your body, it is said that I am holding you. If I hold your hand, I am holding you, if I hold your hair, I am holding you, if I hold your legs, I am again holding you. You are in everything. In this way if you extrapolate further you will find that you are in everything. Look at your gross body itself, it is nothing but you. That which is expressed or not expressed, infinity, Oneness, all this can be understood if it is pondered over.

There is one more point. *Mahatmas* know in a special way what is *jiva*, what is *jagat* and they immediately identify with the *bhava* of what they see. Some look at a tree and are able to acquire the *bhava* of a tree. Or if they see anything or any creature, they understand its true nature and become one with it. Similarly they can see any human being and acquire within themselves, his *bhava* in totality. Because of this nothing remains unknown to them."

After conversing in this manner on many topics, all of them left at nine thirty p.m.

Since today is a Friday, four people arrived from Simla to avail of the weekend holidays and Ma's power of stay with Ma. As soon as they attraction procured leave for a day or two, the devotees of Simla hastened to Ma's vicinity saying that they found it difficult to stay away from Ma. Ordinary people begin to pine thus because of this strong attraction wielded by *mahatmas*. Such people can neither leave off nor can they keep company all the time.

After the Rani left, all these people went and sat near Ma. Dr. Madan, his brother and some other devotees arrived. They all sang kirtan for some time. Then Ma got up and began walking up and down. Many times she walks thus and it appears as though she is thinking a great deal. But Ma has herself said, "You should not arrive at any conclusions in your mind. Whatever has to happen at any time, does so of its own accord." At eleven p.m. all did *pranama* and left and Ma slept.

Ma has herself explained that she does not sleep the way in which we ordinary people do. She sometimes lies down and on some occasions I have seen her sitting up and rocking to and fro and she has spent some nights walking about. When we woke up in the morning she would cover her head and lie down. She has no fixed time for sleeping. For the past few days Ma's *bhava* is serious. Though of course externally there is no diminution of laughter and joy.

## CHAPTER XXXVIII

Saturday, 11th July. This morning again Ma went outdoors for a walk accompanied by Jyotish Dada and a couple of devotees from Simla and she returned at seven thirty a.m. Since she was to eat today, I washed her face and made her drink some water. She sat down to talk to the devotees from Simla. At eleven, *bhoga* for Ma arrived from the house of the Vazir Sahib. It was an elaborately prepared meal with a wide variety of dishes. The Vazir Sahib arrived with his family. Since they wanted to offer a special *bhoga* to Ma, even the children had fasted since the morning. The Vazir Sahib's wife fed Ma a little food with her own hands. Then the Vazir Sahib and others all sat down to receive *prasada*. When all had received *prasada* the Vazir Sahib and his family left and Ma rested for some time.

At two o'clock Ma sat up and told me, "Let me hear you read the *Vedas*." I read out the *Sama-*

Ma listens to *Vedas* recited by me because Ma had told me to read a little of it everyday which I was doing. The devotees of

Simla wanted to hear about Ma's earlier life and as soon as I started the narrative Ma got up and walked into another room. Upendra Babu, Jyotish Dada and others followed her.

For the past few days Ma had been saying, "Snake, snake" and we know that whenever she says this we are bound to see a snake wherever we are. It is as though Ma just has to meet a snake. Today, as Ma left her bedding and walked into the room upstairs, a snake charmer arrived, playing his flute, to display his snake sport to Ma. Ma laughed and said, "I was just thinking that they (the snake charmer and the snake) would come." The snake charmer lifted the snake out of its basket. As it sported, the snake faced Ma and slithered all around her. Ma muttered very softly, almost to herself, "It has done *pradakshina*." I was standing very close to Ma and therefore only I heard this. The snake charmer left.

Ma returned to her bedding and sat down surrounded by all those present. Referring again to the topic of *bhoga* and *tyaga* which had been discussed the previous day, Ma said, "Look, it is necessary to have *tyaga* (renunciation) in *bhoga* (enjoyment). When a student becomes well read his marking is done very strictly. A beginner is applauded by the master however he may write, but when he has advanced in studies he loses marks even for minor mistakes. This is the rule in education.

There is yet another aspect--after studying something, even if there is a little mistake the master still starts on a new lesson, and when doing

Foresight about  
an encounter  
with a snake.  
Sudden arrival  
of a snake char-  
mer with a snake

Yesterday's  
topic of *bhoga*  
and *tyaga* dis-  
cussed again

the new lesson the old one gets revised simultaneously and the mistake is corrected. It is not right to cling to a mistake and sit with the old lesson. Similarly one should not sit back and think of renouncing enjoyments only after one's desires are fulfilled. Alternate *bhoga* with *tyaga* and gradually by accepting and rejecting enjoyments, desires also cease. The amount of work accomplished will depend upon the number of good tendencies developed within. If such a solution is not adopted, you will regret in your old age that you were unable to do anything. It is not right to deepen the *samskaras*. *Vasanas* are destroyed slowly only by renouncing *bhoga*. Therefore it is not right to sit back quietly."

A lady came with her child for Ma's darshan but the child just did not let her sit and was troubling her greatly. The lady complained to Ma, "I had thought I would sit for sometime near you but this boy is troubling me too much and just does not let me sit." She then did *pranama* to Ma and left. Ma laughed and said, "This is just how it should be! You are all but children, why do you not pester your Mother (God). Can you not demand, 'O God! Until you give us That Bliss we shall not cease to pester you day in and day out; we shall not leave you.' We are but children. What do we know of service? We should only trouble God for Bliss." In this fashion Ma gives us such invaluable advice from ordinary events, but we

Ma's advice --  
Pester God  
all the time  
like a rest-  
less child, to  
get *ananda*

neither pay heed nor do we even try to understand.

In the evening the Raja arrived accompanied by his chief pandit (scholar). Today the sun

Ma's utterance -- was shining after many days of rainy weather. Ma remarked,

'the ground "There is lovely sunshine today."

should be The Panditji rejoined that with ready'.

such sunshine the ground would be ready in all the fields within two or three days.

Ma laughed and replied, "Yes, the ground must be ready and it is for that there are so many methods.

It should be so perfectly ready that as soon as the seed is sown the tree grows and becomes adorned

with fruits and flowers." After some conversation the Rani arrived and all the people got up. At

about eight p.m. the Rani left.

Normally Ma eats hardly anything at night.

Tonight dinner had been cooked because devotees from Simla were present. Everyone sat down to eat.

Bholanath also sat for his meal. Ma was walking around. Suddenly she came and sat near

Good fortune Bholanath and said, "Feed me with some rice." He fed her with a

of the Simla couple of morsels. Then Ma got up and said, "I shall get up now and

devotees to get Ma's and not eat anymore." The devotees of

Bholanath's Simla were delighted to receive Ma's and Baba's *prasada* together.

and they all begged for it and ate it. Earlier, on many occasions Ma has eaten with

Bholanath. Sometimes they ate off the same leaf and Bholanath would feed Ma. Sometimes as

they shared the same leaf I would feed Ma. Now for a long time Ma had not eaten with Bholanath. Therefore the devotees were overjoyed to see this rare sight. After dinner Ma lay down at about eleven p.m.

Sunday, 12th July. As on other days, Ma went for a walk this morning. She returned and neither washed her face nor ate anything, but sat on her bedding and talked to the people who had come. Nowadays she often kept repeating, "Take notice of your own home. Time is fleeing past. Call out to Him." In the afternoon Ma lay down for some time and in the evening the devotees from Simla left.

The Rani, Rajmata and Raja arrived. In the course of conversation Ma told them the story of the *mauni sadhu* at Navadweep. Ma had once been to Navadweep accompanied by Bholanath and some others. They saw a *mauni-sadhu* there. No one was allowed to enter the sadhu's ashram but from a distance people could see him seated on an *asana*. He seemed so very motionless that many rumoured that this was a statue of clay -- the workmanship of Krishna-nagar. For no one had even seen him bat an eyelid. But Ma did not feel this was the case.

Some days later Ma again went to Navadweep accompanied by Girin Dada, Jiten Dada and Girin Dada's widowed sister-in-law. Girin Dada was a doctor with a foreign M.B. qualification. He was a long standing devotee of Ma. Jiten Dada

was a lawyer at the Allahabad High Court and was also known to Ma for a long time. Both of them left Ma and Girin Dada's sister-in-law in Navadweep as per Ma's orders, and returned to Calcutta.

Ma stayed in a room at the *mauni sadhu's* ashram. She ate only a roti or two with one vegetable curry every night. Nothing can remain concealed from Ma. An old woman was the disciple of the *mauni sadhu*. At first she told Ma, "Baba does not eat anything. If we place a little milk near his mouth he sometimes drinks it." She was not willing to let Ma stay there, but when Ma said she would stay in the verandah, the old lady let Ma occupy a room some distance away. Within a few days the *sadhu* not only started eating twice a day, he also began talking and everyone came to know of this.

One day the old woman took Ma to speak to the *sadhu*. Then the *sadhu* had many conversations with Ma, much to the surprise of all those who had never seen him speak this way to anybody. Gradually he began unfolding his life's story to Ma and began calling her 'Ma'. Finally he confessed that he just did not like it there nor did he at all savour this business of being a *sadhu*. But the old woman did not let him go anywhere because of her own vested interests.

Ma told the *sadhu*, "Last time when I came here, many people who saw you believed that you were a statue, but right then I felt I should come to know you and speak to you. Therefore as I went about from place to place I came here

again. Now I shall go." Ma told the *sadhu* whatever she wanted to and then came away. After this when we went once again to Navadweep with Ma, we found that the *sadhu* had gone to some other place.

Ma narrated all this to the Rajmata. They left at eight p.m. and Ma slept at ten.

## CHAPTER XXXIX

Monday, 13th July. Ma again went for a walk this morning and then washed and ate a little food. Her food intake seemed to be diminishing day by day. Whenever she sat down to eat she seemed to become absent minded like a child and sometimes sat swaying to and fro or sometimes started fiddling with something and seemed to be so absorbed in it that she just did not pay any attention to eating. Because of this she never ate properly. She drank water and went out with Jyotish Dada.

She returned at about nine. I heard that she had been again taken to the Rajmata's house but as she does not enter anyone's house she sat outside. On returning from there she spoke to the people who had assembled. *Bhoga* was ready at twelve and Ma was asked to sit for it. As she sat she stated, "There is no desire to eat." I forced her to eat a little. At one thirty she lay down again.

In the evening Ma got up and sat on her bedding. Looking at Upendra Babu she said, "It is necessary to get involved in the work with the firm determination that one will not give up one's goal even at the expense of one's life. Let me see you aspire for spiritual progress regularly and methodically. Listen, I shall sing. "Ma told me to get the

note book of songs in which she had made me jot down wordings since she could not remember them. She often sang these songs. I brought the book and Ma sang some very beautiful songs. I had been told to keep *mauna*\*, so Upendra Babu looked at the note book and read out the songs to Ma. Ma was engrossed in *bhava* as she sang. All those present listened enraptured.

Everytime Ma began to sing tears welled up in her eyes and her face became flushed. She shut her eyes and swayed as she sang. All those who heard such songs from Ma, felt detached from worldly bonds for at least some time. Ma herself remarked, "Look, this singing which is going on is *sadhana* in itself. Anyone who hears this song and feels disinterested in worldly affairs even for a little while, is practising *maha sadhana*."

Ma sang for a long time. Generally she never sang for so long. A very old *sadhva* lady belonging to the hill tribes had come for Ma's darshan.

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\*After my upanayana Ma had made me practise *mauna*. At first I kept *mauna* for three hours everyday. Then I was instructed to maintain silence the whole morning, and speak only in the evenings. Next I was told to speak from twelve p.m. to four p.m., for only four out of twenty four hours. When Ma left me alone at Vindhyachal she ordered me to speak and write letters only between twelve and two in the afternoon. This is Ma's method of gradually habituating one to various spiritual practices.

Pointing at her Ma said, "There was so much singing today for this Mataji. This Mataji is very fortunate." And Ma began laughing in her own sweet way.

In the evening the Raja and Rani came for Ma's darshan as usual and left soon after sunset.

Kirtan with the name 'Ma' in Ma's presence      The people around Ma sang some kirtan, with the name 'Ma'. The atmosphere was purified by the chanting of 'Ma' 'Ma' by devotees.

Ma sat quietly and listened to this call. Solan is a very deserted place, surrounded on all sides by high mountains. This temple is situated on a mountain top and after sunset it is extremely quiet and still. In that peaceful atmosphere, some devotees sat around Ma and sang 'Ma! Ma! kirtan, and this enhanced its sweetness. At eleven p.m. everyone left. Ma also lay down but tonight she just did not seem to become quiet.

Sometimes Ma's condition is such. On some night she lies down absolutely still but on some nights she just cannot keep silent.

Ma's conversation with invisible beings and her explanation of the same      She lies down and sings or at times seems to be conversing with an invisible individual. Referring to this I once asked her something and she replied, "They are just as

evidently real to me as you are before my eyes. You are not able to see them but they are truly perceived by me." Another day again speaking in this context Ma said, "They are better than you people. They do not argue as you do for everything."

After many hours, Ma quietened down somewhat and lay down.

Today again she went for a walk as usual. She was to fast today. She sat on her bedding for some time and then lay down. In the afternoon she got up and said to me, "Look, if any room is filled with things, there is no echo to any sound made in it, whereas an empty room resounds whenever there is any sound. Similarly if you can keep your mind pure, then '*sva-svarupa*' manifests spontaneously. In the echo you hear your own voice. So also '*sva-svarupa*' manifests in the pure heart. Therefore, I say, try to make your mind pure. The mind becomes pure only through regular worship. Each one should perform the kind of worship which one likes. *Nama japa*, kirtan, reading holy books and thinking holy thoughts whichever appeals to each one should be used in the endeavour to purify one's heart. Every night before sleeping one should reflect over one's actions and note which actions were improper. Thinking thus and trying to remove one's flaws, the mind gradually becomes pure."

In connection with *pranayama*, Ma said, "The meaning of *pranayama* is the control (*ayana*) of *prana* (life breath). If you do *nama japa* properly you will find that *pranayama* occurs spontaneously. It is greatly advantageous to pay attention to the breath and do *japa*." This was the conversation in progress.

Of late Ma had been using many English words and laughing over them. But her usage was quite correct. People commented, "Ma, you do not know English, but when you do use a few English words people cannot make out that you do not know the language because your pronunciation is perfect and your usage is so correct that it sounds as if you know English very well." Ma would laugh and reply, "I do not know anything. Just as Hindi is spoken, so also is this uttered by me." Swami Akhandananda asked Ma, "Ma, it appears that if you so desired you would be able to speak all languages." Ma replied, "I do not say that I can speak or that I cannot, but there is such a state which when reached, does give the ability to speak all languages. For example, were not *stotras* manifested by this body? English, Hindi and all are just that way, what else?" Ma slept around eleven p.m. as on other days.

## CHAPTER XL

Ma went for a stroll as usual. Today Jyotish Dada was to go to Kasauli to have his blood examined. Two cars belonging to the Raja were to go and Ma and Bholanath were also going to visit the place. Ma's trip to Kasauli and return to Solan. Last night Hariram had arrived from Dehradun, and his brother Badri had come from Simla. They were all going with Ma to Kasauli. The Vazir Sahib came to take us. We were a group of eight or nine people accompanying Ma. We left after lunch at twelve noon and returned at six p.m. At night Hariram's family, the Vazir Sahib and his son received Ma's *prasada* here. *Puris* and a curry were sent from Hariram's (from Dr. Madan's) place. Everyone sat together and ate *prasada* most joyfully. After dinner everyone sat with Ma for some time. Then they all did *pranama* at eleven and left. Ma also slept.

Thursday, 16th July. This morning when Ma went for a walk, it rained heavily but she took shelter somewhere and did not get drenched. Ma returned and lay down on her bedding. Hariram and others were seated and Ma spoke a few words to them. Ma never

had a fixed time for lying down. If she felt like it she would lie down in the morning or sometime she would sit up night and day when she had no inclination for sleep. For many years she had not slept like ordinary people. She herself described, "It seems I shall never sleep because my eyes never feel heavy with sleep. Long ago, I have experienced such heaviness of the eyelids, therefore I know what it is like and am able to tell you." And I would also like to point out that if I ever woke up Ma suddenly because of some reason, I would find her unable to utter a word. It was exactly the same kind of condition which occurred right after Ma's intense *bhava* during kirtan, when she was unable to speak and her voice emerged very indistinctly.

Many a time Ma has explained, "It seems to be the same state always. Outwardly there are many *kiryas* in the body, but within there is no change whatsoever." In Dhaka I have observed many times that Ma went in to cook a meal and finished the job very swiftly and came out with her face flushed and sweating profusely. I thought Ma must be very tired but when I asked her she laughed and replied, "I just do not know how to explain to you that this cooking which I have done or anything else that I do and the state in which I lie down are exactly the same. There is no difference in my condition whatsoever." I was totally unable to grasp this fact but Ma tried to explain this

Equanimous condition within Ma all the time

to me many times.

Ma was lying down and talking in between. Today she was fasting. Some people came for darshan. Ma was rather quiet and therefore the devotees present were also silent.

Special grace  
conferred on  
the Raja and  
the breaking  
of Ma's regulation  
of eating every  
alternate day.

In the evening the Raja and Rani arrived. It was the fourteenth day of the dark fortnight and the Raja had fasted since the morning. He was to perform *puja* at the Siva temple and then drink water.

Accordingly he went to the Siva temple in the evening and did the *puja*. It was the *Ashadh Sankranti* today and exactly two years ago in month of *Asadh*, Ma had started eating only every alternate day. Today some refreshments had been prepared for the Raja and when they were ready Ma was called to see them. Ma said, "Bring it here." The Raja, Rani, Rajmata and Bholanath were all seated there. Just as I bent down to show the plate of refreshments to Ma, she laughed and exclaimed, "You have never made such preparations for me!" She looked at the Raja and declared, "Today I shall also eat." Like a little child she started asking Bholanath, "May I eat?" Bholanath nodded and told her to eat. Ma looked at the Raja and said, "The child shall eat some of it first and then the parents can eat." She then told Bholanath, "Put some food in my mouth." He did so. She now asked the Raja, "Will you not feed me?" The Raja delightedly fed Ma. Ma took only very tiny morsels in her mouth. Then the

Rani made her drink some water. The Rajmata fed her with one cardamom. The Raja requested her with jointed palms, "Ma, today you have been gracious enough to break your regulations of eating every alternate day. Now please do not resume the regulations hence forth. We pray that you should eat every day from now on." Ma laughed and said, "Let us see." The Raja and Rani left.

The other devotees came and sat near Ma. Jyotish Dada said, "Then please eat something from Akhandananda Swamiji's hand also." Swamiji fed Ma a trifling delightedly. Ma lay down at eleven p.m. Before sleeping she told Bholanath, "Hariram is going to Dehradun tomorrow. We could also leave from here. What do you say? Bholanath did not agree. After some discussion it was decided that on the next Monday, 20th July, we would leave Solan. At night Ma murmured with her eyes shut, "I see an apparition." Ma sometimes says this when she sees the personification of some disease or death and so I was worried about Ma's vision.

Friday, 17th July. Today after her morning walk Ma drank some water and lay down. Bholanath got up and complained that he had not been able to sleep at all because of acute stomach ache which was still persisting. His face was downcast. In the afternoon Ma said, "Did I not say last night that I saw an apparition? See, Bholanath's face is downcast since morning."

Ma could hardly rest after her meal for people began arriving and she conversed with them.

Ma's explanation of why she does not eat with her own hands. In the evening the Raja, Rani, Rajmata and other ladies of the royal family arrived. Ma talked to them on various topics. The topic being discussed was Ma's not eating with her own hands and how she stopped feeding herself. Ma said, "I do nothing by my own will. One day I sat to eat and found that I was unable to put rice into my mouth. My hand could not be raised to my mouth and bent down instead. This was not prompted by any desire of mine. It was just like the case of a sick person who falls down when he feels giddy, without being prompted by any desire of his own in this matter. This was almost similar. The significant point here is that this has neither caused any sorrow nor is any desire roused! Whatever happens is just witnessed. Since then eating with my hands has stopped."

She then spoke about eating chillies. "In Dhaka I was unable to do much work and my condition was such that the body could not always rise. Some person, who was visiting us on and off, thinking that I might find it difficult to powder spices, had some spices washed, dried and powdered and sent to Shahbagh. One day he came to Shahbagh with the powdered spices including red chilli powder, Conversa-

Bholanath's attempt at testing Ma by making her eat chilli powder.

tionally Bholanath asked me, "Alright, nothing affects you. Will you feel nothing even if you eat red chilli powder?" I replied, 'Surely, if you want to then why do you not feed me some and see what happens? I shall see and so will you.' Bholanath said, 'Your eyes should not water nor should you sniffle.' I picked up one handful of chilli powder and put it into my mouth. I felt as though I were eating parched grain and therefore just kept sitting normally. After I ate it there was no change whatever in my body, and an hour or so later I got up and resumed my chores.

Then Bholanath began suffering from fever and a burning sensation in his stomach. I began nursing him. Doctors and specialists examined him but to no avail. For eighteen or nineteen days I kept sitting and tended him day and night but this body did not feel the slightest lassitude. Not only was eating stopped but sleeping and lying down were also given up by this body. One night when Bholanath's condition became worse, Matari, Ashu and Baul began weeping. When Bholanath sat up almost unconscious, these words came out of my lips, "How many times have I told you not to test this body?" Then Bholanath replied, 'I shall not test anymore.'

Then I gave Bholanath some beaten rice mixed with water to eat. He had not been eating anything at all and was having severe diarrhoea. After eating the beaten rice he lay down. I had

procured this beaten rice and soaked it the previous day. Nothing had been cooked at all that day and so I took the beaten rice and fed Bholanath's Bholanath. The very next day his recovery by diarrohea ceased. The fever Ma's grace. remained high but it gradually came down and he recovered. Ma narrated all this and began laughing. After much conversation the Rani and others left at eight thirty p.m. Ma lay down at eleven.

Saturday 18th July. Ma rose at nine thirty a.m. Today was her day of fasting, but on San-kranti day the regulation had been Regulation of eating every alternate day broken parti-ally today again. broken so we prepared her meal, not knowing what she would do, and called her to eat. But she said, "I shall not eat now. I shall eat when I feel like it." However she did not eat anything the whole day through. In the evening the Raja took her to his house and Jyotish Dada, Bholanath and I went along. There Ma ate some fruit from the Rani's hands and returned to the temple at seven and ate some more fruit from my hands and drank some milk."

Haran Babu and others arrived with their families from Simla today. Haran Babu was the person who had spoken to Ma about breaking her dietary regulation. Ma told Haran Babu, Ma's lack of inclination to eat on the days of fasting. "I have eaten something today and honoured your request. You should also keep my request in mind." Delightful

conversation of this nature was on. Dinner was prepared for the devotees from Simla and they sat to eat along with Bholanath. On being requested by the devotees and Bholanath, Ma ate a little food, but kept saying, "Though you are putting food in my mouth I am hardly able to chew it. Today was not the day for me to eat and therefore everything feels sort of closed." Dinner was over at ten p.m.

Ma sat and chatted with everybody. Today being a Saturday the devotees from Simla were able

Haran Babu's  
question on  
God and Ma's  
reply.

to come and they were to leave tomorrow. Ma would leave Solan and the devotees did not know when they would see her again and therefore no one was letting her retire for

the night, nor were they going themselves. They were having their hearts' fill of Ma's darshan and hearing her speak. Various kinds of talk was on. Haran Babu asked, "Ma, do give us some information about God; how is He?" Ma replied, "In whatever form anyone longs for Him, He appears just that way to that person." Conversation went on till two in the morning, but Ma did not appear the least bit fatigued--she may as well have been sitting and talking in the daytime! At two a.m. everyone left and Ma lay down on her bedding.

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\*Pran Gopal Babu came to know of all this from Baul Babu and he wrote, "Ma, from where did you acquire this Gurumara knowledge?" Ma heard this and replied, "I learnt Gurumara knowledge from the Guru."

Sunday, 19th July. Ma went for her morning stroll as usual with Jyotish Dada, Haran Babu and others. When she returned I washed her face and hands and fed her with some milk and fruit. All the devotees had *prasada*.

Ma's parting advice to the Simla devotees

Ma started talking to all the devotees and meanwhile lunch was being prepared since Ma would eat in the afternoon. Just then Haran Babu, his wife and Charu Babu's wife brought pumpkin creepers from somewhere. Ma sat for her meal and Charu Babu's wife fed her. The pumpkin creeper was immediately cooked into a juicy curry and served to Ma because those who had brought it would have felt hurt if it had not been given to Ma. Ma and Bholanath were offered *bhoga*, everyone received *prasada*. When lunch was over everyone went and sat around Ma. The devotees of Simla were to return in the evening and they were praying that they should have darshan again soon. It was time for their departure and though they repeatedly did *pranama* and took leave of Ma they did not appear satisfied. Ma and Bholanath bade them farewell with cheerful countenances. Ma said, "Try to keep this request of mine in mind--give as much time as you can for his Name. All of you remember that time is flitting away and the day that passes by never returns." Everyone did *pranamato* Ma and prayed, "Ma! Give us the strength to do *nama japa*." They left and the Raja and Rani arrived. Ma talked to them till nine p.m. until they also left. Then Ma spoke to the others who were present and lay down at eleven p.m.

## CHAPTER XLI

Monday, 20th July. It was decided that today Ma would leave for Vindhyachal along with us. Ma left Jyotish Dada with the Raja. Who knew why Ma was leaving a cool hill station in that hot season, to go down into the plains? We were to leave at nine p.m. It was raining. Ma and Bholanath sat in the Raja's car and went to drop Jyotish Dada at the place where he was to stay. Then we left for Kalka. Ma was accompanied by Bholanath, Dr. Upendra Babu, Akhandananda Swamiji, Kamalakant and me. Dr. Madan Mohan Joshi and his brother Janaki Joshi came till Kalka to leave Ma. We reached Kalka at eleven p.m. The doctor and others took leave of Ma and we boarded the twelve midnight train from Kalka.

Tuesday, 21st July. This morning we reached Delhi. The old Kashmiri lady who had stayed with Ma for a few days, lived in her son's house in Delhi. We all called her 'Nani' and Ma had named her 'Radha Rani'. The old lady had gathered prior information about Ma's arrival and came with foodstuffs for Ma and her devotees. On seeing Ma she was moved to tears for after Ma had gone to Solan they had not met since the old lady had moved to Delhi from Dehradun. She garlanded Ma and fed

Ma's meeting  
with 'Nani'  
at Delhi  
station.

her a little food. She was accompanied by her son and grand daughter. The last time we had come to Delhi, Ma had introduced me to this grand daughter since we were of the same age (or for some other reason not known to me). The train left and Nani weepingly bade farewell.

At eight p.m. we alighted at Mirzapur and reached Ma's ashram at Vindhyachal at nine. Dr.

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| Arrival at<br>the Vindhyachal<br>ashram. | Upendra Babu went to his house from Mirzapur with the intention of making some definite arrangements about his home and then |
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leaving home permanently. Ma said, "That is right, for otherwise he has to return repeatedly because his mind becomes restless and therefore nothing is done properly." Two *brahmacharis*, who were in charge of protecting the sacrificial fire in the ashram had been informed in advance about Ma's arrival. Ma was still unable to eat properly on the days that she usually fasted. Dinner was completed only around midnight.

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| Necessity of<br>being cheer-<br>ful in all<br>circumstances | The weather was extremely hot and everyone was miserable because of the heat. Ma told us, "You should be tolerant in any situation. It is not right to seek only comfort." I said, "It is very hot. I shall bathe you tomorrow." Ma did not bathe everyday and bathed only whenever she felt like. She laughed and replied, "I shall not bathe tomorrow. Let me endure some heat and then bathe." She then continued, "It is necessary to be cheerful |
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In whichever circumstances we may find ourselves." It was nearly one a.m. when everyone slept and Ma also lay down.

Wednesday, 22nd July. Ma did not get up early this morning. As soon as she came down at eight o'clock, she told Bholanath, "Get a *panchanga* (Hindu calendar), a paper and pencil and come upstairs. There is some work for you." A long conversation ensued between them. I heard that Ma would leave Vindhya-chal for Calcutta within a couple of days. Ma alone knows why she moves about in this restless fashion! Today was not the day for Ma to eat and she is still unable to eat on the days she had been fasting. She only ate some fruit or drank milk in the evenings in order to maintain the regulation.

In the afternoon when Bholanath sat down to eat Ma suddenly went and sat next to him and said, "Put a little food in my mouth." Bholanath fed her a small quantity and then said, "No more", rose, washed his mouth, went upstairs and lay down. I noticed that Bholanath did not appear to be happy. Not many other people were present and after dusk Ma also slept. Ma talked to those who were protecting the sacrificial fire and it was decided that the next day they would go to Kashi for the darshan of their Guru.

Thursday, 23rd July. Ma went for a walk in the morning. After a wash she had a drink of water. She was in a very restless mood and I did

not know what she was going to do. Bholanath was feeling unhappy and was experiencing slight stomach ache. In the afternoon after lunch Ma lay down in the room downstairs for some time and then rose and began talking to people present.

In the evening many people arrived from Mirzapur for Ma's darshan and Ma was speaking to them. The granddaughter of Mahendra Babu of Mirzapur had come. She was about twenty years old and passed the matriculation examination. She had a private conversation with Ma. After a long time when I went there, Ma said, "Khukuni, make this girl your companion." The girl looked at me and said, "Ma has told me to take your address and give mine to you." This girl had come with her grandmother (Mahendra Babu's wife). Ma was telling the latter, "Good, why not let this girl remain in her own *bhava*?" Mahendra Babu's wife replied, "All this time there were attempts to get her married and now she is twenty years old. It may be best for her to remain this way." The girl told her grandmother, "I did not tell Ma anything. Ma saw me and started talking of this." Ma told the girl, "Look whatever you do should be done with determined resolve. If you marry then it is alright, do that. And if you want to come to this path then some preparation is necessary. Now that you are grown up, can anyone make you do

something that you do not want to ? Firm determination in your mind is required." At ten p.m. those people left after this conversation. Ma drank some water and lay down.

Friday, 24th July. Ma went for a walk in the morning and on returning she spoke to everyone.

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| Ma's proposal<br>to go to Raj-<br>sahi from<br>Calcutta and<br>return to Calcutta | Today again the talk was of Ma's leaving with us for Calcutta on Monday. Ma herself raised the point of visiting Rajshahi. She told Bholanath, "In the morning when we reach Calcutta, if there is a train we can go straight to Rajshahi and stay there for a couple of days and then proceed to Calcutta where we can stay for as many days as possible. Last time Atal was very sorry that we did not go to Rajshahi. What do you say ? Will you go to Rajshahi or not ?" Bholanath was feeling upset. He replied indifferently that he did not know anything. |
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| Ma listens to<br>my writings<br>about her | In the afternoon Ma went upstairs and lay down. I had told to break my <i>mauna</i> after twelve noon and I could speak till four p.m. As soon as I went up to Ma she said, "What did you say you would read out to me ? Bring it here now !" I brought whatever I had written about Ma and read it out to her. Ma corrected the mistakes and talked at length about various other matters. Yet I did not realise what arrangements Ma had made for me. Bholanath had stomach ache. Ma said, "Then why delay further ? |
|---|--|

We can go to Calcutta and Bholanath can take treatment there." Bholanath replied, "Wait, Anang (who was guarding the sacrificial fire) has gone to Kashi. Let him return. We shall have to settle everything and then go."

In the evening some people arrived from Mirzapur for Ma's darshan. Ma was sitting upstairs and talking to them. Just then About Kumud Babu of Kashi. Shankarananda Swami arrived from Kashi and Anang *brahmachari* also returned. Sri Mahesh Bhattacharya's nephew Kumud Babu also arrived. He was managing all of Mahesh Babu's business transactions at Kashi and also looking after the *dharmasalas*. He lived like a *sadhu* and was called *sadhu baba*.

The last time when Ma told Mahesh Babu to prepare a *panchavati* at Vindhyachal, she also mentioned, "Tell Kumud Babu. He will do everything." Now, *Installation of panchavati by Kumud Babu* hearing that Ma was at Vindhya-chal he came from Kashi with some people and saplings for the *panchavati*. As soon as he came he took Ma to the spot where the *panchavati* was situated and said, "What a surprising coincidence it is that I got ready to come with the saplings and Ma also arrived just then. When the person by whose instructions this *panchavati* is being installed is herself present, everything is most suspicious." He then made Ma and Bholanath touch each sapling and planted them all.

After this Ma went out for a short walk accompanied by Kumud Babu and others. In the evening she returned to the ashram. I made her eat some fruit and drink some milk. Ma - fulfiller of devotees' desires  
Shankaranand Swami had brought some sweetmeats from Kashi. He requested, "Ma, please eat some of this poor man's fare." Ma took a small bit and said, "I shall eat tomorrow." The people who had come to Ma sang kirtan. The devotees from Mirzapur fed Ma and Bholanath with a little sweetmeat and then took leave. At eleven p.m. Ma lay down and Anang *brahmachari* came and talked to her privately.

Saturday, 25th July. Today again Ma went for a morning walk. I washed her face and made her drink water. Kumud Babu came and sat near her. In the course of conversation the topic of the sacrificial fire at Vindhyachal came up. It was decided that Anang *brahmachari* would guard the fire alone. Ma told Kumud Babu, "You all should also watch. This *yajna* has been performed for all." He agreed to do whatever he could. Anang *brahmachari* regarded Kumud Babu as his Guru. Kshetra Babu was to go home as his mind has become restless for his home. Ma had told Upendra Babu to go home and settle his household affairs before setting out so that he would not feel compelled to return again and again out of restlessness.

After talking to Ma about all this, Kumud Babu rose. Ma went and sat upstairs. She spoke to Bholanath about something. A little later she called Akhandanand Swami and said something to him. Then I heard that Ma would leave for Calcutta today, accompanied by Kamalakant. The Dehradun Ashram was lying uninhabited, so Ma told Akhandanand Swami to go there. Vishnu *brahmachari* would go to Dehradun from Raipur and stay with him. I was to stay here, in this ashram, with Birajmohini Didi, a servant and Anang *brahmachari* who was here already. Hearing this order I was stunned because I would have to leave Ma. Nor had I ever in my life stayed away from Father in this way. Father also was having to stay in far away places alone in his old age. Everything seemed to be in disarray. Yet I knew that whatever Ma says is irrevocable and however hard her behest may seem, it has to be obeyed with bowed head. But above all, the thought of having to leave Ma, was most unbearably agonising.

It was not yet eleven a.m. and I was in *mauna*. The *bhoga* was over. Ma had her lunch and lay down in the verandah of the *yajna* temple. After twelve noon I also went and sat there wondering what she would say. This time I had been with Ma constantly for eight months. Till a day ago I knew nothing of this and it seemed like an unexpected thunderbolt.

Arrangements for  
Akhandanand Swami  
and myself

Ma's compassion-  
ate words of con-  
solation and en-  
couragement

Ma spoke to me encouragingly, "When you have been invested with the sacred thread and made a *brahmacharini* it means that you should spend your entire life thus. Give up all attachments and begin living fearlessly like a man." She spoke about many other matters. Then she said, "If Baba experiences any inconvenience you can go to Dehradun. The servant is with you anyway. Then in the month of A'shwin (September or October) when 108 items are offered as *bhoga* during *Annakuta* you go to Dhaka. Stay with them for fifteen days or a month. Take the servant along. What is there to be afraid of? So many people go about. You should be courageous. Go before the rush of the *Navaratri puja*." And so on, she spoke of many things.

I listened to everything. She makes me do what I could never have imagined, but at that moment I could not understand anything. I was grieved by the one fact that Ma was going away. Soon it was time for Ma's departure. At seven p.m. Ma left by train for Calcutta, leaving us all weeping. Swami Shankaranand and Kumud Babu left for Kashi immediately. Swami Akhandanand and I had been to the station with Ma. There in the conversation Ma told me, "Cut off your hair keeping only a tuft." She told Swami Shankaranand, "*Brahmacharis* smear ash on themselves don't they? Write out a regulation for Khukuni to smear ash everyday. She does not apply it now. It is necessary to abide by all rules

Ma's departure from Vindhyachal and a few special instructions to me prior to the departure.

and regulations from now on."

No one else had been able to come from Kashi. They thought Ma was staying for a few days at Vindhyachal. Father and I returned to the ashram forlorn at heart. Some time before Ma's departure it was decided that Birajmohini Didi would also go with Ma. Out of twenty four hours of each day I had been ordered to speak only between twelve and two in the afternoon.

Sunday, 26th July. This morning I awoke and found the ashram deserted. Ma was to reach Calcutta today and a telegram had been sent in advance. Just before the train left the Vindhyachal station when I did *pranama* to Ma, she patted me and said, "Take care."

## CHAPTER XLII

Wednesday, 29th July. Today we learnt from Yatish Chandra Guha's letter that Ma reached Calcutta safely on Sunday where she was received at the station by all the devotees. Arrangements had been made for Ma's stay at the Siva temple in Ballygunge and she went there from the station. Then she went via Dhakuria to the residence of Bholanath's brother-in-law, Sri Kali Prasanna Kushari. Their household was grieving over the loss of their son. Ma stayed there the whole day and left for Rajshahi by the evening train, saying she would be back in a couple of days.

Thursday, 30th July. Today we received letters from Bholanath and Bhramar saying that Ma reached Calcutta on Wednesday, that is yesterday. Birajmohini Didi did not return from Rajshahi with Ma, instead Bhramar accompanied Ma. The duration of Ma's stay at Calcutta was uncertain. Ma was staying at the above mentioned Siva temple.

Saturday, 1st August. From Bholanath's letter which arrived today, we learnt that they were still at Calcutta. Bholanath was undergoing medical treatment. Devotees of Dhaka were earnestly requesting Ma to go to Dhaka but Ma was not saying anything about going there.

Monday, 3rd August. We received Hariram's letter from Dehradun saying that Vishnu *brahma-chari* was willing to stay with Father and on reading this Father immediately set out for Dehradun as per Ma's orders. Yesterday Turiyanand Swami had come to Vindhyachal from Dehradun by Ma's orders. Father would go via Kashi and I also set out for Kashi with Father with the intention of staying there for a couple of days until Father left. We reached Kashi before sunset and stayed in a *dharma-sala*.

Wednesday, 5th August. Today also we got no news about Ma. We heard that Rebati Sen had come to Kashi from Calcutta three days ago in connection with the inauguration of a new institution of Acharya Bijay Krishna Goswami. News about Ma from Rebati Babu Hoping to get news about Ma from him, Father immediately went to meet him. But he had gone out and Father could not meet him. He met him the next afternoon and asked about Ma. Rebati Babu said he had met Ma on three days. Ma was surrounded by large crowds. She was staying at the Siva temple in Birla park and during the day she was visiting various places. Suresh Babu took her to the two or three rooms he had made specially for her on the second floor of his house which were not used for any other purpose, and offered *bhoga* to Ma. One day Prankumar Babu also took her to his newly built house. Most of the time Ma

stays at the Siva temple and visits devotees' houses inbetween. After hearing all this we returned to our *dharmasala* at four p.m.

A little later Nepal Dada arrived with a letter for Shankaranand from Yatish Guha which said, "Ma went to Srirampur on Monday morning with Bholanath and others and sent them all back in the evening. No one knows where Ma is going by the night train accompanied by Birajmohini Didi and Kamal the nephew of Atal Babu, professor at Rajshahi. She has told Bholanath to stay at *Pisima's* place at Dhakuria and complete his treatment."

On receiving this news we were greatly upset because Ma was so frail and she was wandering about in this manner. Who knew where she would go? She was accompanied by two people who were not so close to her. Though Kamal knew her from a long time, he had never stayed with her. Birajmohini Didi had also not stayed long with her and had come to know Ma only a couple of years ago. She had stayed with Ma for some months. But what can I do worrying and fretting this way? When we became very restless we started toying with the hope that Ma might come to Vindhyachal as she toured about. Now that Ma had gone away on her own we realised we should all go and stay in our appointed places. So we decided that I would go to Vindhyachal by the five a.m. train the following day and Father would leave for Dehradun by the ten a.m. train.

I was very worried and Father was extremely upset, thinking about what we were to do to get news of Ma. Late in the night Father and I lay down for some rest and rose again at two thirty a.m. and got ready to leave. At three a.m. we went and sat at the station.

Thursday, 6th August. Father saw me off when I left by the five a.m. train. I set out with only a servant. It was for the first time in my life that I was left alone like this. Ma alone knows through how many more such situations she will take me. I have no right to worry thus for we can only hope to obey Ma's orders by her grace. Father was travelling alone at his age of seventy two years! I found this all painful, but there was no way out. Like the rules laid down by our Creator, Ma's injunctions are unchangeable. I reached Vindhyachal at four p.m. No news of Ma had reached there either. The ashram felt deserted, my heart felt empty and therefore everything seemed empty and desolate. But no work can be accomplished by brooding over one's sorrow. Ma had said, "Go on with your spiritual practices abiding by all the rules and regulations. Do not sit back. Your life span is decreasing with each breath." Remembering Ma's words I began regular spiritual practices.

In the evening I received letters from Bhola-nath and Bhramar. The news was about the same except that they had written that Ma had left Calcutta saying, "I shall go with only one set of

clothes," and had not taken any clothes other than the ones she was wearing, nor had she taken a blanket. No one knew where she had gone. Bholanath wrote that she had said no one should worry about her nor go in search of her. She would return and meet everybody at the right time. Bholanath was taking treatment at Calcutta. On reading that Ma had set out with only the dress she was wearing, I became extremely sad. Undoubtedly everything that Ma does is for our welfare. Ma has gone out thus so many times in a mendicant's garb and yet we continue to remain in stupor of infatuation. I was grieving over the thought that Ma had gone out in this rainy season without any clue as to when she would return. I went to the terrace and sat quietly. Many recollections about Ma began flooding my mind. Father was also not nearby to appease me with talk about Ma, neither could I do anything about it. I was in *mauna* most of the time and could not speak. I began enduring my sorrow in silence. We have not been able to understand anything in spite of obtaining Ma's company. I felt we had lost an invaluable gem through sheer carelessness.

Saturday, 7th August. From Yatish Guha's letter I came to know that Ma had been to their house on the evening of Jhoolan Purnima day, which was a Sunday. She stayed for a long time. Brajendra Ganguli and the Prohibition Chief had sung kirtan for Ma. The ladies had adorned her with flowers in the form of Lord Krishna. Ma was

in *bhava* and she was in deep bliss from the start of the evening. Dr. Yatish Guha's letter -- Denham White had come to news of Ma on the Yatish Guha's house to examine day before she left Bholanath. Ma had served for *ajñata vasa* him '*sandesh*' to eat. He was very happy to see Ma.

Tuesday, 11th August. Today I received a letter written by Triguna Babu of Srirampur, which Jyotish Dada sent to me from News that Ma went Solan, so I could get news about in the direction Ma. In that it was written that of Kharagpur on 18th Shravan, 1936, Monday, at nine p.m. Ma went with Triguna Babu to Srirampur. She sent Bholanath and others back to Calcutta before sunset. She herself left by the eight thirty p.m. train towards Kharagpur taking Biraj Didi and Kamal with her. She first said she was going to Puri. Then she said, "I shall go to Kharagpur. I shall decide further after going there depending upon what happens there." She took no vessels or luggage with her. No one knew anything more than this.

Wednesday, 12th August. I received Yatish Guha's letter in the evening saying that a letter from Makhan Babu of Jatiya Ma in Jatiya Baba's ashram at Puri. Baba's ashram at Puri, had arrived at Calcutta, which said that Ma had reached Puri. Having obtained Ma's company unexpectedly they were immensely delighted. There was great festivity at Jatiya Baba's ashram. Ma had been to Sri Bhuvāneshwar. I became a

little calm on receiving news of Ma's whereabouts. My tutor, Sri Dinesh Chandra Bhattacharya stays at Bhuvaneshwar. I wrote to him for news about Ma.

On pursuing the instructions laid down by Ma and by performing the daily *kriyas* regularly I found that the situation in which  
 Whatever Ma Ma had left me, was good after  
 ordains is for all. I had needlessly worried about  
 everyone's welfare how I would feel in a new situa-  
 tion. Father also wrote to say that he was fine in  
 the company of Vishnu *brahmachari* and was not  
 experiencing any inconvenience. Ma's behests are  
 all auspicious but we do not realise this. And if we  
 only obey her orders fearlessly and with faith we  
 shall come to understand that there is no cause  
 for fear, instead we will be able to see the welfare  
 hidden in them.

Atal Dada's letter from Rajshahi read,  
 "After we wept for so long Ma the Mother came  
 and gave us darshan. All our  
 Letters from Atal sorrows were erased. I have never  
 Dada and Yatish experienced so much happiness  
 Dada nor felt so blessed ever before  
 in my life. Now I pray that I should be freed from  
 worldly debts quickly so that I can obtain peace  
 in Ma's lap. Since Ma did not find a suitably  
 convenient *dharmasala*, she stayed one night in the  
 open verandah of our house and returned to Cal-  
 cutta. This is also Ma's grace."

Jyatish Dada immediately intimated to me  
 any news about Ma that he received at Solan,

but now there was no news from there. Yatish Guha had also written, "Ma told us about all the instructions that she had enjoined upon you all and we asked her, 'Ma what is the use of making everyone weep in this way?' Ma replied that by weeping in this manner, whatever impurity remained would be washed off."

## CHAPTER XLIII

Tuesday, 18th August. Today I came to know from Bholanath's letter that Ma had been to Puri and Bhuvaneshwar and Ma's whereabouts then to some other place. Probably unknown again it was forbidden to name the place where she had gone, and therefore he wrote in this fashion. There was no more news.

Wednesday, 19th August. This evening I learnt from Jyatish Dada's letter that from Bhuvaneshwar Ma went to Kharagpur and Agra and thence to Mathura. Ma in Mathura At Mathura Ma told Kamal to return and so he left Ma with Birajmohini Didi and returned to Calcutta. I received Dinesh Bhattacharya's letter from Bhuvaneshwar. Ma had gone to Bhuvaneshwar on August 6th and stayed at a *dharmasala*. On 7th August, Dinesh Bhattacharya got the news of Ma's arrival and went for her darshan. He stayed near Ma for two hours. The same evening Ma went towards Kharagpur and no one knew where she would go from there. Later we got the information that Ma had gone to Mathura.

Saturday, 22nd August. Today there was a letter from Yatish Dada's daughter, Phulla Juthika (Buni). She had written, "Ma came to our house on the Jhoolan Yatra festival. We adorned Ma with a floral crown and dressed her like Krishna. We had a yellow cloth brought and draped it around her. Brajendra Ganguli sang kirtan and since the

crowd would not fit in the hall, the kirtan was performed on the terrace. In a short while Ma took off the costume and handed it to me saying, 'Keep it with you. Go downstairs--I shall wear it and show you.' Three or four hundred people had gathered. Later, Ma came into the room downstairs and made us put on the costume again. Holding the flute in her hands she stood bent (in Sri Krishna's pose). Everybody was enthralled to see the sight. We all sang devotional songs on Krishna. After some time Ma said, 'Take this all off quickly. The body feels strange--then it will be difficult.' We took off the adornments. We enjoyed this bliss till nearly two thirty in the morning. The rest of the news will be known to you from Father's letter. But this incident cannot be described fully by Father because he was not near all the time. Didi, Anu Masi and I were near Ma all the time."

At the end of the letter she had written that Ma went to Mathura and asked Kamāl Babu, "How much money do you have with you?" He replied, "Ten rupees." Then Ma said, "Take it and go to Dhaka." Ma had nothing with her. She had taken a piece of blanket cut to the size of her body, one small urn and that was all. No one knew what she would do thenceforth. I felt very pained to hear this. The one for whom so many people are longing to offer service,

Letter from  
Phulla Juthika;  
description of  
the distribution  
of bliss on the  
night of Jhoolan  
Purnima.

Ma in Mathura --  
almost like a  
beggar

was wandering about in the garb of a beggar in this fashion. Where would she go and what would she do? No one knew.

I received letters from Jyotish Dada and Father. They wrote, "Ma had forbidden everybody from searching for her and no one has the courage to do so. Ma's orders forbid- What else can we do other than pray?" Ma alone knows when she will return. Birajmohini Didi is accompanying Ma.

Friday, 28th August. Today I received a letter from Bholanath. Nothing definite is known about when Ma will return. None know of where she will go from Mathura. She had mentioned that she would be going elsewhere from Mathura. No one knows where she is going.

Kamal also informed Bholanath on his return that on the day that he left Mathura there was talk of Ma's leaving for some other place. Narsimha was in Mathura but only when he received a letter asking for news about Ma did he come to know that Ma was in Mathura. We were now filled with the dread of not receiving any news about Ma in the immediate future.

Sunday, 30th August. Today I received a letter from Father saying that he had written many letters to several places with the hope of tracing Ma's whereabouts. He had also written to Birendra Dada at Agra, who went to Mathura to the *dharmasala* mentioned by Father. He was also told that Ma had been there.

ten or twelve days ago, but had gone away on not securing accomodation there. Then Father received the information that Ma was at Vrindavan but because of Ma's orders no one had the courage to do anything inspite of having located her.

Saturday, 5th September. Today Father's letter contained the information that Ma stayed for a few days in Faizabad and then went to Ayodhya. Lakshmi Rani had conveyed these facts from Faizabad. Before this a Kashmiri lady devotee had written from Allahabad that she had learnt that Ma was at Lucknow. Jyotish Dada's letter said that he had received news that Ma had said that she would proceed towards Lucknow and Kanpur from Ayodhya. The Kashmiri lady's letter arrived from Allahabad today. She wrote that Ma had gone to Ayodhya from Faizabad and then to Lucknow. Ma had said before leaving, "If you all want to keep this body then do not forget me." She just did not allow anyone to inform others about her saying, "Nothing is sure about when and where this body will go. If someone receives information and comes and does not find me he will be disappointed."

A few days later Swami Akhandananda wrote that Ma was perhaps in Kanpur. Whenever she goes to one place and finds crowds collecting around her, she goes away to some other place. Ma wanders about thus. I remember something that Ma said conversationally while at Dehradun

or some other place, "People say that *rishis* and *munis* lost their temper, so what is wrong in our getting angry too? The answer to this is that those *rishis* and *munis* were complete (*purna*) and they could become angry in complete measure and could also create, maintain and destroy. Just as they could reduce anything to ashes they could also recreate it. Therefore it is not right to compare them with ordinary people."

Tuesday, 15th September. After receiving news that Ma had gone towards Lucknow and

Ma's sudden  
visit to Puri  
in response to  
devotee Shyam-  
das Baba's earn-  
est desires for  
her darshan.

Kanpur, we did not hear about her again. Last night Maheshchandra Bhattacharya's nephew arrived in Vindhyachal from Puri. This morning he came to the ashram and narrated the following incident: "Anandamayi Ma had gone to Puri but unfortunately I did not meet her because I never came to know of her arrival. I stay on the sea shore in a house I have built near Haridas Thakur's math. The Babaji (Shyamdas) of this *math* is a great *Vaishnava*, about eighty years old. He was crippled by rheumatism and came here. About three years ago he heard about Anandamayi Ma from someone and became so crazy for her darshan that he even got ready to go to Dehradun to see her. I often went to see him and one day I found him in this state. Shyamdas Babaji has been living in Puri for the last nineteen or twenty years and I have never seen him either desire or spurn anything strongly. Seeing him so

restless I was surprised. I asked him, "You have been in the company of *sadhus* and are now staying in Sri Jagannath's abode. Then why should you be so restless to see Anandamayi? You do not have the strength to even go to the toilet, and you want to go to Dehradun? I have also never seen Anandamayi. It does not befit you to become restless in this manner! If her darshan is possible in your destiny you will be able to have it sitting right here in your house." He did not say anything in reply to all this. About one and half months after this conversation, I went to Shyamdas Baba. He delightedly told me, 'Ma Anandamayi gave me darshan while I was sitting in the house. She stayed for a few minutes. Makhan Babu brought her here.' I thought I would go and see her but heard that she had already left Puri. I asked Shyamdas Babaji, 'Why did you not call me at that time?' He replied, 'Do you think I was conscious of all that at that time? Ma stayed only for a few minutes and left. I saw a lady with her.' Ma came so close to my house and yet I did not get her darshan."

I was also astonished to hear this incident. Some days ago Turiyananda Swamiji\* had remarked

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\*Khunja Mohan Mukhopadhyaya had started wearing saffron coloured clothes some years ago and Ma had named him Turiyananda. By Ma's orders he had come to the Vindhya-chal ashram from Dehradun. The above mentioned gentleman had described this incident to Turiyananda Swamiji, and I also heard it.

to me, "I just do not understand why Ma keeps wandering about in this way. So many ashrams have been built and yet she roams outside their fold." On hearing this incident I said, "See, we have just now heard one reason for her trip to Puri. How can we become aware of many more such incidents which may have occurred? This gentleman came here incidentally and he happened to know Shyamdas Babaji and also came into contact with you, so that without having been questioned about it he narrated this incident. Otherwise there would have been no chance of hearing this incident either."

Wednesday, 16th September. Birendra Dada's letter from Agra arrived, saying, "I have received news from a letter from Dehradun that Ma has come towards Agra. On making enquiries I found that Ma had actually come to Agra for a day and then gone away somewhere. Then I wrote to Vrindavan and found that Ma had gone to the Bardhaman Raja's temple in Vrindavan. The Manager of the temple, Jogendra Babu had purchased a ticket for her to go to Agra Fort. From there she got a ticket for Itawa and went away. Later I heard she had gone towards Ayodhya. Ma came twice to Agra but I could not get darshan even once. Narasimha is a professor in Mathura and though Ma went to Mathura he did not come to know of it. By Ma's will no one is being able to meet her and she is wandering about in this manner."

Today I received a letter from Swami Akhandananda. It said that Makhan Babu of Puri wrote saying that he spoke to Ma. Ma had said, "I am now walking about the garden. Let me see how each plant is faring." Ma alone knows how and why she wanders about and how she takes note of the plants! .

## CHAPTER XLIV

In the Ashwin month I got the news that Ma went to Itawa and stayed for about twenty seven days and then went to Lucknow. On the 17th day of Ashwin, I went to Calcutta from Vindhyachal and met Kamal and heard some news about Ma from him. Ma had made Kamal return from Mathura. I heard that from Bhuvaneshwar Ma had been to Agra and Shyam Kutir (an ashram between Agra and Mathura) on her way to Mathura. While Kamal was with Ma he had written all about her to Jyotish Dada. On the day before I left Calcutta for Dhaka, that is on the 22nd day of Ashwin I met Bholanath who said he had received Birajmohini Didi's letter the same day, saying that Ma was in Lucknow.

By Ma's orders I went to Dhaka on the 24th day of Ashwin and went to the Siddheshwari ashram on the 27th, Wednesday. As per Ma's orders I shall be staying in Dhaka till the day when a hundred and eight items are to be offered as *bhoga*, that is, till the Pratipada day after Kali Puja. I heard that Ma spread a lot of bliss in Calcutta before going away from there.

29th Ashwin. I received Father's letter with the news that Manik wrote to say that Ma had gone with him to Barabanki from Lucknow.

After staying there for six days, Ma sent Manik away and went elsewhere. Manik did not know where she had gone. Ma had told Manik to find out where I was and how Father was keeping. Manik hoped that Ma would meet him again.

12th Kartik. Bhupati Dada received a letter from Jyotish Dada which said that Ma came down from Nainital on 19th October. After that no one knew where she went. In Lucknow Ma had told Manik that she would let him know where she would be during the Pujas. She had taken Manik with her from Lucknow to Barabanki on 30th September, and had sent him back on 6th October. The same evening Manik searched for Ma and did not find her. Perhaps she left for Nainital from there.

## CHAPTER XLV

Honestly, many people start wondering why Ma takes so much trouble and wanders about like this. In so many places Ma's behaviour is beyond comprehension such excellent arrangements have been made for her accommodation, but we find that the minute her stay begins to be comfortable she abandons that place. So many people pine for one sight of her, but she makes them weep and sets off like a traveller without any purpose. As soon as the Dhaka ashram was constructed, Ma started travelling to many places. She returned after some days but did not stay long at the ashram, for when the ashram became well established and the crowds coming for Ma's darshan began to swell, Ma suddenly went off to North India and stayed for about ten months on the verandah of a dilapidated temple in the hilly region of Raipur. She never allowed anyone to even get any news about her and when she fell ill there, she did not give permission to anybody to serve her.

Then the devotees at Dehradun built an ashram with such expectations, but within a few days of its inauguration Ma went away. She stayed at the building made by Yogi Baba at Solan. Everyday during the rainy season the house got flooded with water. Yogi Baba was

an aged *sannyasi* and he had had the house built to suit him. All the rooms were in the same condition. The Raja Sahib tried to make Ma shift to some other place but Ma insisted on staying in the temple. She did not go to anyone's house and therefore wandered about in this manner. Earlier she had gone to Solan and stayed in a cave, which also got wet during rains, (I have seen that spot) and she lived somehow in one of the cave corner. In the earlier days when Ma went to everyone's homes, she sometimes visited palaces and sometimes the homes of beggars. She sometimes lived amidst people and sometimes in solitude. But through all this I observed that the varying external conditions never wrought any change in Ma's nature. It appears that no one will be able to say which situation Ma prefers in comparison to any other. The truth of the matter is that she is just not attached to anything. Those who have known Ma for some time will be able to understand this.

In 1936 Ma left Bengal and went to Dehradun where she stayed in Krishna ashram for some time. There were excellent arrangements in that ashram for Ma's stay but within a few days Ma suddenly left that place and went to Manohar temple where there were no conveniences as in the Krishna ashram. Earlier Ma and Jyotish Dada had lived on the verandah of the Manohar temple and had faced even greater inconvenience. In rainy weather the verandah got flooded and

in winter it was open to cold winds on all sides. Yet Ma went there and who can say why she did so? At that time Ma had said to Narasimha, "Why do you take so much trouble and come here again and again in this scorching sunshine? You are crazy. You are a human being and so am I. Then what do you come to see?" Ma said this laughingly and Narasimha replied, "That is true enough, but can you tell me why everybody does not flock to us? We offer so much hospitality and veneration to our guests and you don't even speak to everybody each time. You don't ask them to come either, yet why do so many people come? And look, in this hot weather you could have had an electric fan and lights at Krishna ashram which was certainly more comfortable. Then why have you left that place and come to live on an open verandah here? In the afternoons the verandah is burning hot and intolerable and you have left that cool spot in this heat and come here. We would never have done such a thing. These are all the differences between you and us. We desire comfort and whenever you get the slightest comfort and ease you relinquish that place. Because of these reasons so many people come running to you, uninvited."

To this day Ma wanders about in this way. Ma alone knows what will happen in the future. Those who have been with Ma constantly cannot tell when Ma will suddenly leave them and go away though they experience immense

love from her when they are with her. But in any circumstance Ma does not get bound to anyone. Therefore she is always independent. Whenever she feels like going she breaks up the happy congregation and leaves everyone weeping, while she herself laughingly goes away. She does not pay the minutest attention to the breaking up of this congregation of bliss which had gathered around her. We can understand all this only when we come into contact with Ma. Sometimes we might conclude from Ma's behaviour that she loves us, or some other individual more than the others. But some other behaviour may lead us to believe that our conclusions were quite wrong. She has gone much beyond love and affection. She mixes with many individuals with many attitudes. She sports in infinite moods and therefore ordinary people like us do not understand and are deluded. But in every instance she says, "You know that I do nothing of my own accord. The body keeps doing whatever you all make it do."

## CHAPTER XLVI

In 1935, when Ma visited Tarapeeth she addressed an ordinary Muslim householder as 'Baba'. The man was overwhelmed with joy on being addressed thus and came everyday to see Ma. The Muslim's house was close to a Masjid which was at some distance from the Siddhashram. Ma visited his house many times, taking all her devotees with her. The old man would beckon his wives (he had two wives) and say, "Daughter has arrived, come out." They would both come and seat Ma lovingly. Ma in her turn would go there and behave just like a little girl and enjoy herself greatly. Whenever she received anything at Tarapeeth, she would immediately tell me, "Send some to Baba." Whenever the old man came to see Ma, if he found he would have to wait to see Ma, he would send word to Ma through someone, "Tell Ma that her Baba has come and would like to meet her." On receiving this message Ma would meet the old man at once.

While Ma was at Tarapeeth a Maulvi Sahib from Calcutta came and stayed with her for some days. He belonged to a prestigious clan of Delhi. This Maulavi Sahib had first heard about Ma from Sri Surendra Thakur's wife,

Sanjna Devi, and had gone to Binay Babu's house in Calcutta. He felt extremely happy whenever he saw Ma. Later he went to see Ma at Tarapeeth and stayed for a couple of days each time. Ma had named him 'Prem Gopal' by Ma 'Prem Gopal'. She had also named many other devotees, 'Satya Gopal', 'Nitya Gopal' and 'Jaya Gopal'. Maulavi Sahib thus became Prem Gopal. He wrote many poems on Ma in Urdu and recited them for her. After staying in Tarapeeth for some days he returned to Calcutta on Ma's behest. But we heard from Sanjna Devi that on returning to Calcutta he began pining for Ma and could not even eat. He wept and his restlessness increased. Then Sanjna Devi sent him back to Tarapeeth. This time he stayed for some more days with Ma and then calmed down considerably and returned to Calcutta in obedience to Ma's orders. Observing the Maulavi Sahib's devotion to a Hindu Mataji the Muslims in Tarapeeth gathered in protest. The Maulavi Sahib then took them all to the Mosque one evening and addressed them for an hour explaining what Ma is and how their religion would not be defiled in the least by going to her. He took Ma to that meeting and made her sit on the dais on an *asana* and gave this lecture after bowing down to her. He revered Ma immensely.

Prem Gopal brought some foodstuff from Calcutta for Ma. He wanted to feed Ma himself

but did not have the courage to say so. Ma heard of this and called him and asked him to feed her. He put a little sweetmeat into Ma's mouth with great delight and received *prasada*. Ma did not allow that *prasada* to be distributed to everybody. Ma loved this Prem Gopal very much. He was invited to a meal at Ma's old Muslim father's place and the Muslim man looked upon Prem Gopal as his grandson and extended such affection towards him. Prem Gopal regarded the old man as Ma's father and addressed him as grandfather. Sometimes Prem Gopal sang *nama* kirtan in Ma's presence while Hindu devotees listened to him. Again Muslims were present for Hari *nama* kirtan. Thus Hindus and Muslims mingled with each other in Ma's vicinity.

An old brahmin in Tarapeeth sang many *bhajans* and also composed some. He lived elsewhere but came to Tarapeeth and stayed there sometimes for Ma's darshan. One day he came to Ma and said, "Ma I have composed a song for you," and started singing:-

O Magician's daughter!  
Everything about you is mysterious.  
What is true and what is false,  
Explain the magic in the uproarious chaos.

You have made the Moon, the Sun, the planets  
and the stars.

And this earth, circular.

In your infinite circle you have put magic

And rendered this old man crazy.

Ma, in the light of your brilliant smile

Is manifest the pleasure house of desires.

Again, in the same light arises

The weeping wails of the cremation grounds.

On the path where you make wedding trumpets  
and drums resound,

On the same path, Ma, do we hear the strains  
of 'Haribol' of the last journey.

O dear Magician's daughter!

Pleadingly says Radha,

"O Ma, I am overwhelmed by the fear of your  
magic,

The desire to watch your magic is gone, Ma,

Now give me, Ma, your peaceful lap!"

This bhajan made me feel delighted and therefore  
I have written it out.

When Ma went to Srirampur from Tarapeeth  
she sat in the Gaurang temple and a lady devotee

A song sung in Ma's

presence by a lady

devotee at Srirampur.

sang the following song. I

liked the song very much so

I am noting it down.

An ocean of compassion  
 O Mother mine,  
 You have come to  
 Bequeath compassion.  
 Acquiring a human body  
 For the sake of the distressed  
 You have come to suffer hardships.  
 Relinquishing the heavens  
 You have come to this earth  
 How much have you laughed and wept  
 For the sake of your children.  
 This spontaneous love of yours  
 Can it ever be understood by man?  
 Sins of a hundred births have I  
 Poured at these red feet of thine.  
 You have endured everything effortlessly  
 Taking the distressed into your lap.  
 Filled with turbidity is my mind  
 How can it worship your holy feet?  
 Fill my eyes with tears so that  
 I can wash your lotus feet."

Truly, how much the mother suffers for  
 her children, but the children do not realize this.  
 But why raise the issue of understanding at all?  
 For Ma is always our "Ma".

In Dehradun Ma discussed about *diksha* with  
 Amulya Babu. He asked, "Ma, can we not make do  
 with just the Name without taking  
 Ma's utterances about *diksha* *diksha*?" Ma replied, "Yes, the  
 Name can achieve everything.  
 Do you not observe that when a tiny infant, who

does not know to say 'Ma' cries out, the mother knows she is being called by the child and goes to it? But when the child grows up the mother does not feel she is being called when the boy just cries. Therefore in a state of ignorance, by whichever name we call out to God, He understands fully." On another occasion she spoke in this context, "Just call out by the Name that you like best. Whenever necessary He will come and tell you His true Name. Look, it is like when you do not know the proper name of a boy and you call him by his pet name from childhood or simply address him as 'boy'. Perhaps he does not respond at first but if you pointedly call him repeatedly he will surely come and then say, 'This is my proper name.' Similarly by whichever name you call God, your purpose will be achieved."

Wednesday, 19th Kartik. Today Jyotish Dada's letter arrived saying he had received Manik's letter which revealed that Ma had descended from Nainital and gone to Agra and then to a place called Gadh mukteswar near Delhi. He did not know where she went from there. Ma was keeping good health.

Ma had named a certain Punjabi lady, 'Barik Mai'. She was extremely fat and therefore Ma had named with an opposite term, that is 'Thin Lady'. I had seen her many times. She had first met Ma in Hardwar but had not become closely acquainted. One day Ma spoke about her saying that though

News of Ma's  
travel from Naini-  
tal to Agra and  
Gadh mukteswar.

The story of  
Barik Mai

Barik Mai did not have much book knowledge she conversed well. She had joined the Congress during the freedom struggle, toured many places and given speeches. She was a woman of firm resolve. She composed songs and sang them and read the Adhyatma Ramayana so loudly that people ran away from the place wherever she sang. People even jeered at her for this but she did not care and stuck to her ideals.

Her relatives did not approve of her involvement with the Congress and when she refused to stop that work inspite of their repeatedly forbidding her, they took Barik Mai to the second storey of a building and locked up the staircase door. They threatened to keep her confined till she promised to give up her Congress work. Barik Mai gave up food and sleep and began breaking up and throwing all the expensive items in the room. But when her relatives did not release her even after this, she jumped out of the second storey room and went to the Congress meeting. Though she was so heavy she did not fear to jump. She had the first conviction that even if her bones were broken or even if she had to give up her life, she would definitely do what she had resolved to do. And though she jumped from such a height she suffered no injury.

She had once been jailed in connection with Congress work. She sang so loudly in the jail that everyone around was thoroughly upset. The authorities could not stop her singing in any way. She told them, "You people have tied up our hands and

legs but you do not have the strength to stop our tongues. I shall sing at the top of my voice. You can do whatever you like." Finally they were compelled to release her.

After coming out of jail she established a *satsanga* where good thoughts, namely discussions and meditation on Truth, *bhajans* and recitation of scriptural texts were carried on. She spent her time thus in auspicious activity. Ma told us, "When I was at Rishikesh she sometimes came and stayed with me. Seeing her in my company the Punjabis in her *satsanga* began asking her, 'Why do you go to that Bengali Mataji? Do you not know that these Bengali ladies are proficient in magic? They can turn humans into wolves with their magic!' Listening to all this and thinking that she would not get anything from me she stopped coming to me."

"Some time after this Sharada took leave for a few days and came to Rishikesh. She had a desire to hear Barik Mai sing and read aloud scriptural texts and therefore she began looking out for Barik Mai. One day as she was on her way to meet Purnananda Swami, she met Barik Mai by chance. Sharada took her to Purnananda Swami's ashram and heard her singing there. Following this, Barik Mai started visiting me again, and these visits became an addiction with her, so much so that even when her friends advised her against it she did not stop coming to me. Gradually she began eating, sleeping and spending all her time near me. By nature she was fond of roaming

about, but now she gave up going hither and thither and preferred to sit quietly near me. Observing this marked change in her nature everyone was astonished and she herself was surprised. Yet she was unable to go away and seemed to have been overcome by some kind of infatuation. When I started eating on alternate days she also followed suit. I told her not to do so but she refused to listen. In addition having heard from others that I was proficient in magic and noting the change in herself she was convinced that I did in fact know magic. She had also heard that when I slept at night, I rose above the ground. In order to see this for herself, she began keeping awake throughout the night, but could not see any change in me. She heard my conversations at times in the middle of the night and concluded that I did not sleep at night. She reasoned that I probably did not rise above the ground because she was awake. Therefore she would lie down pretending to sleep and watch me furtively. Thus she forsook food and sleep and became very thin.

One night her condition became very bad. Her feet and hands became cold. I told Jyotish to give her a warm fomentation and stroke her but he sat stunned with fear. So I stroked her body. Her breathing had become very faint and had nearly ceased. After I stroked her for some time, she opened her eyes and Jyotish fed her with two tablets of some medicine. A long time after swallowing the pills she recovered. The next day she was told of all that had occurred and

was also warned that if she continued to keep awake in this manner she would not be allowed to stay near me. She agreed to sleep then onwards. When her companions heard that she had been fed with two tablets, they interpreted that the Bengali Mataji had fed her with magic pills and that her health had deteriorated only because of the magic. Listening to such advice and pondering over her ill health she also concluded that I had actually done something to her. So she again stopped coming to me.

Then one day she came to collect her bedding and other things and discovered that I was leaving for Hardwar and that the car was ready for my departure. Seeing her I asked, "Ma, has the magic worn off slightly?" She thought that I had been able to perceive and understand everything and so she caught my feet and began weeping and saying, "I shall go with you to Hardwar." I replied, 'If you had not gone away from here you could have accompanied me. But now nothing can be done because my car is ready and there is no room for a single more person.' I left her and went to Hardwar. Later she did indeed visit me at Hardwar, but I did not let her stay with me and sent her home. Finally she realised that her loss of health was not due to any magic but because of her having given up food and sleep."

Having narrated all this, Ma said, "So now you have heard how the Bengali *mayavini* (magician) feeds people with magic pills. One meaning

of this is a kind of magic. To become one pointed with a pure mind, is like magic. If you once take this on you must never give it up."

In Simla, Haran Babu presented Ma with a beautiful cash box. He took Ma to the market and bought the box for her. Charu Babu and Haran Babu also bought a baton and gave it to Ma, telling her to keep it with her and use it to rule over them. Ma told them to keep both the things for her in their custody. She told Haran Babu to keep the box carefully with himself but he just did not agree to do so. Ma said, "Let my box remain with you." But when he refused Ma said, "Alright I shall fill up the box for you." Then he said, "If you fill it I shall take it." Then Ma sat one night and wrote the names of God in various ways and tucked them in different parts of the box. I wrote the name 'Ma' with sandal wood in the interior of the box. Ma decorated the box with many kinds of artistic craftsmanship and this sport went on till two in the morning because Ma started playing with the box in the late hours of the night after all the devotees had left. The next day the box was received with great delight and they felt blessed indeed. At first they had refused to accept the box because they did not want to take back something they had presented to Ma, but now the box decorated with Ma's own hands, seemed invaluable to them and they expressed great joy. Then all the devotees began to regret that they had not thought of presenting a box to Ma for

then Ma might have decorated it similarly and given it to them! They felt Haran Babu was extremely fortunate.

## CHAPTER XLVII

On reflecting over Ma's past life it appears that Ma has already performed *lila* with total perfection. When she acted the part of a little girl, she was extremely obedient to her parents and revered them as Gurus. Neighbours also loved her greatly. Whenever the need arose she would go to a neighbour's house and cook or do chores for them. In all work her skill was evident. Though she was the daughter of a poor man, because of her straightforward and natural behaviour and her beautiful countenance, everyone loved Ma right from when she was just a child.

I shall describe an incident which exemplifies her total obedience to her mother. Once Ma took an agate cup to wash in the pond. As she was leaving Didima told her, "Look, break it and bring it if you can." Didima meant it as a warning and said it light heartedly, but the next minute the cup fell and lay shattered on the ground. Ma then collected all the pieces carefully, washed them and brought them back to Didima who exclaimed, "What is this?" Ma replied, "The cup fell out of my hands and broke. You had asked me to bring it back and so I have brought back all the pieces." Ma was then

Ma's extraordinary skill and perfection in everything

An incident from Ma's childhood

a little child and hearing her speak thus Didima could not scold her for having broken the cup and began laughing instead.

Even to this day I have observed that with her father Ma behaves just like a daughter.

About Ma's life as a householder If her father is present whenever she is going away to or coming back from some place, she holds his feet with both her hands and touching her head to his feet, she bows to him. When she became a wife, she served her brother-in-law and his wife and looked after their children methodically and painstakingly. She appeared so involved in her worldly work that she did not bother about her self at all. Because of that she fell sick a few times but that did not bring about any shortcomings in her wifely duties. We have ourselves observed her (in her present position) behaving with due regard and reverence towards her sister-in-law.

When she took charge of her own household, she took up the service of her husband as her foremost duty in life and devoted herself entirely at his feet. I have witnessed Ma's implicit obedience to Bholanath's orders to an extent which is impossible for an ordinary woman. The only one comparable to Ma is Ma herself. Ma often played with cowrie shells in her childhood. Bholanath once expressed his disapproval over this in her father's house. After

that she stopped playing with cowrie shells altogether and even when her friends forcibly tried to make her join them she refused. Ma was very young then and Bholanath was away. He would not have known had she played, yet it was against her nature to do such a thing. When *kriyas* began manifesting in her body while she was at Bajitpur, there was no omission in her service of Bholanath. She did not rest even after serving him his meal and seeing him off to office. She got everything ready right down to the water and towel for his wash after his return from office and only then sat down for her meal. In the evening she finished all the traditional duties of a householder such as lighting the lamp and incense and readying the *asana* for Goddess Lakshmi and then started cooking dinner. After cooking she got ready the betel leaf and tobacco for Bholanath and only after he slept at night did she sit for her *sadhana*. Probably she ate dinner only after the *sadhana*, in the early hours of the morning, and so she had meals any time in the night or day.

Ma cooked extremely well. Bholanath often invited his neighbours for meals and they felt delighted. I have observed that both Bholanath and Ma loved to feed people. Impurity was against Ma's nature. Ma's work, home, doorway, bedding, clothes and body were always pure and clean and Ma cleaned everything with her own hands. Ma made pickles and preserves flawlessly and executed

all domestic work beautifully. Towards her sisters-in-law and brothers-in-law she was an exemplary sister-in-law. Though all this *lila* was over within a short span of time, whatever was performed was completely perfect; to the extent that her sisters and brothers-in-law who watched her behaviour called her 'Devi' (Goddess).

Lace and carpets woven by Ma are beautiful and I still have them with me. Ma has spun thread on the spinning wheel and woven cloth while in the role of a householder. And though this role was shortlived she managed to do everything within that short time. Another surprising point was that though Ma was the wife of an ordinary householder, she close acquaintances were from highly placed families. It appears that Ma's divine beauty and inner power of attraction were the reasons for this. Bhudev Babu's family was very close to Ma and the wife of the gentleman (Rash Bihari Ghosh) who occupied Bhudev Babu's post before him, was very fond of Ma. Ma called her '*Masima*'. Rash Bihari Ghosh's daughter was Usha Didi.

When Ma completed her *lila* as a householder and became an ashram dweller, beginning her *lila* as the universal mother, her sport was again unique. When Bholanath was employed at Shahbagh and anyone from Rai Bahadur Jogesh Babu's house visited him, Ma would extend special hospitality towards them because Jogesh Babu was Bhola-

Either as a householder or as an ashramite Ma's *lila* is unique

nath's boss. Then again when the ladies from the household of the Mahant at Siddheshwari arrived, Ma would give them special respect because they were guests from the landlord's home visiting the subjects. Later when Ma was unable to do any work on her own she would make us do all that was necessary. Even Rai Bahadur Yogesh Ghosh first began feeling devotion towards Ma, she continued to get up from the garden and go indoors as soon as he arrived. It was only when Bholanath told her to come out because Yogesh Babu wanted to meet her, that she kept her head covered and emerged diffidently. Then as Yogesh Babu's attitude changed Ma's behaviour changed accordingly and later she met him without any reservation. He also regarded Ma as his Guru. All *kriyas* are thus manifested correctly at the opportune moments in Ma's life. That is why Ma says, "In response to your attitudes changes occur in my body spontaneously. This does not involve my own desire or duty at all." Ma thus performed all her *lila* beautifully without a flaw anywhere. She is completely perfect and no job of hers remains incomplete.

While giving advice Ma has often said, "Whenever I do anything I do it with all my heart and soul. Be the job small or big, that does not affect me at all." I have heard from Ma that she has never read any books, and her knowledge of reading and writing is very preliminary. Whenever she listened to the reading of

any religious book she became strangely affected. In Ashtagram a gentleman (Ma regarded him as a brother and he called her Ranga Didi. This name was popular amongst some people in Ashtagram, probably because of Ma's beauty.) read out a religious book to Ma. As he read he found a marked change in Ma's condition and asked her what the matter was but Ma did not seem to hear anything and sat absolutely still. Then he got up slowly with the book and never attempted again to read out to Ma.

Ma never forgot a person once she saw him whether he was in the midst of a crowd or walking far away on the road. Even though he might not have been acquainted, when he came to Ma many days later Ma would say that she had seen him on the road one day.

In December, 1936, when I was returning to Vindhyachal from Dhaka as per Ma's instructions, I passed through Calcutta where I heard from Abala about two incidents concerning Ma.

The first is this:-- Abala's brother-in-law Sri Satish Bandopadhyaya had a twenty seven year old son who passed away. Abala and Dinesh Babu went to Satish Babu's house when they received this news. Satish Babu's wife told them that many years ago she had Ma's darshan in Kashi and Ma had asked her, 'How many sons do you have?' When she replied, 'Ma I have four sons', Ma laughed lightly and remarked, 'But I see only three sons.' Satish Babu's wife now said

Two incidents  
about Ma which  
I heard.

that when her son died she remembered these words so many years later.

The second incident - Abala once gave birth to twin daughters. One died soon after birth but the second one survived. Abala already had two daughters so she was very upset when these twin girls were born. In Bengal the birth of a daughter invariably causes sorrow to the parents. Therefore one day Abala was talking to Ashu (her cousin) in the maternity room and said, 'Now I shall not grieve even if this girl were to die.' The next day Ma reached the maternity room and laughingly said, "What, do you desire the death of this child? If she dies when she is ten months old what will you do?" Abala replied, 'Ma I have already had three or four daughters and therefore now I am quite upset.' Abala was surprised by the fact that she had told her cousin Ashu the previous day that the death of this girl would not make her sad and Ma knew all about it. And truly enough the girl died at the age of ten months. Ma's vision cannot be blinded by the darkness of the future and therefore Amulya Babu says, 'Our Ma is not only the knower of each heart, she can also look into the future.'

In December, 1936, Ma went to Dhaka. On the day she left for Paruldiya from Dhaka she blessed Amulya Dada's wife with special grace. But that incident is not supposed to be disclosed to others. Amulya Dada said, "Ma's grace is unlimited. She has uplifted our clan."

## CHAPTER XLVIII

December, 1936. By Ma's orders I went for the Annakut ceremony on the 27th Kartik and came to Calcutta on 30th Kartik. I stayed there for four or five days and then came to Kashi. Father also stayed at the 'Shyam Kuti' ashram at Agra and reached Kashi today as per Ma's orders. As Ma had told him earlier, he is going to the *yajna sala* at Vindhyachal for some work. Bhramar had received Manik's letter at Calcutta and I read it. From that I came to know that Ma had had high fever and that she had also had a severe stomach upset in Itawa. Ma came to Bareilly from Nainital and contacted Manik who promptly went to Bareilly and met Ma and stayed with her for ten or twelve days. Maharatan was able to get Ma's darshan in Bareilly. Ma then went to Agra with Manik. Manik wrote that he hoped to get Ma's darshan again after a month. He left Ma at Gadhmutkeshwar and went to Lucknow. Birendra Dada was blessed with Ma's company on the *ashtami* and *navami* days of Navarathri and he adorned Ma with flowers and *bél* leaves to his heart's content. This has been described elsewhere.

Another significant incident that occurred was Bhramar saw Ma twice in her dreams when Ma was running temperature. The first time she saw that Ma was having fever and was saying, 'Today

I have eaten rice with potatoes cooked by Khukuni.' In fact I had actually been cooking rice

Bhramar's vision  
of Ma in her  
dreams

with potatoes almost all those  
days and offering it as *bhoga* to Ma  
and then eating it myself. In the  
second dream Bhramar saw Ma

asking her, 'Can you drink three litres of milk? Only then will I recover!' Bhramar then actually attempted to drink three litres of milk but could not drink more than two and a half litres. Later she did manage to drink three litres of milk. Normally she just could not drink milk and now though she drank so much in one day she was not adversely affected at all. She had told Jyotish Dada about her dreams and asked him what she should do. He had advised her to actually obey whatever she had been asked to do in the dreams.

While I was in Calcutta, we all met at Sri Jyotish Guha's house to talk about Ma. Jyotish

Ganga snana  
at Chunchuda

Dada and Prankumar Babu narra-  
ted the following incidents in  
the course of conversation. Though

I was present during these incidents I had forgotten them. In 1338 B.S. when Ma went to Prankumar Babu's house in Chunchuda, she went for a dip in the Ganga with us all. Prankumar Babu's wife had been plagued by rheumatism for the last eight or nine years and was in a helpless state and could not even walk without being helped by others. Ma had held her and made her walk in the Ganga with the support of the railings. Right after that dip in the Ganga all had begun to drink Ma's

*charanamrita*. Ma emerged from the river and looking at the Ganges she remarked, "I have left *charanamrita* there, you can all take it from there."

Another incident during Ma's visit to Prankumar Babu's house in Chunchuda:-- Jyotish

Missing jewellery in Chunchuda      Dada was also present with family and the atmosphere was charged with bliss. Suddenly one day Mani's (Jyotish Dada's sister's) jewellery was found missing. The jewellery was quite substantial and therefore all became quite worried. Pran Kumar Babu was about to inform the police when Father (Akhandananda Swami) said, "Has Ma been informed about the missing jewellery?" Everyone said, "No, it should not be told to Ma." Father insisted, "Do just tell Ma about it." Immediately everyone went and told Ma and she said, "Where will it go? It is in the bedding--go and look carefully." They went and searched the bedding and this time the jewellery was found in it, though the same bedding had been thoroughly dusted and searched many times earlier.

Yet another event--Sri Anil Kumar Basu had come from Jamshedpur. He was a staunch devotee of Ma and was present along with his wife at Chunchuda when Ma had gone there. When Ma was leaving for Navadvip from Chunchuda, Anil Babu's wife (she is Pran Kumar Babu's niece) expressed a strong desire to accompany Ma. Ma informed Anil Babu about this. He replied, "Ma, what can I do, I don't have any more leave." Ma

Telegram about  
Anil Babu's leave

asked, "Can you not take leave for another fifteen days?" He replied that was impossible. After this Ma went with us to Navadweep and Anil Babu returned to Jamshedpur. As soon as he reached there everyone asked, "What is this? You had wired for fifteen days' leave. Why have you returned now?" Anil Babu was stunned because he had not sent any telegram for leave. He himself narrated this incident.

All the people with Ma in Chunchuda (Jyotish Guha's entire family had come with Ma) went to Navadweep. Ma also took Pran Kumar Babu's wife along. At Navadweep Ma took everyone and went for a bath in the Ganga. Because of some reason Pran Kumar Babu's wife was unable to go for the dip in the Ganga and she was left alone at the lodge. Many felt bad about this and her son-in-law, Yatish, repeatedly expressed sorrow on this account. Pran Kumar Babu's eldest son, Tunu went to Ma and asked "Shall we go and bring mother here?" Ma was quite for a moment and then she replied, "Alright, go and bring her." Immediately Tunu went and fetched his mother to the bathing *ghat*. Ma bathed in the Ganga with all the devotees and all were immersed in joy. Ma made Tunu's mother get down into the water and made her walk about just as an infant is first taught to walk. Sometimes holding her hands and letting go at times, or standing at a little distance and calling her to come, Ma made her move about for a long time in the water and

came out. Tunu and Pran Kumar Babu said that two days after returning to Chunchuda from Nava-dweep, Tunu's mother began to walk about slowly and within a week or so she was moving around very well.

Some days later Revati Sen took Ma to a school for the dumb to see their sports day and we were also present. The same day Pran Kumar Babu arrived there from Chunchuda and I saw that Tunu's mother was able to walk normally after being crippled for so many years and I was surprised.

Once when Ma went to Pran Kumar Babu's house on his invitation, from Pabna, the following incident occurred:--

Ma's presence had turned the place into a festival of bliss and the house was overflowing with people. Crowds were present day and night. Suddenly one day Search for snakes in Pabna Ma began searching for something all over the compound, so I asked her, "Ma, what are you looking for?" Ma replied, "Wait, I am searching for a snake." Till then no one had seen a snake in those premises though every time Ma mentions a snake, it is always spotted within a couple of days. Ma said this and returned to her seat. In the evening Pran Kumar Babu's servant went to the pond to fetch drinking water for Ma. There he saw two snakes and was so frightened that he ran back to take another man with him. They returned to the spot and found that the two snakes were lying on either side of the water pot

with raised hoods. When they made a slight sound the snakes went away. The servants came home and narrated the incident and the news reached Ma. She began laughing.

I shall write about another incident which occurred while Ma was staying at *Pisima's* house in Salkiya. She went for a day Incident at Salkiya to Govardhan's house at Srirampur and returned to Salkiya. She was then running fever which seemed as high as 102° or 103° F. At that juncture Bholanath asked Jyotish Guha's brother, Nitish, "Will you take us to Dakshineswar?" Nitish answered, "Who says we would take you? You may be going, in which case we will go with you." Bholanath said, "Everybody says Jyotish will take all of us to Dakshineswar." Then Nitish replied, "That is alright then, if you all come we can arrange to go one day." Bholanath said, "Well then let us go tomorrow." Ma also said, "Good, let us go."

Now Nitish spoke, "Ma, let us not go tomorrow. Let us go after a few days because you are not keeping well at present. It would be better to go after you recover." The actual fact was that Nitish knew that his elder brothers (Jyotish and Kshitish) did not have much money and that they were managing household expenses with great difficulty. It would be necessary to have some money to go to Dakshineswar. Therefore he tactfully brought up the excuse of Ma's indisposition and tried to postpone the Dakshineswar trip by a few days. But Ma knew everything

and perhaps to teach Nitish a lesson, she looked at him and said, "It will be done, let us go tomorrow. Everything will be accomplished."

Then Bholanath told Nitish, "Go quickly to Calcutta and discuss with your brothers and make all arrangements so that you can pick us up at Salkiya *ghat* tomorrow." Nitish left by the next train, worrying over their predicament. Before he left he did *pranama* at Ma's feet and prayed to her mentally that arrangements should be made smoothly. Ma looked at Nitish most compassionately and said, "It will be alright, everything will be done, let us go tomorrow." At six p.m. Nitish reached his house at Bhavanipur and told his brothers all that had happened. Jyotish scolded Nitish and proposed that they should telephone to Salkiya and ask whether they could postpone the date of the trip to Dakshineswar. Kshitish intervened and said, "Let us see, if Ma has said, 'It will be done' then surely there is some purpose in this." Then the three brothers and their mother rummaged through their boxes and found only five rupees in all. On hunting through their store room they found only nine seers of dal and six seers of rice.

The three brothers and their mother were discussing the situation when Sri Jnanaranjan *brahmachari* (whom Ma had affectionately named Khokan Lala) came upstairs saying, "May I come in for a minute?" He came in and said, "I have heard all your conversation from downstairs. Why are you so worried? When Ma has said she will go tomorrow there is no need to think any more about it."

Tomorrow I shall bring *ghee* from my brother's shop and make all preparations for *bhoga*." Kshitish owned an old car and they decided that they would make two or three trips in that car and transport all their family members to the Bada Bazar *ghat*. They also decided that if four rupees were not sufficient they would borrow money from somebody.

The next day was the last day of the ritualistic mourning period after the death of some relative of Jyotish Guha. So the washerwoman and other domestic helpers came very early and finished their work. The house was also cleaned and mopped early. Jnana *brahmachari* came as he had promised and took the dal and rice and also took one rupee from the five rupees for vegetables and left for Dakshineshwar.

The car was to come at seven but it did not arrive even at nine so Yatish Guha, Kshitish, their mother and aunt and some others went by bus to Bada Bazar *ghat*. This cost about one rupee. The two brothers bathed at the Bada Bazar *ghat* and then started searching for a boat. They discovered that no boat could be hired for less than eight rupees and no more than thirteen people could be accommodated in one boat. The brothers were desperate and walked from Bada Bazar till Ahir Tola *ghat*, but got the same reply everywhere. Finally they turned back disheartened, and just then they heard someone calling out. They looked down the river and saw two new boats sailing towards them and the boatmen beckoning them. The boatmen cried out, "Babu, if you want to

hire boats, come in ours." Jyotish Guha replied that they wanted to go to Dakshineshwar but could not pay much fare. The boatmen said, "Babu, we have set sail our new boats today and so we shall not specify any fare for you. We shall take whatever you give."

The two brothers now began discussing that since they had so little money with them it would not be fair to hire two boats. The boatmen intervened saying, "We are uncle and nephew and we have set out with our new boats for the first time so we shall agree to anything that you give. Come on, do not delay further." The brothers saw that the boatmen were actually keen to take them and their joy knew no bounds. Realising Ma's limitless grace they mentally bowed a hundred times at her feet and sat in the boat with their families and crossed the river to Salkiya *ghat* where they picked up Ma and all of us and thus we made the trip to Dakshineshwar altogether.

As Ma crossed the Ganga, devotees sang kirtan to the accompaniment of the *khol* and *kartal*.

Great bliss in That bliss cannot be described. Ma  
company of Ma had high fever but her bliss  
permeated personality was  
constantly full of joy. Someone recited the Chandi  
and some others sang the name of Radhe Govinda.  
Ma was seated wrapped in a woollen shawl. At  
eleven thirty the boat reached Dakshineshwar *ghat*.

Ma climbed the steps and went to the shore. Everyone touched Ma's footprints and then touched their heads and hearts in veneration. The Kali

temple was shut. *Arati* was performed at the Madan Mohan temple. All the people sat around Ma in the *natya mandir*. Before kirtan some people went for a bath in the Ganga. Ma asked, "Shall I not bathe?" Jyotish Dada's mother said, "Ma, you have fever so you should not bathe. You sit here, we will bathé and come."

They all had their bath and sat for their *puja*. Just then they heard the devotees shouting and turned to see Ma running very joyfully towards them and then the next moment she had jumped into the Ganga and was swimming about merrily. Many others jumped into the water with her. After some time Ma came out of the water and sat in the *Natya mandir*. Devotees wiped Ma's head. Kirtan was started and a large crowd gathered.

*Bhoga* was prepared and devotees offered it to Ma and Bholanath. *Prasada* was distributed to all. About eighty two or eighty three people received *prasada* though the dal and rice used weighed only fifteen seers. After so many devotees received *prasada* one full bucket of *khicdi* remained and all were surprised to see this. Ma again sat in the *Natya mandir* and devotees resumed kirtan. A slight change in Ma's *bhava* was perceptible.

As the scheduled time came to an end, devotees got ready to return home with Ma. Some

people wished to contribute towards the expenses of the day's trip and function. Later Jyotish Guha told us that surprisingly enough, the amount contributed by the devotees exactly compensated the amount that was falling short of the boat fare, not a paise less or more. Everyone was astonished at this fact. Jyotish Dada comprehended that that was why Ma had said, "It will be done." Now everyone returned to the boat and Ma lay down as soon as she got into the boat. It was the tenth day of the dark fortnight on which the immersion ceremony is performed after Ganga *puja*. Devotees sang kirtan and returned home with Ma. Ma went with us to Salkiya while the others returned to their own houses. After the dip in the Ganga Ma's fever came down.

## CHAPTER XLIX

10th Agrahayana (November/December) 1936, Kashi. I came to Kashi and heard from Nepal Dada that a friend of his had recently met Ma at Sultanpur. Sharada Sharma's sister, Rama, is a doctor at Sultanpur and Ma was staying in a temple situated near Rama's house. There was no more news. About this time we received a telegram from Ma at Tarapeeth and went there.

At Tarapeeth I heard from Birajmohini Didi about how Ma left for *ajñata vasa* in August 1936 and I am now describing it in detail. Ma reached Srirampur on 18th Sravana, Monday, in the afternoon. She went to the Gaurang temple and all the devotees gathered there. Ma told the devotees to return with Bholanath to Calcutta the same evening. In the evening Ma went for a walk by the side of the Ganga. Later she revealed that she had a vision of Sri Jagannath there and immediately decided to go to Puri. Till then no one knew anything of this. She had started from Calcutta with only one *dhōti*. When Triguna Babu presented her a new *dhōti* she wore it and gave him the one she had been wearing. Ma left Srirampur by the night train with a ticket till Kharagpur. Triguna Babu secretly handed over

Detailed description of how Ma set out for *ajñata vasa* from Srirampur.

a *dhوتي* and a blanket for Ma to Birajmohini Didi. At the Srirampur station someone offered Ma a nice *sari*, *sandesh* and *sindur*. The *sandesh* was distributed immediately and Biraj Didi kept the *sari* with her.

On reaching Kharagpur they could not catch the train to Puri so they rented a room for a day. The next day they reached Puri and went to the Goenka *dharmasala* but since no room was vacant they stayed in the verandah.

In a room adjoining this *dharmasala*, some traveller from Orissa was staying with his family. Biraj Didi kept the blanket and clothes in their room and set out for darshan. As soon as they reached the *dharmasala* Ma had told Kamal that she would give the new *sari* to the travellers from Orissa and take a *dhوتي* from them. Nobody except Kamal knew that Ma had said this. When they returned after darshan Biraj Didi went to the travellers' room to get her things and the traveller of his own accord asked Biraj Didi whether she would sell the *sari* and how much it costed. Biraj Didi said that she did not know its price and that a devotee had offered it to Ma. She declared she would not sell it. The traveller pointed out, "But Ma wears only a narrow bordered *dhوتي*. She will not wear this *sari*." Biraj Didi narrated this conversation to Ma who laughed and asked her to call the traveller. Ma requested him to accept the *sari* but he flatly refused to take it

without paying for it and Ma conversed with him for a long time on this issue. Ma addressed him as Baba and talked to him sweetly and finally won him over into accepting the *sari*. He went away with it but came back soon after, insisting that he would purchase a narrow bordered *dhoti* for Ma. Ma refused repeatedly but on his insistently pleading she agreed and he brought a narrow bordered *dhoti* for Ma. So, the statement which Ma had made only to Kamal, as soon as she entered the *dharmasala*, came true.

In the evening Ma went for a walk on the seashore. Suddenly a *Vaishnava* boy came to Ma and said, "I have seen you in Shahbagh.

Another incident in Puri.

Are you not the Ma of Shahbagh?"

Saying this he went to Sri Bijay Goswami's ashram and informed Makhan Babu about Ma's arrival. Makhan Babu went to the *dharmasala* but returned without finding Ma there because she was then at the seashore. When Ma returned to the *dharmasala* from the seashore, she began walking up and down on the verandah. All of a sudden she declared, "I can see Makhan Babu walking about with a lantern." A little later Makhan Babu did indeed turn up, lantern in hand. He was extremely delighted to obtain Ma's company so unexpectedly and talked to Ma for some time and then went back.

The next day as Ma strolled along the seashore she again encountered a boy from Navadweep. He had seen Ma at Navadweep and had travelled with her to many places. In the evening

Makhan Babu took Ma to Shyamdas Babaji and then to Anand Bazar and many other places. He purchased a variety of eatables for *prasada* which he brought to the *dharmasala* and fed Ma with his hands. **Ma also fed everybody.**

Ma left the same evening for Bhuvaneshwar by train. There she stayed in a *dharmasala*. The next morning she visited many places and returned to the *dharmasala* in the afternoon. On receiving information of Ma's arrival, Sri Dinesh Bhattacharya came to see Ma and talked to her for two hours and also sang to her. That evening she left and travelled through Gomo, Adra and other places to Agra where she stayed for a day and visited Shyam Kuti and then went to Mathura by car. At Mathura she stayed in a *dharmasala* for three days but no devotees came to know about her stay. Since no one is permitted to stay in any *dharmasala* beyond three days, Ma left and ordered Kamal to return to Calcutta. He tried very hard to stay on but Ma persuaded him to leave and went with him to the station. From the station she went to Vishram Ghat and sat down. That day Ma was to eat fruits. She had practically no possessions with her. Biraj Didi had purchased a few ordinary vessels at Puri but Ma had given them all to Kamal. She had cut a piece of the blanket and kept it and given the rest to Kamal. Other

than a water pot, this piece of blanket and one *dhoti*, Ma had nothing else with her. Biraj Didi had a blanket and two *dhotis* and some money. She bought some fruit and began feeding it to Ma sitting on the *ghat*. People gathered and stood around to watch this spectacle. Looking at Ma's dishevelled hair and seeing her being fed by someone else, they thought she was mad and began laughing. Ma joined in their laughter.

As evening drew on their destination was still unknown. Ma pointed out to every place

Ma's encounter  
with a Kashmiri  
lady devotee  
at Mathura

by the roadside and Biraj Didi asked, "Can we stay here?" Just then they happened to encounter a Kashmiri lady who was Ma's devotee. She delightedly bowed down at Ma's feet and began praising her good fortune which had enabled her to have Ma's darshan. She wanted to take Ma to her house but Ma did not go to anyone's house. So she said, "We have a temple right here on the Vishram ghat. Let us go there." She took Ma to the temple and made all arrangements for Ma's stay. She brought fruits and milk for Ma's *bhoga*. The next day she made *roti* and curry and fed it to Ma with her own hands. As Ma was eating a Kashmiri gentleman named Shiva Narayana Pandit came and had Ma's darshan and was extremely happy. He told her, "I saw you once before and then looked for you in many *dharma-salas* but could not find you. Now please come to another temple where you can stay without any

inconvenience." Ma replied, "Not this time, let us see later. Now I shall go to Vrindavan." He said, "I shall also go with you."

So on 29th. Shravan, Friday, Ma left for Vrindavan with the Pandit. At two p.m. Ma reached Ma at Vrindavan the *dharmasala* belonging to the Bardhaman Raja. The Manager, Yogendra Babu knew Ma and he took Ma inside the *dharmasala*. A little later Ma told the Panditji to return to Mathura.

The next day, that is 30th. Shravan, Ma left Vrindavan and went to Mathura station where the Manager Yogendra Babu From Vrindavan asked her, "Ma, where will you go to Agra now? Which place do you want a ticket for?" Ma replied, "Nothing is certain with us. I shall go wherever anyone takes me on the way. Now you can get us tickets for Agra." The Manager got them tickets for Agra. When Ma was coming to Vrindavan from Mathura she gave the Kashmiri lady a *dhoti* saying, "Have it washed and keep it." The lady thought that this meant Ma would perhaps return to Mathura, but Ma has given blankets, *dhotis*, rugs and blouses to so many people, asking them to keep it, but has not returned thereafter. This was not known to the Kashmiri lady. At Agra fort, Ma got down and told Biraj Didi to purchase a ticket for Itawa. As Ma was sitting at the station, two boys began conversing with her with great reverence and requested her to go with them to their place in Agra and said they would arrange for her stay by the Yamuna

river. They also gave her their address.

Ma changed trains at Tundla to go to Itawa. At Tundla station a boy saw Ma and came to her

In Tundla on the way from Agra to Itawa and said, "Mataji, I have seen you in Sultanpur. Will you go to Sultanpur? I am also going there."

Ma replied, "We have tickets for Itawa." The boy got the tickets changed for Sultanpur.

So Ma did not go to Itawa and went to Sultanpur instead. When changing trains at Allahabad they did not see the boy again.

Ma in Sultanpur On the way to Sultanpur Ma and

Biraj Didi were seated in the ladies' compartment. At the Pratapgarh station a Muslim lady got into the same compartment. She asked Ma, "How many children do you have?" Ma replied, "I am myself your child, will I then have children?" This remark

made a profound impression on that lady. She then conversed with Ma for some time and became greatly attached to Ma. Biraj Didi had bought a little toy for Ma and Ma fiddled with it for some time and then told the Muslim lady, "Children

keep their toys with their mother. Please keep this toy with you." The lady gave Ma her address and requested her to meet again. When leaving she began weeping. Ma went to Sultanpur with Biraj Didi and stayed in Kalumalki's *dharmasala*. Biraj Didi went to meet Rama Sharma (Sharada's sister) who is a doctor in Sultanpur. Rama came and made all the arrangements for Ma's stay. Ma reached Sultanpur at nine or ten a.m. on the Pratipada of

Bhadrapad. She stayed for a day and then went to the Gomati river the next morning. On the way she saw a car and asked, "Where is this car going?" Someone replied, "It is going to Faizabad." There and then Ma told Biraj Didi, "Let us go to Faizabad." They reached Faizabad at four or five in the evening. From the station they took a horse cart and set out for Ayodhya.

## CHAPTER L

Ma reached Ayodhya at five thirty or six in the evening and stayed in Laldas Babaji's temple.

Ma in Ayodhya Rama was with Ma. They decided to shift to another temple. They went for a walk by the Sarayu river and came across Ahalya Bai's Sri Ram temple where the Ramayana was being recited. Ma went and sat there. The temple was very beautiful. Rama asked the priest, "Can Ma stay here?" The priest consented happily and showed them two rooms which could be occupied. So Ma went to stay at that temple and Rama returned. Ma stayed in the temple for seven days and no one came to know of her presence. During the day time Ma lay in her room and in the evening she went and sat where the Ramayana was being read out. Then she went strolling by the Sarayu river and peeped into huts inhabited by *sadhus* and *sannyasis*. She alone knew what she was looking for. She never uttered a word. The *sadhus* would bathe in the morning and sit inside their huts with doors shut. Ma would peep through the doorways and watch for some time. Thus were seven days spent.

On the eighth day Satya Narayana *puja* was performed. The priest of the Kashmiris at Faizabad was the worshipping priest at this temple. Many of these Kashmiris were devotees of Ma. During the *puja* a boy recognized Ma from afar and

immediately cycled back to Faizabad and informed all the devotees of her presence. Within a short time two or three cars packed Unique offering to Ma at Ayodhya with devotees and their families turned up at Ma's feet. They all questioned the priest, "Mataji has been here from so many days. Why did you not send us the information at Faizabad?" The poor priest was astonished at the turn of events. He exclaimed, "But I did not know Mataji." Because of all this the people of Ayodhya came to know Ma and large crowds began surrounding Ma. All arrived with flowers, garlands, *arati* and sweets and began worshipping Ma fervently. *Dhotis*, blouses and other things piled up and Ma distributed it all to her devotees there and then. The atmosphere was charged with bliss. Next morning the devotees gathered and again performed Ma's *puja*. In the afternoon Ma was photographed. In the evening the Ramayana reading was completed and the priest performed *arati* with Ma's photograph placed on the *simhasana* on which Sri Rama's idol was installed. The same day Ma decided to leave Ayodhya and this resulted in much tearful protestations but Ma's departure could not be deterred. The same night Ma was taken to Faizabad station in Manakeshwar Raina's car. There Ma had to wait for two hours for the train and within that time hundreds of people thronged to the station and till midnight; children, aged people and youngsters surrounded Ma. *Puja* and *bhoga* was also performed.

At twelve midnight Ma left for Lucknow. A

lawyer from Barabanki was travelling in the train. He lovingly requested Ma to go to Barabanki but

From Lucknow      Ma said she was on her way to  
to Itawa      Lucknow and would consider the  
                 invitation some time later.

At five a.m. she got off at Lucknow. From there she went to Itawa in another train. At Itawa she went to the house of Pitamber Pande (Civil Surgeon). He was having his bath and as soon as he heard that Ma was at his door step he rushed to the door in drenched clothes. Seeing Ma with only one lady, he was surprised and asked, "Ma, what's the matter? Why have you come alone like this?" He spread a blanket in his garden and made Ma sit down. Later he made arrangements for Ma to stay in a newly constructed house on the banks of the Yamuna river, near the temple of Daoji, about three miles away from his house. Ma stayed there for about fifteen days. Every afternoon at twelve the Doctor Sahib sent some one to enquire if Ma needed anything. Then by five or five thirty every evening he himself came to Ma and stayed for a long time. Gradually many people came to know of Ma's presence and started arriving. Ma spoke to them on many profound matters and everyone derived great joy in listening to her. The Rani of Pratapgarh heard about Ma's arrival and took her to the garden of her house and performed Ma's *arati* and *pūja*. A large number of people gathered there and kirtan was sung. Devotees took Ma to two or three other places and had kirtan and *bhoga*. Gradually crowds began surrounding Ma.

Poor people came with a handful of rice or dal as offerings to Ma and she in her turn accepted it delightedly. Ma was photographed beside the river.

One day while in Itawa, Ma went and sat under a peepul tree. The foliage of the tree was so dense that it was very dark in its shade. Biraj Didi had brought some grapes to give to Ma. A *Sivalinga* was installed under the tree and Ma did not eat the grapes but said, "Give it all to Siva." Biraj Didi did accordingly. The place was very desolate and Ma often sat beside the Yamuna. People arrived there for Ma's darshan. A cremation ground was situated close by and the smell of bodies burning often pervaded the place.

One day while strolling on the banks of the Yamuna, Ma discovered a *Sudra* family living under a Margosa tree beside the fields. Ma went into their midst and the poor people spread papaya leaves for Ma to sit on. Ma assumed the role of their daughter and started calling them 'Ma' and 'Baba'. They responded with great affection for Ma, offered her a raw papaya and just refused to accept any money for it. Ma went and sat with them now and then and many highly placed people who came for Ma's darshan went and sat on those papaya leaves.

From Itawa Ma went to Naimisharanya. The Civil Surgeon purchased the ticket for Ma and also gave some money. The day she reached Naimisharanya she left for Lucknow and stayed in

the Sarojini *dharmasala* there. The Manager, Mati Babu had seen Ma earlier and he was very happy to accomodate her. After Ma had stayed in Lucknow for a week, Ma's trip to Lucknow via Naimisharanya Manik came to know of her presence and came to meet her on the eighth night of her stay. On the ninth day Ma went to see the Gomati river. At twelve noon they spread a blanket under a tree by the river and sat down to feed Ma with some fruit, for she was only to eat fruit that day. People passing by thought that Ma and her companions were in trouble and began discussing whether they ought to extend some help. A little later Ma was seated facing the Gomati when a Kashmiri devotee (Nani's son-in-law) caught sight of Ma from a distance while driving past in his car. Immediately he hastened to her and offered obeisance at her feet. After staying with her for some time he went and informed everybody about Ma's whereabouts. The next day a large crowd of people arrived for Ma's darshan. Nani, who was an ardent devotee of Ma, was then staying at her daughter's place and when she met Ma she began weeping with happiness. At ten a.m. the same day, Ma went to stay in a *dharmasala* on the banks of the Gomati. At seven p.m. she went to the station and sat there till ten p.m. Then she left for Barabanki, also accompanied by Manik. While in Lucknow Ma had fever which continued when she left for Barabanki.

At twelve midnight she reached Barabanki and lay down in the open. She was running 104<sup>0</sup>.

temperature. The next morning they went to a *dharmasala* and informed the lawyer who arrived immediately with four other people. Ma in Barabanki for Ma's darshan. Ma stayed for four days in Barabanki and a large number of people began coming to her everyday in this short span. A couple of very learned scholars came and conversed with Ma and felt very happy. Listening to Ma's expositions and delineations on profound matters they applauded her. Many people performed Ma's *puja*.

Ma sent Manik away and proceeded to Bareilly. On the way she had to halt at Lucknow station for two hours. In the morning when she reached Bareilly she was still having fever and Biraj Didi was also feeling feverish. They went walking to a *dharmasala* near the station but could not get a room. So a small piece of blanket was spread on a cot in the verandah and Ma lay down on it. Biraj Didi procured an iron stove and made tomato juice for Ma and cooked sago for herself.

A Punjabi lady devotee (Maharatan) lived in Bareilly, where her husband, Sri Jaspal, was a Registrar. Biraj Didi set out in search of Maharatan but in spite of trying hard throughout the day she could not locate her. In the night Biraj Didi set out again with a Punjabi boy and after a long search she discovered that Maharatan lived very close to the *dharmasala*.

On reaching the house Biraj Didi asked the

peon and affirmed that it belonged to Mr. Jaspal, but she did not know anybody other than Maharatan there. Therefore she asked, "Is Jaspal's wife at home?" She got a positive reply. Just then Maharatan's daughter arrived and Biraj Didi asked her, "Is Maharatan there?" Hearing this name Maharatan came running and embraced Biraj Didi asking, "Where is Mataji?" On learning that Ma was in Bareilly, she was overwhelmed and began weeping. Immediately she paid off the horse cart on which Biraj Didi had come and set out on her car with Biraj Didi taking milk for Ma. As soon as she reached she procured the best room for Ma and worshipped her with flowers and garlands. The next day Maharatan took Ma to the market and purchased warm clothing and a blanket for her in spite of being told not to do so. She pleaded persistently with Ma and compelled her to use the woollen clothes but Ma would not discard her old piece of blanket and spread it below the new one. Maharatan also gave a blanket to Biraj Didi. Ma stayed in Bareilly for nine days and Maharatan was with her in the *dharmasala* almost all the time. Every evening she went with Ma for a drive in the car.

One day Maharatan took Ma to her house and seated her outside the house. Mr. Jaspal was sitting near Ma when a Deputy  
 Ma and Mrs. Magistrate, Mr. Dikshit arrived  
 Dikshit with his wife and was very  
 happy to have Ma's darshan. They also heard a few things about Ma. Mrs. Dikshit then narrated her

experience to Ma which was as follows. Some days ago an astrologer looked at her palm and predicted that on 9th October, 1936, she would have a special experience. Now it turned out that Mrs. Dikshit had Ma's first darshan on that very day. She had come earlier on two or three occasions to meet Maharatan but had been unable to meet her and heard that she was away at a *dharmasala* to meet a Mataji. She was thrilled that she had obtained Ma's darshan on the very day predicted by the astrologer. Because of this coincidence she was particularly attracted to Ma. She often stayed till late in the night with Ma. Ma would tell her, "Go now it is late and it is time for your dinner." She would reply, "I am not hungry. Where else will I get your company?" and she refused to budge though she was told to leave. Later one day some highly placed people of the town gathered round Ma with their families and sang kirtan. The ladies then gathered every Sunday and sang kirtan. They took Ma to the place where kirtan was being performed and all the people there worshipped Ma with fruits, flowers, garlands and *arati*. Ma commented, "The ladies in Bareilly sing kirtan very well. While sitting for kirtan they do not talk at all." Within the few days that she spent there she became closely acquainted with the people there who developed great devotion and respect for her.

A certain *sadhu* in Bareilly practiced *japa* and other penances sitting in Mahadeva's temple in the *dharmasala*. He heard that a Mataji had come

and he went to Biraj Didi and expressed his desire for Ma's darshan. When he heard that Ma welcomed everybody, he met her and told her that though he had practised much *yoga* and *tapasya*, he was unable to make his mind one-pointed and nor was he able to find peace. Ma gave him some advice secretly and told him, "Do not reveal this to anyone because if you first bury the seed and then unearth it again and again, it cannot grow. Hide the seed in the soil, guard it and water it regularly. Then when the tree grows many more seeds will sprout and naturally many flowers and fruits will blossom forth." The *sadhu* was very happy to receive this advice from Ma. In this way many more people came to Ma gradually and received the advice that they were fit for and felt blessed.

After nine days in Bareilly Ma declared, "When blankets and woollens have arrived they ought to be used. Come let us go to Nainital." When Ma was leaving Bareilly she was photographed and a big celebration was held in the station. The public in the station watched the proceedings in surprise. The compartment occupied by Ma was filled with flowers offered by devotees. Thus did Ma leave Bareilly for Nainital. Amazingly people in various places declared that they had seen Ma earlier either in dreams or in the form of a shadow.

## CHAPTER LI

At Nainital, in a place called Tallital, Ma found a devotee called Krishnaram Pant standing next to the car. He was surprised to see Ma and respectfully made her alight saying, "I usually never come this side but today I had an irresistable urge to come here. Now I understand why I felt that way! My soul was yearning for you over the past so many days and I had despatched letters to many places in an attempt to locate your whereabouts. And today how much trouble you have taken to come and give me darshan!" Overwhelmed he began weeping. He wanted to inform everybody by post but Ma forbade him saying, "Nothing is certain about how long and where I shall stay. People will unnecessarily take the trouble to come." District Engineer Tarachand 'Babu's wife was present with Krishnaram Pant. She made Ma sit in a palanquin and took her to the Sri Naina Devi temple and made arrangements for her stay. She opened two or three rooms on the floor above the temple and spread mattresses. They also made arrangements for Ma's meals. The entire occurrence seemed as though Pantji had come there only to take Ma. Ma stayed in Nainital for nine days.

On the fifth or sixth day of Ma's stay at Nainital, Durga Puja (*Navaratri*) commenced. With-

in the few days that Ma stayed in Nainital the people there began worshipping her with great love, offering flowers, sandal paste and fruits. They all came to Ma and sat near her with their eyes shut. One day they took Ma in a palanquin to Pantji's house and people came from all sides to offer flowers at her feet. One person walked ahead of Ma's palanquin with joined hands, reciting invocations. The scene was delightful.

One day a *pahari* (Devi Dutt) took Ma to a *sadhu's* ashram. There everyone worshipped Ma and sang kirtan. The *sadhu* was in *mauna* and was sitting with an incense pot. He also rose and offered some flowers and fruits in Ma's hands. Ma instructed Biraj Didi to distribute all the fruits and flowers to the *sadhu* and to the people present.

The next day some *Kumari* girls came and sat around Ma and began chanting invocations.

That day (31st, Ashwin) Ma told them to come again the next day and told Biraj Didi, "You perform a *Navaratri puja* don't you? Will you do *Kumari puja* during *Navaratri*? Then prepare for it. Ask for one dozen handkerchiefs to be purchased and also get flowers, fruits, sandal paste and sweets." That day seven or eight *Kumaris* had sat and sung around Ma but surprisingly enough, exactly twelve *Kumaris* turned up the next day. Ma had earlier asked for one dozen handkerchiefs to be purchased. Ma had one handkerchief, garland,

Exquisite *puja* performed for Ma in Nainital

Mauni *sadhu's* worship of Ma

Biraj Didi's *Kumari puja* in Nainital

From Nainital Ma went to Bareilly and stayed for three days. As she had promised earlier, Ma sent word to Manik at Lucknow, and he went to Bareilly to meet Ma and accompanied her to Rajghat.

They stayed at Rajghat for a day and then proceeded to a place called Kailas in Agra and went to Shyam Kutī. When From Bareilly Ma was travelling in the train to Agra she declared, "It appears to me that someone is going to catch me and take me." Truly enough when they alighted at Rajamandi and were on their way by horse cart to Shyam Kutī, Sri Birendrachandra Mukhopadhyaya's son caught sight of Ma and began chasing the cart on his cycle exclaiming, "This time I shall catch you, where will you go now? I shall follow you wherever you go. You have slipped away from me many times in Agra." Finally at Ma's behest he returned home with information of her arrival and immediately Sri Birendrachandra Mukhopadhyaya went with family and performed Ma's puja. It was *Mahastami* day, the eighth day of the *Navaratri*. Dr. Bhargava was in Agra and the moment he heard of Ma's arrival he came for her darshan. Ma went to Agra and visited Birendrachandra's son who was ill in hospital. The same day Ma made Biraj Didi to perform *Kumari puja* for

Birendrachandra's two daughters and the next day, that is on *Mahanavami* day she told Biraj Didi to perform the same *puja* for Dr. Bhargava's daughter.

On *Bijayadasami* day Ma left Agra and went to Lahore via Delhi. She stayed for a day in a *dharmasala* and visited a Kali temple. At the temple Biraj Didi bowed her head to do *pranama* to the Goddess and simultaneously Ma casually walked up to such a position that Biraj Didi's head touched Ma's feet. Biraj Didi looked up and saw Ma standing and the thought that crossed her mind was, "Has Ma revealed her identity to me today?" They returned to the *dharmasala* from the temple and stayed the night there.

The next day they left Lahore and reached Amritsar at four in the evening and proceeded to Gadhmukshteshwar via Meerut. Ma in Gadhmukshteshwar Manik was then sent home. One day in Gadhmukshteshwar Ma was wandering about when she saw a potter and said, "Where else shall I go? I may as well sit here." And she sat down near the potter who was making a pot. Watching him at work she remarked, "The mud undergoes much suffering, yet it has to be turned and made ready. Similarly, for getting oneself ready one has to suffer."

A couple of points must be mentioned here. Ma had no money with her for expenses. But we heard that there was never any shortage of money. Wherever Ma went someone or the other invariably purchased a ticket for her and also gave some

money to Biraj Didi. Many were under the impression that Ma and Biraj Didi were probably buying *puris*, vegetable curry and sweetmeats at shops and managing their meals. But we have heard from Ma and Biraj Didi that this was never so and that they never purchased even sweetmeats in a shop. Whenever Biraj Didi got some provisions she cooked food herself, fed it to Ma and took *prasada* herself. On some days she just boiled vegetables in water and on other days she made rice and curry for their meals. In between devotees cooked some food at home and brought it and fed Ma. Ma never let Biraj Didi eat any food cooked by others. She always ate only what was cooked with her own hands.

Ma stayed in Gadhmukteshwar for fifteen days and went to Sultanpur where she halted for nine days and then proceeded to Ayodhya. In Ayodhya she remained incognito for four or five days. Then a *sannyasini* known to Ma happened to meet her and informed everybody of Ma's presence. Ma was staying in the Badri Narayan temple. As soon as the news of Ma's arrival spread, crowds of people flocked for her darshan. Gopalji's uncle, Mankeshwarnath Raina and his wife came from Faizabad for darshan. Raina's wife revealed that just before she got the information of Ma's arrival she had seen Ma in the form of a shadow in her own *puja* room and had felt that

someone was telling her that Ma had come. Two or three other ladies in Ayodhya also disclosed that they had dreamt of Ma's arrival.

From Ayodhya all the devotees accompanied Ma to Faizabad station where they performed *puja*, *arati* and *bhoga* with great love. A blind boy began reciting invocations and Ma had some fruit given to him.

Ma left for Deoghar from Faizabad station and stayed there for four days incognito. Pran Gopal Babu, who knew Ma for many years, was in Deoghar but Ma did not meet anybody. Ma was staying in a *dharmasala* and a batch of travellers also came to stay there. One of the ladies among them suddenly became afraid of something and took very ill. Seeing her condition the manager of the *dharmasala* informed them that a Mataji was staying in the *dharmasala* and that they could meet her. The afflicted lady's husband knocked on Ma's door. Biraj Didi opened the door and heard the man's tale. She told him curtly, "Mataji does not say anything about illness and suffering." The man then forcibly entered the room and fell at Ma's feet and began weeping. Ma rose and told Biraj Didi, "Come, let us go and see." They saw that the lady was in dire straits with cold hands and feet and her lips turning blue. Sometimes she trembled violently and her eyes were watering all the time but she could not open them. Ma watched for a while and then told Biraj Didi to fetch a pomegranate from

their room and had its juice fed to the lady. She then told the manager to allot a separate room for the woman, went there, opened all the windows and made her lie down. The next day the lady had recovered completely. The party left Deoghar with Ma the same day. Biraj Didi said that all those who saw the ailing lady recover so fast were astonished.

## CHAPTER LII

On 26th November, Thursday, Ma left Deoghar for Tarapeeth. On the way Ma had her lunch at the house of a lady devotee called Ma goes to Shmashanvasini. From the market Tarapeeth place at Rampur. Ma was followed by large crowds on bullock carts. Ma had a telegram sent to us from Tarapeeth.

On the evening of 27th November, Friday, we received a telegram from Bholanath informing us of Ma's arrival at Tarapeeth and instructing us to go there. Gathering of devotees at Tarapeeth We left for Tarapeeth the next day (Saturday, which was *Purnima Rasyatra* day) and on Sunday we had darshan of Ma's feet. At midnight Bhramar Ghosh and her uncle Shishir reached there. The next day Doctor Yatish's wife, Lakshmi Babu and Amulya arrived, but by this time Ma had decided to go to Dibrugarh in response to persistent invitation from her long standing devotee, Sri Haridas Mukhopadhyaya. It was decided that Ma would travel through Assam and then go to Jamshedpur. On 1st December, Bholanath performed a special *puja* of Tara Ma. Shachi Babu, Minu (Pran Kumar Basu's son), Vimala Ma, Anand Bhai and many others came from Calcutta to Tarapeeth for Ma's darshan. They all pleaded with Ma to go to Calcutta but she did not agree to go.

On 1st December, Tuesday, Ma left Tara-peeth accompanied by all the devotees. Since she was not going to Calcutta, she went via Naihati to Assam. Devotees from Jamshedpur and Calcutta stayed on with Ma till Naihati. Biraj Didi, Akhandananda Swamiji and I were to accompany Ma to Assam while the others would all return from Naihati. We reached Naihati in the morning. Since the train was due only after some time, arrangements were made to cook *khichdi* in a temple. Ma went with Bhramar, Dr. Yatish's wife and two or three others to the riverside for a stroll. Ma had not eaten any food and so I was anxious but there was no sign of her.

She returned only an hour later accompanied by two or three brahmins who were entreating her to halt there for a day. I was astonished to see Ma chatting so cordially with strangers in this place. I asked Ma how she had collected these people and Ma laughed. Then Bhramar and Dr. Yatish's wife explained that while Ma was strolling by the river, she suddenly entered the house of these people and said, "Baba, please give me some water." They hurriedly got together some fruit, sweets and water and when they came to know that Ma does not eat with her own hands they fed her themselves. Ma spoke to them as if she had known them since long, addressing them as 'Father' and 'Mother'. When she came out of the house, two or three members of the house also came with her to the temple and

when they heard all about Ma from her devotees they felt blessed. They pressingy requested her to visit Naihati again to which Ma replied, "The house is now known to me. Whenever the daughter wants she will visit her father's house. No invitation is necessary." I have heard that the brahmin's family was very devout and that they lovingly worshipped and served an image of Sri Narayana in their house. Ma said that the rooms of the house were very clean and everyone performed the daily *sandhya vandana*. The family expressed great regret that they could not serve lunch to Ma and her devotees that day. Ma came to me and declared, "You were anxious to feed me and I have already been fed at my father's house!" And she began laughing.

Not much time was left for the departure of the train. *Khicdi* had been cooked in a new pot. Devotees had brought a variety of vegetables and as many as possible had been used in the *khicdi* and the remaining given to the temple priest. The priest's wife made some *rotis* for Ma. They were people of West Bengal. Ma and Bholanath sat in the kitchen and the rest in the verandah.

I took the *khicdi* off the fire and discovered that it had got burnt at the bottom and was smelling strongly of it. Shachi Babu got a whiff of it from outside and remarked, "Didi, the *khicdi* has got burnt." What could I do? I offered *bhoga* to Ma and Bholanath. Then I took some *prasada* and mixed

Burnt *khicdi*  
turns delicious  
after being  
mixed with  
Ma's *prasada*

it with the rest of the *khicdi* in the pot and served it to all those present. Surprisingly, not only did no one comment on the burnt smell they all declared that it was delicious and ate it. Finally Shachi Babu even scraped the burnt portion of the *khicdi* adhering to the bottom of the vessel and ate it and not a morsel remained. He came to Ma and asked, "Ma, thinking that the *khicdi* was burnt I took a very small helping but having tasted it I found it excellent. Then I ate a lot of it. How did it happen thus?" Ma laughed and replied, "What do I know? Once before in Naihati *khicdi* had got burnt and everyone was to eat it in the afternoon. When all the others were served they did not get any burnt smell." I said, "That day again Ma had gone and stirred the *khicdi* thoroughly and then I had fed a little of it to Ma and made *prasada*. When the devotees sat to eat the *prasada* they said they just could not detect any burnt smell and that it was very tasty."

We ate very quickly and went to the station and left at twelve for Assam. Devotees from Calcutta and Jamshedpur went by Towards Assam another train from Naihati station. We left Naihati on 2nd December and reached Amingaon the next morning. We crossed over to Pandu Ghat by steamer and got into a train.

Some time was left before the departure of the train so I washed Ma's face at the window of the train. Just then a boy passed by with a book pressed to his side and as he glanced at Ma she called out to him. He climbed into the compart-

ment. There was something unique about his countenance. Ma spoke to him and found out that his name was Mukul Datta and that his father was a railway employee. The boy was on his way to his school in Gauhati. As Ma conversed with him a number of boys and girls got into our compartment and stood near Ma. They were all on their way to school at Gauhati and they were all children of railway employees. They became very attached to Ma.

Ma's compassionate advice to school students in a train.

The station next to Pandu was Gauhati therefore they spent very little time in Ma's company. Ma told them, "You all must do a little *japa* of God's name. Tell me, which name does each of you like?" Some said Hari, some Lakshmi and some others Saraswati. Ma said "As soon as you get up and wash your face, each one of you should write whichever name you like best in a notebook, five, ten or twelve times (depending on your age) and then proceed to have breakfast and study. When you fill one note book, bow down to it and consecrate in water and start on another one. Tell me, you will do so much, won't you? Tell me all your names. If I remember I shall think that you are all writing God's name." Ma then made me write down the names of all the children. Two boys were Muslims. Ma gave them the same advice. She asked us to distribute amongst the children all the fruit that we had. They were delighted and agreed to observe Ma's instructions and also noted down Ma's address.

The train stopped at Gauhati station where the children bowed to Ma and got off. They knew nothing about Ma. After going a little distance some of them returned and told Ma, "Our homes are very close to the station. When you return please call out our names and we shall come. You must positively meet us when you return." I was fascinated by their affection. Children's simple hearts -- there was no affectation of any kind!

Biraj Didi's daughter and son-in-law and half a dozen other people had come from Nowgong and were waiting for Ma's darshan at Gauhati station. Biraj Didi had telegraphically informed her son-in-law, Sri Narendra Chakravarty about Ma's arrival. The party pleaded with Ma to accompany them to Nowgong from Chaparmukh station. Ma said she would visit Nowgong on her return journey if she could and they pressed her earnestly to come again. The train halted in Gauhati for about twenty minutes, after which the devotees did *pranama* and left.

## CHAPTER LIII

The next morning, that is on 4th December, we reached Dibrugarh. Haridas came with family to the station and four or five other people of Dibrugarh were also present. They all took Ma to a *dharmasala*. Information of Ma's arrival had been sent in advance. We all went out to look around the place and walked by the river side till we reached Muktananda Swami's ashram. The ashram was inhabited by many *sevakas* and *sevikas*. Ma was taken to the residence of the ladies who took her all around. She was very happy to see their devotion to their Guru. The ashram was also beautifully decorated. From the ashram we returned to the *dharmasala* and I made Ma drink some water. Then lunch was cooked and after Ma had *bhoga* we all received *prasada*.

By evening people started arriving and by night there was a large gathering of people who sat around Ma talking for a long time and dispersed only at eleven p.m. The next day we were thinking of going to Parashurama Kunda but Haridas and others just would not hear of it. After lengthy discussion it was decided that we would stay in Dibrugarh for three days. On 19th Agrahan it rained heavily. Yet it did not stop people from

coming. Many little girls and boys were among the visitors and they sat surrounding Ma as she spoke to them. Ma asked them, "You take God's name sometimes don't you?" Some replied that they uttered the name 'Durga' in the morning and some declared that they did nothing at all. Ma told them all, "You must repeat God's name atleast a few times daily. This will be for your good. Do one thing--keep a note book each and every morning, as soon as you wash your face, write the name of God you like best, five or ten times (depending on your age), do *pranama* and then go for breakfast or studies. When the book is full do *pranama* to it and consecrate it in a river. Then start on another book. Will you remember this?" The children agreed happily. I purchased some note books and wrote down their names in it. They asked me to write Ma's name first and I did so. The next morning they all brought their books with God's name written in them as Ma had instructed and showed them to her. Ma sports in this fashion with many children in many places. People of the town came to Ma in large numbers and expressed great regret at the fact that Ma had come so far and was leaving so soon.

A man came from Muktananda Swamiji's ashram offering to bring *bhoga* for Ma. Ma was eating rice or wheat only every alternate day but she did not fast completely on the days inbetween and ate some fruit or drank some milk towards evening. Since Ma would not eat on the 4th, *bhoga* was to be brought from the ashram on the 5th.

On the 4th night many people who had come for Ma's darshan were sitting and talking to her. Just then *brahmacharis* from the ashram arrived with a variety of provisions for the next day's *bhoga* and arranged them beautifully in a room.

Variety of items  
to prepare *bhoga*  
for Ma from  
Muktananda  
Swami's ashram

The large number of items included many kinds of sweetmeats prepared by the *brahmacharis* of the ashram, fruits grown in the ashram compound and vegetables from their fields. A unique feature was that the manner in which these things had been arranged decoratively reflected the devoted dedication and competence of the ashramites. They pressingly requested Ma to visit the ashram again.

Ma was staying in the verandah of the *dharmaśāla* and she also slept there at night. Ma was then taken into the room and shown the decoration of the items for *bhoga*. Ma looked and asked a *brahmachari* of the ashram, "Alright then, is this not all mine now?" The *brahmachari* replied with folded hands, "Yes indeed." Ma smiled at me and said, "Distribute all the fruit and sweetmeats equally to all those present--but keep a share for me!" She told the *brahmacharis*, "Go and tell the mothers in the ashram that everyone together enjoyed the preparations made by them."

On 5th December, she asked us to prepare dishes with all the provisions that had arrived and said that people to be served the food would also gather. And so it was. On the 5th morning Ma went to the houses of Haridas and many

others. At the house of Haridas Ma was photographed in the company of all those present. When Ma had gone to Vin-dhyachal for three days the previous year in August, she had said about Akhandanandaji, "Baba does not wear *kurta*, shoes and such apparel now. He has given it up completely so it is necessary to preserve a photograph of him in this guise. He should be photographed wearing only a loin cloth." Soon after this Ma had gone away to Calcutta and the photograph had never been taken. Now that instruction was obeyed and Akhandanandaji was photographed in that garb.

Ma returned to the *dharmasala* after visiting a number of houses. Many people were waiting for Ma's darshan in the *dharmasala*. Kirtan and Swami Akhandanandaji had spent *mahotsava* in many years of his worldly life in Dibrugarh while on his job. His former acquaintances were very surprised to see the change in him wrought by Ma's grace. After Ma and Bholanath had *bhoga* all the people sat for *prasada*. A large crowd received *prasada*. In the evening they all gathered around Ma and arranged for kirtan. Two or three parties sang kirtan and one person performed a *mahotsava* in Ma's presence. At night the *prasada* of the *mahotsava* was distributed to all. At three in the morning the devotees did *pranama* to Ma and left.

Ma was to leave for Parashuram Kunda that day and after the devotees departed in the

small hours of the morning Ma lay down and so did I. Preparations for the journey began. Two or three people from Dibrugarh were to accompany Ma to Parashuram Kunda. Two cars were being used, one belonging to Manmohan Singh of Dibrugarh and one on hire. Ma went to Muktananda Swamiji's ashram and the inmates were extremely happy to see her. Ma spent some time at the ashram and then left by car.

At eight a.m. on 6th December, we left for Sri Parashuram Kunda. We passed through Tinsukia Sadiya and reached a dak bungalow in the evening. Since Akhandanandaji had worked as a civil surgeon here for a long time, many people helped and it was easy to procure passes and tickets for travelling. A relative of ours was the overseer at the dak bungalow and he had been sent prior information. The place was a dense jungle inhabited by elephants and tigers. Yet we took the car through the jungle and decided to put up at the dak bungalow for the night. It was very cold and we somehow managed to cook and eat. Ma was not to eat that day and only had some milk and fruit.

The next morning we set out again. After travelling for half an hour by car we had to walk. We crossed the river and walked a distance of four or five miles and reached Parashuram Kunda. A makeshift palanquin was used to carry Ma

during this part of the journey. Parashuram Kunda is surrounded by mountains on three sides. Two waterfalls gush into a kind of depression at the foot of the mountains.

At Parashu-  
ram Kunda

We all bathed there while Ma sat nearby. A couple of women belonging to the hill tribes became very attached to Ma. They shared no common language in which they could converse with Ma, yet they indicated their affection through gestures and wanted to keep Ma with them. After the bath we all left our *dhotis* on the side of the *kunda* according to the prevalent custom and the hill tribe women took the *dhotis*. They were very very happy to receive two or three new *dhotis* belonging to Ma.

We then walked back the four or five miles and then travelled by car to the dak bungalow where we halted to have some milk and fruit. Then we set out by car immediately because we had to catch the train at ten p.m. from Tinsukiya

Returned jour-  
ney from Para-  
shuram Kunda

station and it was nearly one p.m. Ma had not eaten since the previous day and neither had we. We reached Tinsukiya station at eight p.m. Manmohan Singh's daughter lived close by. We went there, dug a pit and cooked *khicdi*. After a hurried dinner we boarded the ten p.m. train for Nowgong. Since Ma would not eat rice I made *rotis* for her and took them along.

## CHAPTER LIV

On 8th December, at three p.m. we reached Nowgong. On the way we were surprised to see a couple of railway guards and a ticket collector doing *pranama* to Ma. Some person even purchased fruits and offered them to Ma. Who knows from where these people learnt about Ma! We also met Makhan Babu during the journey. He is the son-in-law of Ma's old acquaintance of Dhaka, Sri Dinesh Babu, zamindar of Dhankora. He saw Ma and came and sat in her compartment. Ma recognised him as soon as he did *pranama*, though she had not seen him since many years and had not known him very well even at that time. Dinesh Babu's wife had taken Ma to her house for kirtan but Makhan Babu was very young then and did not come to Ma. He was on his way to Nowgong where he was practising law. He sat near Ma and talked to her for a very long time.

Information of Ma's arrival had been sent to Nowgong in advance and many devotees came to the station to receive her. Ma was taken to a room in Sri Jitendra Babu's house which was being used only for group kirtan and worship. Ma was to leave for Shillong by the eight p.m. train the same night. In the evening the Civil Surgeon and the Assistant Surgeon took Ma for a ride in a car. Akhandanandaji had worked in the post of

Civil Surgeon for a few years in this place and therefore he was acquainted with many of the people, who were surprised to see him as a *sannyasi*. They declared, "All this has been possible by the grace of this Ma!" Civil Surgeon Ram Ratan Babu was also the Superintendent of the jail and so he took Ma around At Nowgong the jail and then took her to his bungalow. From there Ma went to the house of the Assistant Surgeon (Amulya Babu) and to Nagendra Babu's house and then to two or three other houses before returning to the kirtan room. Since Ma was not to eat a meal that day, she only had some milk and fruit. We were also observing *ekadasi* so we all had fruit and milk except Bholanath who ate rice.

The hosts did not want Ma to leave by eight p.m. So Ram Ratan Babu decided to take Ma at one a.m. in his car to Chaparmukh so that she could catch the train to Gauhati and go from there by car to Shillong in the morning. Everyone sang kirtan in Ma's presence and saw her off at midnight and then went to their homes.

Makhan Babu came with us. At Chaparmukh station we lay down in the waiting room and when the train arrived Makhan Babu helped us board it. On the morning of 9th December we reached Gauhati. After a wash we left at eight a.m. by car and reached Shillong at eleven or twelve noon. The Assistant Surgeon (Kumudini Bandopadhyaya) had been informed in advance and he

Journey to  
Shillong

came to receive Ma at the station. He had arranged for Ma's stay at Sri Jagannath temple and we all went there. The priest had cooked enough for three or four people more than the usual number and *bhoga* had already been performed. (Later we heard that the priest was a *bala brahmachari*). Today, after a very long time, Ma ate some rice while partaking of the *prasada*. Since I was forbidden to eat food cooked by any one else, I decided to eat a meal at night and only had some milk and fruit. The weather was so cold that it was difficult to even bite the fruit.

The temple is situated in a very decent locality. Before her meal Ma went for a walk on the road outside. A lady from a house beckoned Ma and on learning that Ma did not enter any house she made Ma sit comfortably outside her house and began conversing with Ma. Ma's encounter with a young girl at Shillong

I came out of the temple and saw Ma chatting away merrily. A girl from that house followed Ma into the temple asking her, "Where have you come from?" and "How long will you stay here?" When Ma replied that she would be leaving the very next day the girl visibly saddened and said, "Why? Do stay longer. Why are you leaving so soon?" I laughed and said, "Why? How does it matter to you whether she stays or goes away? You don't even know her!" The girl replied with forthright simplicity, "I don't know why she seems so very dear to me!" I marvelled at this and wondered about the nature of Ma's attraction. She attracts

infants, boys, youngsters and old people alike. We are extremely ignorant, for having obtained such a priceless treasure we do not care for it!

The girl did not leave Ma's side after that and took her out with her. Ma told her, "I have a 'Boro Ma'," (Ma called Bhramara Ghosh by this epithet) "and I also have a *Choto Ma*" (Ma had named a lady at Tarapeeth '*Choto Ma*' -- her name was Lily). "Which Ma will you be for me?" The girl replied, "*Mejho Ma*". Ma said, "Alright, then give me a name for I have just been born and therefore you are a mother." Pat came the girl's reply, "I name you 'Narayani'." The girl, Ma and I were walking together and I was laughing on hearing this dialogue and Ma was laughing too. I asked the girl, "What is your name?" She answered, "Shobha Rani Ghosh." I remarked, "So now you are my grandmother, isn't that so?" She accepted this joyfully.

Later we returned to the temple and many more girls gathered there. Ma asked me to note their names. In the evening we went out for sometime and then Kumudini Babu arranged for kirtan and all those who had gathered sat around Ma and sang kirtan. A large crowd had come for Ma's darshan. Devotees saddened at the news of Ma's departure from Shillong

When they heard that she was leaving the very next day many of them began expressing their sorrow saying that Ma who had come so far was staying only for a day and that many had not

even come to know of her arrival and so on. They also began asking when she would return and Ma replied, "This girl will come whenever you call her. This time I have come with Akhandanandaji who has to reach Vindhyachal by 13th December for some specific work. So we cannot stay longer now."

In the evening the Health Officer, Dr. Sarkar came to see Ma. He heard something about Ma from Akhandanandaji. Then he came and sat near Ma. We heard that he and his wife were very religious and that they spent much time with *sadhus* and *sannyasis*. He had a long conversation with Ma. At ten p.m. all the people left. The next morning when Dr. Sarkar came and took Ma in his car we went along. We were to leave Shillong the same day by car at twelve or one in the afternoon.

Dr. Sarkar took Ma to a number of places and then to his house where he made her sit in his small *puja* room. The *puja* room contained idols of many Gods. Some *sannyasi* had given a *Siva-linga*, a *sadhu* had given a Narayana *chakra* and yet another had given a conch winding clockwise (*dakshinavarta san-kha*) and an *ekamukhi rudraksha*. The couple delighted in receiving all this. Dr. Sarkar's wife sat in the room and revealed, "Three or four days ago I saw Ma's form walking out of this very *puja* room. "But I did not see her wearing this kind of

a narrow bordered *dhoti*. She was wearing a broad red bordered *dhoti*." I was astonished to hear this because in fact a few days ago a lady in Dibrugarh had draped a broad red bordered *dhoti* on Ma. I told Mrs. Sarkar about this and also informed her of the fact that Ma usually wore a broad red bordered *dhoti* earlier. She was overwhelmed to see Ma and immediately brought a broad red bordered *dhoti* and dressed Ma in it. She made Ma sit in the *puja* room and fed her with sweetmeats. Ma was dressed in new clothes in the *puja* room and adorned with *sindur*.

Dr. Sarkar's sister and another lady were also present. They wished to apply *sindur* on me but I did not let them. They persisted saying, "Why should a *sadhva* refuse to let *sindur* be applied," Then Ma intervened and said, "Listen, Some events have occurred in her life which all cannot understand and therefore are not revealed to all in general. You people will understand and therefore I shall tell you. This girl did get married, it's true, but she never lived a worldly life. She spent her childhood serving her parents. Another girl grew up with us from the age of one and a half years and she was never allowed to eat fish or eat anybody's leftovers since childhood. Last year, in the month of Magh, both this girl and that one had their sacred thread ceremony, just the way boys do. Now these girls have the same rights as brahmins, though they are women. It is written in our *sastras* that brahmin

History of  
my *brahmachari*  
way of life,  
in Ma's words

girls did have the sacred thread investiture in ancient times though the tradition is not prevalent now. That girl was married after the sacred thread ceremony and at the time of her wedding she was entrusted with the sacrificial fire of the investiture ceremony. The husband and wife perform *yajna* everyday and the boy's father and mother live in the Dhaka ashram, having given up *samsara*. This girl has been instructed to live the life of a *brahmacharini* after the *yajna*, and the hair on her head has also been shaved off. Therefore since she now lives in a totally different *bhava*, she does not need to adhere to norms of *sindur* and such other traditions belonging to her previous way of life." Hearing this the ladies threw away the *sindur* and begged Ma to forgive their mistake. Ma replied, "You have done nothing wrong at all. You did not know and this is something which cannot be told to everybody." After spending a long time there Dr. Sarkar took Ma to a few other houses. Some of these people had visited Ma the previous night at the Jagannath temple. At ten or eleven a.m. we returned to the temple.

Ma was not to eat today so I cooked something for myself and ate it. Father and Bholanath had the temple *prasada*.  
 Ma leaves                      A gentleman had given all the items  
 Shillong                      for *bhoga* at the temple with  
 the request that the people with Ma should be given *prasada*. He had also sent fruits for Ma. I warmed some milk and made Ma drink it. Kumudini

Babu had sent a large quantity of milk for *bhoga* and Ma's *Mejho* Ma had also turned up with milk for Ma. Ma gave her a *sari*. When we reached the temple we found a large number of ladies waiting for Ma's darshan. They had not received information about Ma's presence the day before. We heard that Santdas Babaji had been to Shillong sometime before he passed away and these people had been very happy to have his company. Many of them specially requested me to send them photographs of Ma and her words if available in print. Devotees at Dibrugarh had also made similar requests and Ma had been photographed there.

Thus Ma spent about twenty four hours in Shillong and then left by car. The car was surrounded by a crowd of men and women who had known her for only a few hours and surprisingly enough, some of the well dressed gentlemen were pulling out kerchiefs and wiping their eyes. They were all gazing at Ma who was laughingly chatting on many topics. All listened enthralled as though the talk was novel.

## CHAPTER LV

At one p.m. the car started. We were to go to Pandu Ghat and board a steamer. Birajmohini Didi was staying with her daughter in Nowgong and she was to meet us at Pandu Ghat. We boarded the steamer and found Biraj Didi had come. Biraj Didi told us that the moment she met the children who had seen Ma last time, they began asking about Ma. She told them that Ma was arriving from Shillong that day by car and so they started peering into every passing car, searching for Ma. They had just run to see if any other car was arriving. A couple of them had been saying, "Whenever we remember Ma we feel like going to her immediately!" Bhola-nath and Akhandananda Swami went in search of the children but we could not recollect their names and it was also growing dark. The steamer was to leave soon and the children could not be found. I felt very sad that the children came in search of Ma but could not meet her.

Just then Ma gestured with her hand and beckoned to a young gentleman. When he came near she asked, "Where do you stay?" He replied, "I work right here, in the railways." Ma questioned, "Do you know Mukul?" He replied in the affirmative. Ma said, "Please tell him that I had come and that I was looking for him." I

told the gentleman Ma's name. As he went Ma said, "Somehow I felt that the children could be informed through this person, therefore I called him." And she began laughing. Later we met a few other railway employees and requested them to pass on the information to the children. A little later the steamer left and on 10th December we left Shillong.

On the morning of 12th December we were at Atal Dada's house in Rajshahi. Ma was seated in the garden. Atal Dada had Ma in Rajshahi leave for twenty days starting from that day and when Ma heard of this she said, "Come for a few days and travel with us this time." Ma was talking of leaving the same night for Calcutta and Atal Dada was weeping. Lunch was cooked and *bhoga* was offered to Ma. After lunch she went out and we all sat down to eat. Ma returned and Atal Dada agreed to accompany Ma. It was decided that Ma would not leave that night, but that Biraj Didi and Akhandananda Swami would go to Calcutta by the night train for some work and Ma, Bholanath and I would leave for Calcutta by the next morning's train. Ma instructed them to wait for the train to Jamshedpur at Howrah or Sealdah station and not go anywhere.

In the evening a big crowd of people came to meet Ma and they all took her to the *Panchavati* and returned before dusk. Since Ma did not enter houses arrangements were made for her

to stay in the verandah.

After dusk Nityananda Babu arrived with family and wished to take Ma to his house for some time. Atal Dada objected at first but Ma laughed and told him, "And what if he says that I stayed in your house for so long but you would not allow me to go for even half an hour to his house?" Everyone laughed when Ma said this and Ma also stood up laughing. Nityananda Babu took Ma in his car saying that he would send her back soon. Ma spent about an hour there and they all fed Ma with sweetmeats. On their request Ma fed them with sweetmeats and she thus spread bliss and returned to Atal Dada's house.

Akhandananda Swami and Biraj Didi left by the night train for Calcutta. The very next day Ma was to leave for Jamshedpur from Howrah. She ordered Father and me to go to Vindhyachal. Father was aggrieved by the thought of having to leave Ma again but always accepted her orders as inviolable commands and so he never commented upon them even when he felt sad. His supreme duty lay in obeying Ma's injunctions to the best of his ability. He therefore held back his tears when he went to do *pranama*.

After Father departed I heard that Atal Dada would not be able to accompany Ma because of various impediments. Earlier also About Atal Dada Ma had called Atal Dada many times but he had been unable to go with her and he

therefore became very restless. He pined and wept for Ma like a child, yet he was unable to break off his bondages and accompany Ma even for a short time. He did not sleep all through the night. Sometimes he wept, and sometimes he put his head in Ma's lap and lay down quietly. I also lay down near Ma in the open but no one slept because all kept sitting around Ma till two a.m. and at three a.m. Atal Dada came and sat. From four thirty or five I began preparations for our departure.

For the past few days Ma's meals and rest had not been regular because of continuous travelling by car and train. We left by train in the morning. Atal Dada with family and many other people came to the station to bid farewell to Ma. We went to Ishwardih and waited for the train to Calcutta.

We reached Sealdah at one p.m. All the devotees had received information about Ma's arrival from Akhandanandaji and a big crowd of men and women had gathered at the station for Ma's darshan. Many garlanded Ma and made her sit. Ma was not to eat a meal that day, so Bholanath went for his lunch. Since I did not want to leave Ma alone, I did not go for my lunch. As soon as we reached the station we heard that Kali Prasanna Kushari was not keeping well. Bholanath told Ma this and she replied, "I had already said that we would sit in the station. You go and see him."

So Bholanath left and all the devotees sat surrounding Ma. In a little while Vimala Ma and Ananda Bhai arrived with the devotees of Adyapeeth. They were very happy to see Ma. Ma held Vimala Ma and made her sit nearby. I have noticed that Ma gives her a lot of regard everytime she comes and this regard is extended without the slightest shortcoming. Everything Ma does occurs beautifully in the form of divine sport. I have noticed this right from the beginning and it is nothing new today. Ma said that Biraj Didi would go with me to Vindhyachal.

Nothing was certain about who would go with Ma to Jamshedpur. She had mentioned Kamal's name on the way but nothing had been finalised. Kamal was Yogesh Dada's younger brother and was living with Krishna Dada. So many people had come to the station but there was no sign of Krishna Dada and Kamal, so I became somewhat worried and told Ma, "I cannot spot anyone from Krishna Dada's household, how is Kamal to be informed?" Ma made no reply and only smiled slightly.

Within fifteen or twenty minutes of this conversation I saw Kamal and all his household members arriving with Krishna Dada. As Kamal did *pranama* Ma said, "You come with me to Jamshedpur, we shall go there once again." Kamal had lived in Jamshedpur with Krishna Dada for a very long time and therefore Ma spoke thus. Ma told me, "Explain everything to Kamal." Krishna Dada said, "Today is *Amavasya*

and therefore Kamal is fasting. Should we get him something for dinner?" Ma replied, "There is no need to get anything now. He can eat some fruit here." About his bedding and clothing she said, "Everything will be arranged -- there is no need to get anything." And thus it was all decided.

Before evening Ma was made to have some refreshments. Devotees had brought a number of items ; they all put a small morsel into Ma's mouth and took *prasada*. The crowd was enormous. The police arrived on the scene and seeing such a large crowd on the platform for such a long time they began dispersing the crowd. Ma could not have her meal and she also got up.

It was evening by then and Ma was to catch the seven p.m. train to Jamshedpur so she was quickly taken to Howrah station.

Ma leaves

for Jamshedpur

She boarded the train and the devotees stood surrounding her. Ma had a basket which had got filled with fruit in Dibrugarh, Nowgong and Shillong. The basket was kept in the train. Ma now looked at me and laughed, saying "Khukuni, fruit can be obtained in Jamshedpur also. Distribute these fruits right here. Immediately all the fruit was distributed. Soon the bell rang for the departure of the train. One by one all the devotees did *pranama* to Ma and got down from the train. Everyone gazed at Ma's face. It was decided that Ma would come to Calcutta once before going wherever she wanted to.

Just before the train left, Bholanath signalled to Buni. (Jyotish Guha's youngest daughter whose name was Phullajuthika) and beckoned to her. At once she climbed into the train and sat down. Ma said, "Her father should be asked." Jyotish accompanies Ma Dada was standing close by and he replied, "What is there for me to say when she is going with Ma?" He took off his shawl and threw it into the train which had just started moving. Shachi Dada threw some money into the train and thus Kamal and Buni set out with Ma for Jamshedpur. We were to catch the eight p.m. train and so we kept sitting in the station. Shachi Dada, Jyotish Dada, Nitish, Meenu, Jnana Dada and some others were waiting with us. Later we decided that we should not leave the same day leaving work unfinished, but should rather leave by the four p.m. train next evening and reach Vindhyachal on 29th Agrahan (15th December) according to Ma's orders. This was a unanimous decision.

It was 13th December, Sunday. We spent the night on the fourth floor of Suresh Babu's house which has been specially set aside for Ma. The next evening (14th December) we left by the four p.m. train and reached Vindhyachal on 15th December, Tuesday (Sankranti) in the morning. As per Ma's instructions we performed the worship which had to be performed on

News of Ma's  
travel to Cal-  
cutta from  
Jamshedpur and  
then to Nava-  
deep

Sankranti day and for the same purpose we then had to go to Kashi. We left on 17th December, Thursday by the morning train for Kashi. After finishing our work we returned by the afternoon train on 22nd December, Tuesday, to Vindhyachal. At Kashi we heard from Manik that he had been to Calcutta where he heard at Shachi Babu's house that on 19th December, Saturday, Ma would return to Calcutta and proceed to Navadveep. On returning to Vindhyachal we received letters from Bholanath and Shachi Dada. Shachi Dada's letter dated 20th December said that about twenty or twenty five devotees had accompanied Ma to Navadveep but they had all returned the same day. They would again visit Ma in Navadveep the next fortnight. Dada Mahasaya, Didima and Atul Brahmachari had joined Ma from Dhaka on receiving Bholanath's letter. Bholanath had written, "We have come to Navadveep from Jamshedpur. On 22nd December we shall take your Dada Mahasaya and go to Dwaraka, but your Ma, Didima and Atul will stay on here. This is what is being planned at present...."

## CHAPTER LVI

December, 1936. We received news of Ma's departure for NavadvEEP. Father wrote to Ma asking for permission to meet her in connection with the work for the *yajna kunda* at Vindhyachal and Ma asked him to come. On receiving this telegram we left Vindhyachal

on the 26th December, Saturday, and we went to Kashi. On 27th December we left for NavadvEEP reaching there on 28th December, Monday.

We found many devotees gathered around Ma's holy feet. Vimala Ma, Nirmala Ma, Anand Bhai, Hema Bhai and others of Sri Adyapeeth had come.

We reached NavadvEEP and heard that Ma had gone with about fifty people to some one's house on the other side of the Ganga where she was to have *bhoga*. It was evening and we wandered on the banks of the Ganga wondering when Ma would return. Just then we saw two or three boats filled with people, sailing on the river. We could hear the melodious strains of kirtan of the name 'Ma', emanating from the boats packed with Ma's devotees. My heart danced with joy when I heard this kirtan. Binay Babu and his wife were with us. The boats drifted ashore.

We all went with Ma to the *dharmasala*. Ma was staying in the Hetampur *rajdharmasala*. As soon as I saw Ma's face I noticed that she had a dark

mark below her eye. I learnt that at three a.m. one morning Ma slipped while descending from the verandah and fell. Her right eye was badly injured and the right side of her forehead was swollen. Since people would get upset if they saw it, she hid the swelling with her hand and told everyone to leave and also had the light removed. Within hours the swelling was so bad that it could no longer be hidden. The next day the swelling subsided leaving a black mark below the eye. When everyone expressed sorrow over this incident Ma laughed and said, "What is there to grieve about? That Sri Govinda has applied kohl in my eyes?" Another incident is involved with this occurrence. Five or six hours before Ma was injured, Shachi Dada and Brajen slipped and fell in exactly the same manner and at the same spot and would have been hurt badly but surprisingly escaped without any injury at all. Who knows whether or not Ma took their wounds upon herself?

Bholanath took Didima and Dada Mahasaya and left for Dwaraka. Triguna Dada had come from Srirampur and Amulya Dada and Pran Kumar Dada with family had come from Dhaka. Shachi Dada, Baby Didi and Sri Prafulla Ghosh's wife had also come. We heard that Ma often went boating on the Ganga and sported with Nirmala Ma and Vimala Ma as their daughter, eating with them

and spending all her time in their company. They too were delighting in Ma's company. Both Nirmala Ma and Vimala Ma had beautiful natures. Vimala Ma's husband, Ananda Bhai was always immersed in *ananda* and Nirmala Ma's husband, Hema Bhai was a quiet, steady, calm and collected person who was always happy within himself.

On the Tuesday after we reached, Ma went in a boat on the Ganga. The same night all sat around her and conversed. Two or three *sannyasis* had come from Navadveep. One of them was narrating the experiences of his pilgrimage to Mount Kailas.

On Tuesday evening Ma took all her devotees to Lalita Sakhi. As soon as Ma reached, Lalita Sakhi's meeting with Ma Sakhi Ma hurried outside and prostrated on the ground and did *pranama* to Ma. She then held Ma and took her to the verandah expressing great happiness at her arrival. We all went and sat on the verandah. All were charmed by Sakhi Ma's humility and sweet demeanour. One of the devotees requested Sakhi Ma to say something. She replied, "I am only a machine which will sound the way you play it, so you play. I surely do not have the capacity to reply to questions. Yet it is always necessary to ask questions about God and it is good to bring up the subject." Prankumar Babu asked, "What is the duty of a *jiva*?" Sakhi Ma replied, "Each one's duty is different. If the son has a certain duty the father has another kind of duty. Yet some duties are compulsory

for all. If you meet a little boy and ask him, 'Where do you live why have you come?' he is able to answer you. But we are so ignorant that if we are asked the same questions we are unable to answer. Therefore it appears that our first duty is to try to understand, 'Where have I come from and why have I come?' Everything can be achieved by having faith in the Guru's words." All were very pleased with this reply and when they expressed their happiness Sakhi Ma said humbly, "There is none of my ability in this. It is the skill of the one who plays." Ma laughed and said, "If the strings of the instrument are not turned the sound will be dissonant therefore the excellence of the instrument has also to be taken into account." Sakhi Ma rejoined, "Though the strings be broken the player can repair the strings and produce beautiful sounds."

Such conversation rendered a blissful atmosphere. Finally Sakhi Ma said, "Ma we heard that you had gone away. I felt very unhappy and thought that I am a worthless woman lying here and therefore Ma went away without once coming here. Then we got news that you had not left." Ma laughed and replied, "Can the daughter go away without seeing her mother?"

At this juncture since the space on the verandah was insufficient, we all came out into the open with Ma and Sakhi Ma. Sakhi Ma's advice Then again much conversation ensued. Baby Didi asked, "How is *sraddha* developed?" Sakhi Ma replied, "Faith in

the Guru's words arouses *sraddha*." Baby Didi asked, "And what if there is no faith at all?" Sakhi Ma replied, "*Sadhana* is performed in order to strengthen faith. You cannot say you have no faith at all. Look, your parents entrust to an unknown young man saying that from this day you are his. Believing this you leave your parents and others and go away with him, taking refuge only in him. Is this something that can be done without faith? Did you not accept an unknown young man as your own only because of your faith in your father's words? Unswerving devotion towards the husband can lead to liberation -- nothing else is necessary. But we make the mistake of expecting somethings from our husbands." Saying this she went on to narrate the story of a chaste woman who was devoted to her husband.

The husband of a chaste woman was suffering from leprosy and was unable to even stand. His wife carried him in a basket on her head and took him around. One day when she was lowering the basket a tear fell from his eyes on her body. She immediately concluded that her husband was unhappy because of some shortcoming in her behaviour and that the tear had therefore dropped from his eye. So she very humbly asked her husband if some mistake on her part had caused him pain and begged him to tell her what her mistake was. He replied, "How can anyone with a devoted wife like you, feel sad?" But the wife was not consoled by this

Story of a  
chaste woman  
narrated by  
Sakhi Ma

reply and questioned him persistently. Finally the husband confessed, "See, I have no strength at all yet my mind is so weak and impure that today when I saw a beautiful woman walking past I was attracted towards her. Because of this I felt extremely unhappy, for I wondered how my mind could become so impure when I was blessed with such a devoted wife. Thinking thus my eyes filled with tears." The wife said no more but entrusted her husband to a neighbour saying that she was going elsewhere on some business and that the neighbour should kindly look after her husband till she returned.

The wife searched exhaustively and finally located the woman and discovered that she was a prostitute. The wife now engaged herself in serving the prostitute without the knowledge of the latter. She served her secretly and went to the extent of cleaning her toilet. The prostitute was mystified as to who was thus attending on her clandestinely. After trying for two or three days, the prostitute finally managed to catch the chaste woman and asked her, "Devi, who are you? Why are you secretly serving a lowly woman like me? What is it that you want? I shall give you anything you ask for!" Then the woman said, "Tell me truly. Will you give me whatever I ask for?" The prostitute replied, "Know for sure, I shall give you whatever you demand." The woman explained, "My husband is a leper. He saw

you and was attracted by you. You must come to my husband." The prostitute replied, "Alright. I have associated with so many lowly people. I shall be blessed by the touch of the husband of a devoted and chaste wife like you." So saying she set out with the wife.

Meanwhile in Vaikuntha Lord Narayana's throne began quaking. He told Lakshmi that he was going to the earth to see a devoted wife. Lakshmi declared, "She is one of our kind, so I shall also go." Similarly Lord Shankara arrived from Kailas with Parvati and Brahma descended from Brahma-loka with Saraswati and they all went to the earth to see the devoted wife. Just as the devoted wife took the prostitute to her husband, the prostitute experienced a radical change in her nature. The wife approached her husband with great reverence and devotion. When she looked up she saw that the gods and goddesses were present. She asked them why they had come and they replied, "Devi, we have come for the darshan of a devoted wife like you." That place was immediately transformed into heaven. Saying so much, Sakhi Ma concluded, "Look, because of a devoted wife all the people became blessed."

Smilingly Sakhi Ma continued, "You should do *sadhana* methodically. If you are unable to do that then just tie your small boat to this" (pointing towards Ma) "big boat. Even if *samsara* drags the small boat from behind, it will just float

with the big boat, so why fear? And a unique  
The end of        feature of this big boat is that  
Sakhi Ma's        it has specialized equipment to  
discourse        pull things that are behind it  
                  and so it drags them of its own  
accord."

The ladies then sang kirtan after which we  
returned with Ma to the *dharmasala*. At night we  
all sat around Ma and talked for a long time. It  
was very blissful.

## CHAPTER LVII

30th December, 1936. This morning Ma called Father and asked him, "Tell me all about the work at Vindhyachal." Father told her everything and listened attentively to her instructions. Then Amulya Dada, Triguna Dada and others came and sat near Ma. Ma spoke on a number of subjects. The topic of Sri Krishna Lila came up, as to whether it was *prakrit* (worldly) or *aparakrit* (divine). Ma proposed, "When it is called *lila* it is implied that it is divine. The state of the *rishis* is higher than that of the *jivanmuktas*. Without attaining the state of *jivanmukti* one does not have the right to even listen to Sri Krishna Lila." Then the topics of Radha - *tattva* and Gopi - *tattva* came up. Ma said, "*Rishis* themselves became the *gopis*. They became a part of the *lila* and therefore had no bondage." Further she declared, "Sri Krishna and Radha were not different and Radha was the main *gopi*. Therefore it can be seen that Krishna was Radha and Krishna was also the *gopi*. And this is Vedanta in itself." So saying she laughed.

Then the subject of grace was discussed. A person asked, "Ma, is *sadhana* dependent on action or on grace?" Ma replied, "First action is necessary. Only when there is action is grace bestowed." Amulya Dada asked, "Then is there nothing called grace?" Ma explained, "As the

*sadhaka* performs actions he reaches a stage when he realizes that nothing can be done without His grace. As long as the ego sense remains one cannot understand what grace is. When the mind gets purified one begins to understand grace. Only then does the *sadhaka* realize that everything is being done by the *Purusha*. That is to say, whatever the *Purusha* does, whatever the Supreme *Purusha* does, happens." Jnana Dada asked, "What then is grace without cause?" Amulya Dada questioned further, "Does this causeless grace occur from our side or from His side?" Ma replied, "From His side." Amulya Dada was perplexed, for this did not conform to what Ma had been saying till then. The truth is that Ma never destroys anyone's faith. Jnana Dada and Navataru Dada believed that nothing could happen without grace and therefore Ma confirmed their belief. We have observed that Ma replies differently to different people on the same subject.

Tonight, Jyotish Dada's daughter Phullajuthika (Buni) asked Ma, "Ma, why can't we people prepare *bhoga*? Why are only brahmins allowed to do it?" Ma replied, "It is their *karma*. Whatever be their present nature, they are privileged to prepare *bhoga* now because of the fruit of their earlier merits. Their distinction lies in the fact that they have been born in a brahmin household."

Vimala Devi and Binay Babu wished to

speak to Ma privately and in order to afford them this opportunity, Ma arranged to go with them in a boat. She forbade anyone else to go with her. We all strolled up and down the river bank. Shishir could not bear this and set out with Bacchu in another boat alongside Ma's boat. Since Ma had forbidden anyone to go with her, he kept his boat at a distance from Ma's. Some time later Shishir suddenly suffered a bad injury while in the boat. Ma commented on this saying, "You do not listen to what you are told and therefore this happens."

Thursday, 31st December, 1936. Today Ma sat and talked in detail about her childhood. She described the incidents so beautifully, we could almost see them happening right then. Someone told her this and she said, "Truly as I talk about those days I completely get into the mood of that role and therefore I am able to speak in that manner." Everyone was taking extreme delight in Ma's words. Ma narrated, "When I was first sent to school to study, the school master was the grandfather of this body. He taught me the vowels just once and somehow they got committed to memory instantly. The same day the consonants were also learnt by heart. In this manner everything happened spontaneously. I went to school very irregularly for it was far away and also my little brother was unwell for some time. Because of these reasons I attended classes very infrequently.

The surprising matter was that though I studied very little, everything turned out fine when I recited my lessons before the master. I could not read out to others the same way. Once I opened a book and looked at a poem and learnt it by heart that very instant. I cannot explain how and why this happened. An inspector came to observe the school and he opened the book and asked me to recite that very poem. I rattled it off at once." So saying Ma began laughing just like a child.

Ma then continued, "What shall I tell you? Just as *asanas* and *mudras* occurred spontaneously so also reading, counting and multiplication were learnt spontaneously. For the sake of the reputation of lessons the school the masters promoted four of us girls from the alphabet class to the Lower Primary Class. I often missed school so when I went after a gap of many days I found that the other girls had learnt quite a lot. The master then taught me all the lessons to bring me on par with the others. So see, by God's will, studies somehow went on alright.

"Another amusing happening was that Mother had told me to pause at a comma and at a full stop and according to this instruction I read the sentence in a single breath till I reached a comma or a full stop. If I ran out of breath midway I started all over again from the beginning. The effort of reading it in one breath caused my body to contort but I would not pause

till I reached a full stop. I did this only because it was my mother's behest." All laughed aloud on hearing this and Ma joined in the laughter. I laughed and said, "It appears *pranayama* had begun right then."

While describing anecdotes from her childhood Ma explained, "Whenever a sorrowful mood had to be portrayed, that mood manifested itself in my body and when a shy mood needed to be effected shyness was depicted by the body. In this manner did all the incidents occur." So saying Ma laughed and continued, "I did not have intelligence and such like and therefore during my childhood people called me a simpleton. Everyone called me simple and straightforward. One day I pressed a pot full of water to my side and stood bent and told my mother, 'Ma, you all call me straightforward. See I am crooked now.'" We all laughed heartily on hearing this.

Friday, 1st January 1937. Today a woman came and took Ma to the ashram of a Mataji called Sevadasi. Today Ma had also to go for a picnic by boat and before that she went to Sevadasi Mataji's ashram. The previous day, Sevadasi Mataji had come to Ma and requested her to visit the ashram and therefore Ma went with the woman sent by Sevadasi Mataji and alighted at Vidal Ghat accompanied by a big group of people. As soon as Ma reached the ashram Sevadasi

embraced Ma and took her to the verandah of the Govinda temple and made her sit. The temple had idols of Gaur Radha Krishna. The ladies who visited Sevadasi Mataji told us that from the age of twenty two or twenty three years, Sevadasi had not eaten anything. She did not even drink *charanamrit*, but only sprinkled it on her head. Her excretions had also stopped completely. In between she lay in *bhava* for two or three days at a time.

While conversing with Ma, Sevadasi Mataji told her, "Once the Lord told me, 'I have shut your external door and taken your responsibility.' I have also surrendered all my responsibilities to Him and I am awaiting the moment. In a single day all eating and drinking ceased. I never go out of the ashram without orders from Sri Krishna. I heard the news of your arrival but I did not go. Day before yesterday I received the orders, 'The body in which I reside has come. Go yourself and bring Her here with due respect.' Therefore I came to you last night. You are Sri Krishna Himself. All this time I had darshan in the subtle body, today Sri Govinda has become manifest and arrived. Now you must stay in your temple, I will not let you go."

Hearing this speech Ma laughed like a child and declared, "Today I have heard from you that Govinda lives in this body. Well, since when has Govinda come into this body?" Sevadasi Mataji replied "Since birth. Today Govinda

has come and now I will not let Him go." So saying she clung tightly to Ma. The ladies there requested Ma to sing kirtan and sang joyful kirtan in the company of Seva-dasi Mataji kirtan themselves. Then they started kirtan with all of us and the kirtan really gathered tempo. Sevadasi Mataji had embraced Ma so tightly that it was difficult to make her let go. Kirtan went on for a long time. Gradually Sevadasi Mataji was made to release her hold and she lay on the ground. Ma stood up. Every limb of her body began dancing in tune with the Kirtan. All who watched were enthralled at the wonderful sight. Ma indicated that everyone should lift their hands and dance. On her inspiration devotees started dancing unabashedly during the kirtan. Kirtan went on for a very long time. As soon as Ma got ready to leave, the kirtan was stopped. Sevadasi Mataji would not leave Ma on any account. Ma made her understand saying, I will not leave you and go. Let go of this body. You understand everything." On hearing Ma's consoling words, Sevadasi Mataji let go of Ma and Ma came out of the ashram with all of us.

## CHAPTER LVIII

Ma came out of Sevadasi Mataji's ashram and went straight to Bansidas Babaji who lived in a house close by. People started saying that at that hour Bansidas Babaji would not be available for he shut the door most of the time and could be seen only during the morning hours. But we all went though it was twelve noon because Ma said, "Let us go for even if we do not meet him we can at least see the place." So saying Ma set out in that direction accompanied by all of us. When we reached we heard that he had shut the door just some time ago and that he would not open the door now. Ma said nothing and began strolling outside the door. Within a minute Babaji suddenly opened the door much to the astonishment of the local people who declared that they had never before seen the door opening within such a short time. Ma went and stood near the window and we all stood near her. The *sadhu's* face was turned the other way. Idols of Radha Krishna and Bala Gopal were kept in the hut and the *sadhu* sat facing them. He prepared tobacco for the gods and offered it to them and then started having it himself. Ma told us, "Take the name softly." When the devotees started singing *nama* kirtan as per Ma's orders the *sadhu* turned his face and gazed at Ma and then

immediately looked away again. We were all astonished.

Ma kept standing without uttering a word. Everyone said, "We could not hear Baba speak at all." Ma commanded, "Remain standing quietly and you will hear him speak. Stay quiet and listen intently." Surely enough in a little while the *sadhu* took a deep breath and exclaimed, "Hari! Hari!". Ma declared, "Now let us go. Baba has spoken the true word 'Hari! Hári!'. What else will he say?" So saying Ma set out with all of us. Brajen Dada said that in the morning he and Atal Dada had come and Babaji had looked at the gods and spoken at length and had also sung devotional songs on Sri Gopal. He had also uttered the words '*Satsanga, Satsanga*' twice.

However, as planned earlier, preparations were made for the picnic and we went to the banks of the river. Ma was to tell Amulya Dada's wife and his daughter something in confidence and so a separate boat was hired. Ma set out with me in Amulya Dada's boat. She told me, "You and Amulya sit that side and talk, I shall speak to the girls." When the conversation was over I asked Ma, "Amulya Dada wants to know why Ma goes boating on the Ganga every day. Does Ganga call you? Ma replied, "What do I know Baba? I know nothing, yet just as you all come to see this body so also does Ganga beckon to me and then I have to go." Amulya Dada asked, "And you give fruits to the

Ganga beckons  
and therefore  
Ma likes to go  
sailing on the  
Ganga

Ganga. What is the reason for that?" Ma laughed and said, "Oh indeed! Do I not give you all fruits? This is also similar to that, what else?"

At one p.m. we reached the island in the middle of the Ganga where food was being cooked for the picnic. Vimala Ma and Anand Bhai were with us and Ma constantly sported with them. Ma was offered *bhoga* and then the devotees sat to partake of *prasada*. A *Vaishnavi* woman who had been coming to Ma for the past few days was also present. She began strumming the *ektara* and singing kirtan very melodiously. Hiran Didi (wife of Prafulla Babu) joined in playing the cymbals. Seeing this Shachi Babu commented, "Ma shall I look at you or at your company? This lady (Hiran Didi) is very good, absorbed in the bliss of kirtan." Ma said, "It is very sweet, is it not?" This was the conversation during the meal on the island.

After lunch Ma and all the devotees boarded the boats. As soon as Ma sat in the boat she named Hiran Didi 'Mithamayī' and Basanti Didi (Amulya Dada's wife) 'Madhumayī'. Then she said, "Jatin Babu's (Kaviraj) wife had come there. Her name is 'Rasamayī'." She told Baby Didi, "You have already been named 'Gauri Priya'." In the boat Triguna Babu started singing kirtan beautifully. Ma asked the *Vaishnavi* lady, "What is your name?" She replied, "Radha." Ma asked,

Lady devotees  
named by Ma  
and fun in the  
company of the  
*Vaishnavi* lady

"Where do you stay?" She answered, "Beneath the Kadamba tree." On hearing this reply Ma and the others began laughing. Then the *Vaishnavi* lady declared that she had been living in Navadvēp for about fifty years but she had never enjoyed such happiness before.

Bimala Ma and others were to go by the seven p.m. train so Ma had the boat taken to the shore near the station. They all did *pranama* and alighted. Amulya Dada was also to go so he took his luggage and got off at the station, but he later learnt that the boat in which his wife was sailing had not arrived. Two or three boats had gone towards the *dharmasala* and she had gone in one of those. In the crowd no body had realised this. Immediately Shankarananda Swami took another boat and went to the *dharmasala* to fetch Amulya Dada's wife. But by the time he returned the train had left so Amulya Dada decided to go by the three a.m. train. Shachi Dada, Brajen and others from Calcutta also decided to leave with them for the holidays were coming to an end. Ma returned to the *dharmasala*.

Every night after conversing with all, Ma had been sleeping only at four a.m. After everyone left we lay down. Ma woke up in the morning and said, "Look, last night as I slept I saw Basanti before me. Her face looked down cast and sad." Later we came to know that when Shankarananda Swami went to fetch Basanti she acciden-

tally fell into the water. As the water was shallow she did not get hurt badly. Hearing this Ma said, "This morning I told Khukuni so." And truly enough Basanti's face was down cast that morning.

## CHAPTER LIX

Saturday, 2nd January 1936. Today a large number of people came for Ma's darshan. A little girl sang two songs beautifully for Ma. During the conversation that followed Ma said, "We are all seated here, someone comes, someone goes; all this is but a dream."

Then the topic of the Shahbagh days came up and Ma said, "Once I had jaundice and Yogesh Ghosh said it would be necessary to take a laxative. I told him that there was nothing in my stomach and that it was empty. Then Yogesh Babu pressed my neck with his hands and as he did so it felt as if air was gushing out of a foot ball and I also experienced pain." What Ma said was that her stomach was empty.

In the course of conversation Ma's earlier dietary regulation was mentioned. Ma described, "So many kinds of rules regarding diet were followed by this body. On some days three grains of rice and on some other days nine grains were eaten, for some months no food was taken at all. Then again, I remember, a small brass tin was purchased at Kashi. Parboiled rice was cooked in the sacrificial fire at Shahbagh and that *prasada* was eaten by Kulada and Bholanath.

At that time, a little rice and some finely chopped vegetables were put into that brass tin and its lid was shut and it was put into the pot in which rice was cooked. As the rice boiled the contents of the little tin also got cooked. The whole day through no food was eaten and in the evening I had a meal from the contents of the tin. This system went on for some months. It was not as if I observed these rules by my own will. Many times this body behaved thus."

At eleven Ma shut the door and started kirtan with the ladies. As she had done in Simla, Ma began dancing with everyone and singing kirtan and this went on for a long time. After that Ma lay down to rest. In the evening she sat up and a large crowd of NavadvEEP residents came for her darshan. The room being small, Ma came and sat out in the compound and kirtan was started again. Ma sat amidst the ladies and told me, "You walk in a circle with the men and sing kirtan calmly. After all you are one amongst the men." I did as Ma commanded. In between Ma raised her left hand and signalled teaching us to dance to the rhythm of the kirtan. Kirtan went on till dusk. Almost night and day the *khol* and *kartal* were played and kirtan was sung. The venue was NavadvEEP, Ma was present and so were her devotees and therefore the bliss of kirtan went on all the time. Hiran Didi and Yatish Guha had come with families and they greatly aided the kirtan singing.

Kirtan in the  
company of  
devotees

At night Ma sat down to drink some water. She drank a little and told me, "Give Hiran *prasada* in this pure cup." I did accordingly. But it is better for the one who is given *prasada* to partake of it many others were present there and Juthika (Buni) spoke up, "Will Hiran Didi have all the *prasada*?" Hiran Didi was slightly embarrassed by this question and she began giving each person one spoonful of *prasada*. When she gave Buni her share Buni asked for more. Just as she was about to give Buni another spoonful, Buni's head bumped against the wall so badly that her eyes were filled with tears. Ma remarked, "*Prasada* should be eaten by the one who is given the *prasada*." Ma instructed us to put water on Buni's head and massaged it with her own hands.

After drinking water, Ma went and sat down on her small *asana*. Amulya Dada, Yatish Dada and others sat around her. Difference in *bhava* during kirtan between ordinary people, Sri Gaurāṅgaṇḍ Sri Ramakrishna Dada and others sat around her. Whenever any problem was posed Ma solved it at once. Some people were under the impression that anyone who experienced ecstasy during kirtan was undergoing *samadhi* like Sri Gaurāṅga Deva or Sri Ramakrishna Deva. Ma explained explicitly that these two states were quite different. She concluded by saying, "What has been explained is only a fraction--there is much more to it." The previous night also there was much discussion on this point. Ma had explained the condition that worldly people find themselves in during

*bhava*. Now the question that can arise is how could Ma explain all this? Did Ma herself experience all these *bhavas*? If not, then how could Ma explain these matters? When these queries came up Ma said, "Look, this is how it is. If you are standing in the middle of the river you can see things in the river in all the four directions. Another point--a person can write beautiful poetry and he can deliver lectures fluently but if you look into the books that he has read, you find neither the lectures nor the poetry. This is something similar."

As Ma conversed she lay down. Kirtan was started and she listened to it lying down. The *Vaishnavi* lady joined in the singing. Suddenly Ma stood up and began dancing with the *Vaishnavi* lady, who forgot herself and danced with Ma. Seeing Ma dance in this manner all the devotees got up and sang kirtan walking all around Ma. Sometimes Ma went and hid herself amidst the people like a child and sometimes she stood in the centre and swung her hands. She sported in this fashion for some time and then sat down and the kirtan ceased.

Ma laughed and said, "What an event this was again!" And so saying she burst into laughter. Prabuddhananda Swami said, "Ma we don't know what happened to us, we all danced. We are always with you." Ma replied, "If any stranger had been here he would thought that these people had certainly eaten something intoxicating." And Ma again began laughing.

Later during conversation she said, "No strangers were present and therefore such a thing occurred." Ma then began singing :--

Who is this new yogi who has entered  
Navadveep

What beauty of form!

It has maddened me.

What a sweet voice this yogi has

Never have I heard such a voice

The sound of this voice raises a flood in  
holy Ganga.

How charming is this youthful yogi

Donning only a loin cloth

Begging bowl in hand,

I know not for the love of whom.

(I see) When he says 'Ra'

Tears flow down his cheek

When he utters 'dha'

He rolls in the dust.

Never have I seen the like of this

In the three worlds.

Say, say O friend! What has happened  
to me?

My eyes are enthralled on beholding  
this yogi's form

My life-bird is ensnared in the yogi's  
love-cage

My life-bird will fly no more,  
in the yogi's love-cage

My feet will not stir homeward,  
caught in the yogi's love-cage

I have surrendered my life at the yogi's feet  
I shall return no more; here I have come  
out once for all  
And I shall go with the yogi.  
I shall follow the yogi  
And beg for food  
Remaining with the yogi forever."

Then the subject of Ma's first visit to Jamshedpur came up and Ma said, "I shall say something in connection with the talk of a stranger which came up today. In Jamshedpur the people who worked all day long at the factory sat with me silently till three a.m. in the mor-

Ma's irresistible power of attraction. One gentleman would sit quietly in the dark. Once he got up and came to me saying, 'Look here daughter, can you tell us how this crowd of men who work all day long in the factories and don't sit still even for ten minutes, come here and sit quietly near you till three a.m.? Have you drugged them with some pills?' I laughed and immediately replied, 'Father, then you

too have probably swallowed the same pills, else how is it that you are also sitting here?' Everyone laughed at this."

This time again at Jamshedpur a person stood gazing at Ma for a very long time. Ma called out to him, "Father!" The person responded, "Ma, had I been your father I would never think it unbecoming to let such a girl remain in her father's house. How did your parents let go of you?" Saying this the man went away.

After this conversation the ladies began singing kirtan and performed Ma's *arati*. Today again we slept only at three thirty a.m.

Everyone marvelled at the fact that Ma spoke and sported all day long yet never showed any signs of fatigue. During this time an incident occurred. Ma was walking around the temples when she happened to come by the police station. Seeing Ma arriving with a group of devotees at the gates of the police station, the Inspector of police, Nareshchandra Bandopadhyaya took Ma inside with great reverence. He made her sit on a platform beneath a tree and said, "Ma, just awhile ago I was musing that when Sakhi Ma called out to you, you went to her. I thought I would also think of you and see whether you would come. Just as I was thinking thus, you arrived!" Naresh Babu felt very blessed indeed. People who saw Ma entering the police station with her devotees started wondering why Ma had

Ma's arrival  
at the Police  
station in  
response to the  
quiet prayer of  
the police ins-  
pector.

been arrested along with her followers. Everyone burst into laughter when they heard this and Ma remarked, "I stole the mind of the Inspector Baba for some time and therefore I have been caught and brought here." This comment delighted us greatly. The same evening the police inspector came with his family to the *dharmasala* with offerings of fruit for Ma and after that they started coming regularly.

## CHAPTER LX

Sunday, 3rd January 1937. Today Dada arrived from Bareilly. While speaking to Ma, Hiran Didi told her, "I shall narrate what I heard about Aparna Devi's (daughter of C. R. Das) dream; listen."

"Once Aparna Devi's husband Sudhir Rai was very ill. Dr. Bidhan Roy who was treating him, was at his house on the day that his illness took a serious turn. At midnight Aparna Devi saw you in her dream and your face looked sad. Then in the hour before daybreak she again had a dream in which she saw your face radiantly happy, surrounded by an effulgent glow. You were telling her, 'Tomorrow have a bath, wear your mother's sari with golden motifs and serve the patient.' Aparna Devi did accordingly and from then onward her husband began recovering."

Last night Ma gave Hiran Didi and Baby Didi detailed advice about kirtan. At the Dhaka ashram ladies gather every Sunday to perform kirtan. Ma said, "It is good to sit with eyes shut and meditate for a few minutes before and after the kirtan. After the meditation following the kirtan, before going home, you should reflect amongst each other as to what thoughts entered each one's mind during the meditation." Further she said,

"If you all go round calmly in a circle looking upwards, while singing kirtan, a special *kriya* occurs in the body."

This morning, Prabuddhananda Swami wanted to speak to Ma alone, so he went into the room and shut the door, much to the chagrin of all the other devotees who did not want to let go of Ma even for a moment. Some of them stood against the door and demanded, "Open the door at once, other wise we will break it open. This is most unfair -- you have imprisoned our Ma!" Finally Prabuddhananda Swami was compelled to open the door and he begged forgiveness with folded hands. Ma was made to sit on the verandah of the *dharmasala* which overlooked a large compound on the bank of the Ganges. Ma sat surrounded by a big crowd. A person asked, "Ma, can everything be achieved by the Name?" Ma replied, "So long as name and form exist, the Name is all in all. Look, once you get into the river, the current will take you towards the sea without your doing anything. But before that you have to take the Name. You are all able to do other work using your intellect, but when it comes to this you say, 'We shall do whatever God makes us do' -- This is not right!"

Someone said, "Ma, I shall get up now." Ma replied, "Get up, but watch out, do not bend. I say all should get up." Ma often said this.

Ma was speaking to Prabuddhananda Swamiji about 'the scene and the seer'. Ma said, "If you

are advised to relinquish the scene and focus your attention on the seer you have to understand this to mean that you have to go beyond the gross scenes of this world; for if you think over this you will find that in fact the scene cannot be relinquished altogether.

Because even if someone controls his vision or stops it, the scene still remains. The world of duality and the scene exist only when they are thought to exist. Therefore it is apparent that whoever visualises the Brahman does so only with the help of his ego and intellect."

Then the topic of desire came up. Ma said, "Everyone tries to reach the state of desirelessness. So long as you have your own desires you have no peace. Peace can be attained only when you mingle your desire with His will. Then his desires become yours and no agitation arises any more from desires."

Triguna Dada began singing kirtan with the words, "You are sweet," and so on, and everyone listened enrapt.

Ma went to the bank of the Ganga with the devotees. In the boat she listened to personal problems of each devotee. When Prankumar Babu and his wife were conversing with Ma, the boat had gone far out into the river. Another big boat carrying some policemen was approaching

Ma's words  
about the  
scene and  
the seer

"Peace can be  
attained when  
you mingle your  
desire with  
His will"

Police officer of  
Krishnanagar has  
Ma's darshan

from the ghat. When the big boat came abreast of Ma's boat the boatman of the big boat called out saying, "Move your boat to one side. The *Hakim's* boat is coming." But the boatman knew not that the small boat before him carried someone who was the *Hakim's Hakim*, and that it was for her darshan that the *Hakim* was arriving with family in the big boat. The gentleman was a police officer of Krishnanagar who had come for Ma's darshan on hearing about her. They were all very humble and devout people. Their boat reached the ghat as Ma's boat touched shore. They expressed great joy on getting Ma's darshan right there. Ma returned to the *dharmasala* with all the devotees.

Triguna Dada had arranged for Ma's bhoga that day. The Deputy Collector of Krishnanagar, Sri Purnachandra Sen had also arrived with family and all the devotees happily ate *prasada* together. Suddenly Ma arrived on the scene to watch the devotees eating *prasada* and sat down to eat with an eight year old boy. The boy fed Ma and Ma fed him. Then each devotee came up to Ma and took *prasada* from her hands. The police officer of Krishnanagar also came to Ma, like a boy, wanting *prasada*. Ma fed him and then stroked his head. The gentleman began dancing like a mad man saying, "I have received *prasada*, I will eat no more. I had been cherishing the desire that Ma should keep her hand on my head. Ma, the inner Knower understood my longing and

Ma satisfies  
the desires  
of devotees

fulfilled my prayers!" Observing Purna Babu's wife's devout nature, Ma named her 'Pagli Ma'.

It had already been decided that Ma would go to *Vaishnavi* Ma's house after lunch and accordingly, at three or four, Ma set out with her devotees. We were walking along the Ganga. A boy named Nitai who was in the group played the *khol* very well and was carrying one with him. As we walked he began playing it and immediately Yatish Dada, Abani Dada, Triguna Dada, Vrajendra, Nitish and others started *nama kirtan*, "*Nitai Gaur, Radhey Shyam, Hare Krishna Hare Rama!*" Ma turned to the ladies and said, "Why are you silent? Sing the name with them." On Ma's behest the women joined in delightedly and gradually the daylight dimmed. Ma was surrounded by many people -- the place, time and character were all ideally suited to the scene. The devotees sang joyously as they walked. Ma raised her left hand and swayed it in time to the rhythm of the Name. The glow of the setting sun lit up Ma's face. Firstly, the continuous kirtan had brought on an exquisite radiance on Ma's countenance and now this sunlit effulgence brightened it a hundred-fold. On seeing Ma's marvellous form in *bhava*, the devotees became intoxicated in kirtan. The people around who saw the kirtan were so overwhelmed that they in turn joined the group and before long an enormous crowd of kirtan singers was moving along with Ma. Many people recalled the

story of Sri Gauranga Dev's *nagar - sankirtana* which occurred four and a half centuries back. In this manner the devotees sang kirtan and went with Ma, first to *Vaishnavi* Ma's place and then to Sriman Mahaprabhu's temple. On the way Ma saw an orange seller and gestured to us to buy all his oranges along with his basket. The oranges were distributed amongst all the devotees and many also began distributing sugar puffs. Kirtan was continued for some time while walking around the compound of Sri Mahaprabhu's temple.

When Brajen had come to Navadvēp he had asked Ma, "We have come to Sri Gaur's place -- will you not show us Gaur?" Brajen did not remember having said this to Ma, but in spite of the crowds, Ma went up to Brajen and called out to him saying, "Did you not want to see Gaur?" Pointing to the idol of Sri Gaurang, she said, "See, here is Gaurang." Brajen was delighted.

From Mahaprabhu's temple, Ma walked towards the temple with the golden Gaurang. It was late evening and the path was dark. Ma now lifted both hands and started dancing. This created such an atmosphere that the ladies in the group also abandoned their usual shyness and began lifting their hands and singing kirtan loudly. After sometime Ma began walking with her usual swiftness. Those who were standing outside could not see this scene because it was dark but for the devotees who watched it, the

Kirtan in the  
house of the  
golden Gaurang

incident was unforgettable. Ma reached the temple of the golden Gaurang. In the large spacious compound the kirtan gathered tempo. Ma was joining in the kirtan at times. Then she would stand on the top stair with a peaceful and steady mein and watch the kirtan, and the next moment she would again start walking and moving about amongst the singers. Sometimes she lifted both hands and moved about immersed in *bhava*, swaying so much that we feared she would fall to the ground. She remained thus in this ecstatic state for sometime and then suddenly, without anybody noticing, she went out of the temple. The next moment everybody realized that Ma had left and hastened after her. In the anxiety to reach Ma quickly there was quite some pushing and shoving until all the devotees reached the road and joined Ma.

Kirtan was continued for some more time in the compound of Srivas. On the way back to the *dharmasala*, Ma walked into a shop selling vessels and asked, "Baba, will you give me two small water pots?" The astonished shopkeeper handed her two water pots. Ma pressed them to her sides and declared, "We are *gopis*!" On going some distance Ma saw two *sannyasis* and said, "Baba, take these two pots and use them for storing water." She gave the two pots to the *sannyasis* who were left staring in surprise. Ma blessed them and stroked them. In this way she performed various *lilas* and returned to the *dharmasala*. The kirtan

Ma's *lila* in  
Navadvēn

was stopped. Addressing the devotees Ma declared, "What a game you all played today! Kirtan is not sung outdoors in this way. It just happened in the course of events!" One person commented, "No one even dreamt that *nagara sankirtana* could be sung with men and women together in this way!"

Then Ma went to the verandah. Seeing Brajen walking up and down by himself she asked him, "Was not your desire fulfilled today? You wanted to go with me to the temple of Mahaprabhu and the other temples. On that pretext such a scene occurred today for your sake. Once earlier I did go to the temples with everybody, but then you were in Calcutta. In every temple I remembered your request and I told Khukuni, 'Brajen particularly wished to go with me and therefore I am remembering him thus. Remember, when he comes he must be told this.' I do nothing by my own will. Whatever happens is in response to your desires." Brajen was extremely happy to hear this and he did *pranama* at Ma's feet with great devotion. Ma laughed and said, "I have received one more *pranama*!"

## CHAPTER LXI

Monday, 4th January, 1937. When Ma woke up in the morning devotees came and sat around her. Ma suddenly remembered the Kirtan in the company of two *sannyasis* to whom she had given water pots the previous day. Within devotees a few minutes the two *sannyasis* arrived. In the evening Ma went with the devotees for a boat ride. Prafulla Babu's wife sang kirtan with the other ladies. Ma returned to the *dharma-sala* by dusk. Many people had come and were conversing with Ma. Kirtan was started again. Hiran Didi started *nama* kirtan and was joined by Juthika, Latika, Shefali, Bijali, Anu and other girls.

The *Vaishnavi* Ma had also come and the kirtan was on. Ma stood up and *Vaishnavi* Ma adorned her with a crown and a garland. After some time Ma had it all removed, except the garland around her neck. Ma started clapping while singing kirtan and all the ladies abandoned their shyness and joined in the singing, making it more enjoyable. Jyotish Dada and the others were on the terrace. Ma called them and made them sit for kirtan. It was past eleven p.m. and kirtan went on for a very long time. A mad woman got into an argument with Turiyananda. Ma put her own garland around the neck of the mad woman and told her lovingly to join in the

kirtan. The mad woman was extremely angry but she was immediately placated by Ma's behaviour towards her and began dancing. After some time kirtan was stopped. The *satsanga* went on till two a.m.

Triguna Dada left by the three a.m. train with his mother. Ma was lying down but at three a.m. she got up and went with Hiran Didi to the banks of the Ganga for a walk. Then she returned to the *dharmasala* and went to all the rooms and looked at everyone there. At four a.m. she returned to her bed but did not lie down. At five she slept for awhile. During these days she once said, "I can see a very fair complexioned man bleeding."

On Tuesday, 5th January, Ma got up in the morning and went boating on the Ganga. Jyotish Dada and Prabuddhananda Surging crowds Swami wanted to speak to Ma for Ma's darshan privately so she listened to them. Day by day the crowds around Ma were growing so huge that it was difficult to get near her. Whenever she went in a boat large groups of people sauntered on the banks. How lovingly they waited for Ma! They said they would stand and look at Ma just for a little while. Ma returned and lay down for some time. Jyotish Dada left for Calcutta on Ma's behest. His health was not good and so he would go to a doctor for a thorough checkup.

A member of the Hari Sabha requested Ma to visit their institution in the evening. Kirtan went on throughout the day. *Bhoga* was offered to

Ma. People had come from far off places and the room was overcrowded. Ma was photographed. She sat in the lap of Pran Kumar Babu's wife and had a photograph taken. Ma had named her 'Yogini Ma'. In the evening Ma went and sat in the verandah because all the people could not fit in the room. She said, "Do *nama* - kirtan. It is not right to sit idle." The ladies again started singing kirtan.

Just then a pandit came to speak to Ma. The gist of his question to Ma was, "To which sect do you belong?" Ma laughed and replied, "Because each one has a Guru, he belongs to some sect. In my case the fact is that in my childhood my father and mother were my Gurus. Then I was married to a person and he became the Guru. And now I see that you all, including the tree, the creeper and the leaf are my Gurus." The pandit proposed, "But each one has *samskaras* carried over from the previous births which result in a particular method of *sadhana*." Ma replied, "That is very true. But in the case of this body, the same state is present now as in childhood. I do not feel the slightest difference. What shall I tell you Baba? Now you decide for yourself as to which sect I belong to!" So saying Ma began laughing. After conversing for some more time the pandit went away but I think he was not able to grasp the meaning of Ma's reply. A little later a member of the Hari Sabha arrived and took Ma to that place. There were statues of Sri Gauranga Dev and Siva -

Parvati. All the devotees sang kirtan for some time and then returned to the *dharmasala* with Ma.

Most people were to return by the four p.m. train today. After prolonged discussions Ma said everybody should leave by the three a.m. train the next morning. To this Departure from Navadveep some devotees replied, "Why go by the three a.m. train? We may as well leave by the twelve noon train." Ma had been expressing the opinion that they would leave only after Bholanath returned, though from the news that had been reaching us, Bholanath would only be arriving much later. But Ma kept repeating, "Has the arrival time of Bholanath's train elapsed?" and so on. Then truly enough Bholanath arrived after dusk. He had come in a hurry and was not feeling too well. But a little later Ma told Bholanath, "Let us go tonight by the three a.m. train to Calcutta. Then whatever has to happen will happen." She managed to make Bholanath agree, but he said, "Your father is old and has come also. You ask him." Ma then caught hold of her father like a little child and pleaded, "Bholanath has given his permission. Now we can go only if you also permit." She pleaded so pressingly that Dada Mahasaya could not refuse. Ma told everyone, "All of you get ready. We shall all leave by the three a.m. train."

What more could be said! That was the end of the congregation. About thirty five people were present and they all began getting ready hastily. Ma, along with the rest left by the three

a.m. train. Just a couple of people living in Navadveep came to know of Ma's departure, the others had absolutely no idea for Ma left so suddenly.

## CHAPTER LXII

January 6th, 1937. This morning Ma reached Calcutta with all her devotees. She went to a Siva temple and lay down, using her *Arrival in Calcutta* *dhoti* as a pillow. No one in Calcutta had information of her arrival and therefore nobody came to the station. Gradually as people got the news they started arriving. Ma was to leave the same day for some other place.

On the way to Calcutta Ma was conversing and Didima was also present, therefore the topic of Ma's childhood came up. Every *About Ma's childhood* job that Ma did was executed perfectly by her. The way she draped on her clothes was absolutely correct so that her body was completely covered and looked extremely beautiful.

In the course of conversation Ma explained, "This body was spontaneously straightforward and simple in childhood as behoves infancy. On becoming a wife it adapted accordingly. I was just the observer. I behaved exactly in the manner that was necessary at each moment. During kirtan when this body lay on the ground I could see that it was lying thus. And all the people sitting for kirtan seemed to me to be myself. To the extent that even their feelings and emotions seemed to be my own. Even the *khol* and *kartal* were nothing but I. The sound of kirtan -- to whatever distance

it travelled -- was nothing but I. Such a state occurred."

She continued, "Whenever anyone questioned me at any time the reply emerged spontaneously, there and then. Even replies to worldly questions came out pat. Worldly life has never been led by this body, but on being questioned on such matters the reply came forth. Just what was necessary was done by this body. You all particularly needed to know about spiritual practices and therefore the *bhavas* and practices of *sadhana* specifically occurred within this body. I needed nothing. I felt that as I ran and played in childhood, these yogic *kriyas* manifested themselves in much the same way in this body. Therefore I say that perhaps these were necessary for your sake. And that is why one sport after the other is performed by this body. After taking into account the usefulness of this body, there is still a state in which nothing is unknown and so it is possible to know everything. Conversations have taken place with subtle beings in languages which one never hears of in one's life time. Just as you reply in Hindi when a Hindustani comes and speaks to you, similarly when I went to the mountains, replies were given in the languages of the hill tribes to the subtle bodied individuals there."

Yet another incident, which occurred much before the incident of *pranama* at the Dhakeshwari temple, was mentioned. Once Ma went from Ashtagram to the Kali temple at Kasba. After performing *pradakshina* and *pranama* Ma's face and eyes

acquired a strange glow which could not be concealed however much she tried. When this fact was mentioned Ma spoke up all of a sudden, "Do you know what kind of *bhava* it was? Whenever I went to do *pranama* to a god I felt that I was one with that god and this body also underwent a supernatural change." Further she reminisced, "Look, during childhood whenever Mother sent me to the *puja* room to do some work she warned me against touching the seat of the idol. Surprisingly, though I never wished to, and though I specifically remembered Mother's injunctions, my hand would invariably touch the seat of the idol. Then I would wonder about what had happened and reason out that I had never touched it because of my own desire. As soon as I came out of the *puja* room I completely forgot all about it and therefore there was no need to mention it to anyone." I laughed and remarked, "Ma, whatever was necessary was performed by your body. If you had revealed that you had touched the idol, it would have been necessary to bathe it, but there was actually no need of it at all, therefore you forgot all about it and were unable to reveal it."

Today some ladies from the household of the Raja of Nepal and the Rani of Tripura and some other family members came for Ma's darshan. Ma sat with them in the Siva temple. Bholanath and Ma left with us all by the night train for Dhaka. Akhandanandaji was sent to Vindhyachal and Jyotish Dada to Bareilly. Atul

and Shishir were with us. Amala, the daughter of lawyer Upendra Ghosh of Gray Street, also went with us. She got into the train and began gazing at Ma's face as if she was enraptured. Ma asked her, "What are you looking at?" She replied, "I am looking at you." This reply was given with such a smile and eyes sparkling with tears, that Shachi Dada who observed her asked, "Will you go with Ma?" When Upendra Babu asked for permission he said, "If she is going with Ma what can be questioned further?" Immediately a ticket was purchased and Amala set out with Ma. Looking at Ma steadily she said softly with immense happiness, "The desire to go with you was extremely strong -- you have fulfilled it." Amala's devotion was wonderful.

Thursday, January 7th, 1937. Today we reached Dhaka. As the steamer reached Narayanganj we caught sight of Bhupati Ma in Dhaka Dada, Amulya, Nagendra and Jatin-dra Dada who had come to receive Ma. They all escorted Ma to Dhaka. At the station a large crowd had gathered. As Ma reached Ramna Ashram people showered flowers and parched rice on her. The Ashram gate was decorated with banana shoots and a *mangala kalasa* had been installed. Ma entered the kirtan hall and sat down. As soon as people heard of her arrival they began flocking for her darshan. Arrangements were made for Ma to rest only at twelve, midnight. Ma slept amidst all the devotees in the kirtan hall.

Friday, January 8th, 1937. Today again Ma was surrounded by devotees as soon as she awoke. Ma went with them to the Siddheshwari Ashram and returned after some time. All the devotees sat around Ma till twelve midnight listening enthralled to her nectar like speech. No one seemed to be satiated with Ma's kirtan. At midnight Ma began singing kirtan with the ladies. The women in Dhaka had felt sorry that Ma had not sung kirtan with them as she had with the ladies in Simla. Today their desire was fulfilled. They danced in great delight as they sang kirtan. Ma sometimes raised both hands and sometimes swung her left hand and inspired the others. At times she encircled someone's neck with her arms and danced to the beat of the kirtan. Amala, meanwhile, lay down as soon as the kirtan started. Ma stroked her body and then commented, "The beautiful *bhava* in which kirtan is being sung now, is not seen often. If these ladies get help they can inspire very beautiful *bhava*." In fact the eyes of those ladies seemed to be filled with devotional fervour. Kirtan went on throughout the night. In the morning *prabhati* kirtan was sung and the session concluded.

Saturday, January 9th, 1937. Since Ma was to leave Dhaka at eleven a.m. today, all the ladies stayed on in the ashram. Dada Mahasaya was not keeping well and Ma went to him and did *pranama*. She also went to the Kali temple at Ramna. By

then it was time for her departure. She was fed hastily for not much time was left. Ma then sat in the car and left for the station. The devotees bid a sad farewell to Ma and returned from the station. Since Ma spent a very short time in Dhaka the devotees were not satisfied at all, but Ma said that she had to be in Vindhyachal by the 13th and so no further delay was possible. From Dhaka Ma went to Behrampur in response to the devout invitation of Abani Babu, Sudhansu and others.

Sunday, January 10th, 1937. On the way to Behrampur we reached Krishnanagar in the morning. Many residents of this place had been to Navadvip for Ma's darshan and had requested Ma to come to Krishnanagar, therefore she now alighted at the station. The Deputy Police Superintendent and the Deputy Magistrate (Babu Purnachandra Sen) and Mohini Babu (who also worked in the police) had pressingly requested Ma to come. Shishir was sent from station to inform these people. Meanwhile when I fetched water for Ma's wash, I found that the Deputy Police Superintendent had turned up at the station to board a train. On seeing Ma he ran to her and did *pranama* and arranged for his men to escort Ma to the resthouse. He left saying he would return very soon. After we reached the resthouse Mohini Babu and Purna Babu arrived with families and soon there was a big crowd. Some people took initiation from Bholanath. We

had reached Krishnanagar around eight a.m. and we left by the four p.m. train for Behrampur and in this time span a large crowd of people had gathered. They were all eager to worship Ma as Bhagawati. No one in Krishnanagar had any prior information of Ma's arrival and yet, we heard that not a single person in that place remained without Ma's darshan.

During the short halt, Ma was also taken to some houses. One person's house which Ma visited was said to have been blessed by Manasa Devi herself and the man's wife was said to be possessed by the Devi at times. People said that if a sacrifice was performed near the pot of Manasa Devi the cure for any illness could be obtained and when the woman was possessed by the Devi she would reveal the manner in which the medicine was to be administered. People also claimed to have seen money falling in the house and the coins which had been collected in a cup and kept near the pot were brought and shown to Ma.

Ma also visited three or four other houses. Purna Babu and his wife sat together and worshipped Ma and Bholanath. A huge pile of fruits which people offered to Ma was distributed right there. Kirtan was sung for some time. At four p.m. Ma left for Behrampur and reached by seven p.m. Abani Dada and many others came to the station. Ma was taken to the bungalow belonging to the Sericulture Department. The rooms there housed silk worms but some rooms were vacant. All sat

and sang kirtan for some time. After lunch we all rested.

Monday, January 11th 1937. Ma woke up in the morning. She had to leave by the five o'clock train. She was taken to Sudhanṣhu's house and to an ashram where ladies gathered, sang kirtan and read out scriptures. The ladies sat around Ma.

From Behrampur After some time Ma was given some water to drink and then she lay to Calcutta down on the ground with her head

on her lap. When she rose she was made to have some refreshments. Amala was sitting quietly most of the time. Now when she was called to take *prasada* she went into a tearful mood and fell on the ground. Ma said, "See, no kirtan is going on now, yet she is absorbed in her own inner *bhava*." Ma stroked her body and we also tried to rouse her. She got up and walked with Ma but she had a far away look and a detached attitude. Ma returned and drank some water and then sat with the rest. When it was time to leave, Ma took everyone along and went to the station. The devotees in Behrampur were left discontented in having Ma for such a short time, but Ma left as scheduled and we reached Calcutta at eleven p.m. Shachi Babu had been informed and many people had come to the station. They took Ma to Birla's Siva temple. Many devotees had gathered at the houses of Prankumar Babu, Shachi Babu and Jyotish Babu. Conversation went on till three a.m. in the morning.

The subject of Ma's earlier life came up. Ma said she was married at the age of twelve years and ten months in the month of March. She then stayed in her brother-in-law's house for four years. After the death of her brother-in-law she spent six months at Atpara and six in Vidyakut. Then at the age of eighteen years she went to Ashtagram and lived there for a year and four months. She again lived in Vidyakut for three years (the time spent in Ashtagram and Vidyakut totalled four years) and at the age of twenty two she went to Bajitpur where she lived for six years. Then at the age of twenty eight she went to Dhaka.

Conversation went on till three a.m. after which Shachi Babu went home and the rest of us spread blankets around Ma and lay down in the verandah.

Tuesday, January 12th, 1937. Today again the ladies from the royal family of Tripura and many others came for Ma's darshan. Talk of ladies singing kirtan with Ma was on. At eleven a.m. Shachi Babu, Upendra Babu, his wife, Jyotish Dada's daughters, Anu, some other devotees and I went to have photographs of Ma taken. Shachi Babu took Ma to the studio of a photographer who had long cherished the desire of taking pictures of Ma. His desire was fulfilled and many shots were taken one after the other. The devotees just did not seem to have had enough. Many of them posed with Ma for

the photographs.

Around two p.m. when we returned to the temple we found that the devotees there were displeased because we had taken Ma away for so long. The crowd was immense. As soon as she reached Ma made the ladies start kirtan. The ladies began walking around and singing in the verandah and after some time Ma also joined them. Ma asked me, "Where are the garlands and the sandal paste?" Flower garlands were purchased, sandal wood was rubbed right then and all the devotees were adorned with garlands and sandal paste as they sang *nama* kirtan with Ma. Ma raised her left hand and swung it in time with the rhythm of the kirtan, inspiring everyone. At times it seemed her entire body was dancing to the kirtan. Her form was so marvellous that all who watched were enraptured. A flow of bliss was tangible. Sri Surendranath Bandopadhyaya took a film of Ma's *lila* as kirtan was in progress.

After a very long time the ladies were asked to move aside and the men were called. They began singing kirtan with Ma as if they were intoxicated by the Name. No one had any feeling of shyness or fear. Later Ma went and sat aside. Bholanath joined the kirtan which gathered tempo as he sang. He got totally absorbed in kirtan and this was greatly enjoyed by everyone. Kirtan went on thus.

Meanwhile Ramdas Babaji arrived for kirtan as per the previously arranged programme. He sat down to sing and the earlier kirtan was

stopped after which he sang till seven p.m. Then  
Departure Ma left for the station. On the way  
from Calcutta she went to see Rai Bahadur Jogesh  
Babu who was ill. Ma stood on the  
road while the old gentleman (Jogesh Babu) gazed  
at her longingly from a window facing the road.  
Ma went to the station accompanied by a large  
crowd. She left by the nine p.m. train for Vindhya-  
chal and a telegram was sent to inform Swami  
Akhandananda.

## CHAPTER LXIII

Wednesday, January 13th, 1937. At seven a.m. Ma reached Mirzapur. Akhandananda Swami was present there. Nepal Dada, Bacchu and Bacchu's mother had got the news of Ma's arrival and had come from Kashi. They were all present at the station. From Mirzapur Ma went to the Vindhyachal ashram. After a wash Ma sat at the place where the *yajna* was to be performed saying, "Come, let us see the *yajna* for which we have all gathered with so much effort." And so it was. At twelve noon the ceremony to inaugurate the *yajna kunda* was performed and then the sacrificial fire was installed and the *yajna* was performed. Ma intended to leave by the four p.m. train the same day.

Bacchu's mother had brought two sets of clothes and some eatables with her from Kashi.

An incident in Vindhyachal When Ma and Bholanath sat to drink water, Bacchu's mother wrapped a shawl each around both of them.

Immediately Ma laughingly declared, "Mine is smaller." Then she proceeded to fret over it like a child. Bacchu's mother and Nepal Dada laughed and said, "You cannot say that because both shawls are of exactly the same length." Ma replied, "Alright, then measure them and see." But all

laughed over this because they were sure Ma's conjecture was not right and they thought she was just joking, therefore no one got up to measure the shawls. Ma, however, persistently insisted in childlike fashion, that the shawls should be measured. Finally they were measured and Ma's shawl turned out to be shorter by four fingers' width. Everyone was astonished.

After refreshments Ma sat amidst all the devotees on the terrace. Lunch was served. Jitendra Dada had come from Allahabad. Ma's childhood featured in the conversation. One morning Ma had eaten rice in an agate cup and she was taking it to the riverside to wash it when her mother said, "Break it and bring it if you can." She said this as a warning in the manner in which we speak to children. While taking the cup for washing Ma was speaking to the trees and plants or to some invisible beings, as she walked along. Ma explained, "Just as you now sometimes see me conversing with someone but are unable to make out with whom, at that time also such conversation occurred. I was walking with those thoughts when the cup fell and broke. Since Ma had said, "Break it and bring it", I collected all the pieces of the broken cup and took them to her. Ma tried to hide her laughter and look angry but I saw through it all." Saying this Ma began laughing.

Then the question under discussion was, "Why does Ma roam about so much? In reply Ma

said, "If I stay in one place you will all ask why I stay in one place. But the fact is that I never feel I am roaming about. It just feels like going from one room to another within a house or like staying in one place."

An incident which occurred long ago in Dhaka when Ma went to Shachindra Babu's house for a meal is as follows. Shachi Babu's son had no progeny. Ma was told about this but she made no comment. Some time later a worm came crawling towards Ma. She pushed it away with her finger but it crawled back again and again. Then Ma lifted it up with her left hand and after some time she laughingly gave it to Shachi Babu's wife, who began looking after it with great care. Within two weeks of this incident Shachi Babu's daughter-in-law conceived and the son who was born to her was brought to Ma when she went to Dhaka this time. Hence this topic came up again.

## CHAPTER LXIV

Wednesday, January 13th, 1937. Atul and Birajmohini Didi were left in Vindhyachal and we proceeded to Kashi with Ma. We left at seven p.m. and reached Kashi at ten p.m. where we stayed in Bireswar Pande's *dharmasala*. From Vindhyachal we were to go to Delhi and a telegram was nearly sent, but at the last minute the plans were changed. On the first day of Magh (January 14) non stop kirtan for twenty four hours was to be performed in Delhi by devotees of Simla who were now in Delhi for that purpose. They were extremely restless for Ma's darshan and had sent many telegrams requesting her to come. Yet somehow Ma did not go to Delhi. Ma told us, "You all must try to do kirtan in Kashi from morning to evening tomorrow just as *akhanda* kirtan had been planned for tomorrow." She told Bacchu's mother to start the kirtan in the morning. We all retired at twelve midnight.

Thursday, January 14th, 1937. Early morning Bacchu's mother commenced singing kirtan. Nepal Dada and others helped to keep up *akhanda nama* kirtan throughout the day. Gradually Jogendra Rai and others all arrived and the kirtan gathered strength. When the crowd became very large arrangements were made for people to sit all the way from Ma's room till the terrace. Everyone was anointed with

Arrival at  
Kashi

Bliss of kirtan  
in Kashi

a flower garland and sandal paste. Baijnath Pande and Bhargava Sahib of the Theosophical Society arrived with families. They saw Ma for the first time and were extremely happy. Soon after dusk the kirtan was ended and devotees did *pranama* to Ma and left.

Friday, January 15th, 1937. Today again a large number of people came for Ma's darshan. Ma sat on her bedding and talked to all the people. Ma was speaking to a University Professor Jeevanshankar Yajnik, saying, "Study some of that knowledge also. Just as you have passed B.A. and M.A. here and become a professor, so should you be there also." Yajnik replied, "But my mind refuses to be steady. If the mind got happiness I could have sat." Ma replied, "How much time have you spent in your life time studying? Just think it over. And what is *tapasya*? I say everything in a topsy-turvy fashion." Saying this Ma continued with joined palms, "I say nothing - I only say what you make me speak. *Tapasya* means '*tapa sahan*'. Even if the mind does not want to, you must try. Whatever trouble you take is itself *tapasya*. If there were no trouble then the value of *tapasya* would not be known. When the trouble is not experienced any more the mind begins enjoying bliss of its own accord and then there is no talk of *tapasya* because *tapasya* has ended. Look, children are naturally attracted towards playing but they are forcibly made to sit and study. Yet their minds do not concentrate and

only after they are made to study regularly as a routine do they start liking studies. After that they do not need to be forced. They themselves begin studying regularly because now they cannot remain without studying. They know that if they do not study they will fail in the examination and they do not like failing." Finally Ma said with folded hands, "Look Baba this is the prayer of this girl, that you must give a little time every-day to Him and gradually increase this time." Yajnik was greatly pleased by Ma's words and touched her feet and did *pranama* before leaving.

Another incident worth mentioning: Nepal Dada arrived at Vindhyachal this time and told us that two days earlier Dr. Gopal Dasgupta of Kashi had come to him and asked, "Can you tell me when Anandamayi Ma is coming this side?" Nepal Dada asked him, "Why do you ask?" He replied, "Last night I dreamt that Anandamayi Ma was sitting on my mattress and saying, 'I have come so close yet you do not come to see me.'" Then Nepal Dada told the devotee that he had received a telegram from Behrampur just the day before with the information that Ma was arriving at Vindhyachal on January 13th. Nepal Dada requested the doctor to accompany him to Vindhyachal but the doctor declared, "I shall not go. I do not even know Ma. When she has herself given me darshan she will come here herself if necessary." Truly enough Ma went to Kashi in the course of events. Yesterday

A doctor in  
Kashi dreams  
about Ma and  
she reaches  
Kashi

when Nepal Dada rang up the doctor and informed him that Ma had come to Kashi, the doctor came for Ma's darshan. Ma laughed and asked him, "So Baba, how are you? It appears that this time you have pulled this body (pointing to herself) here. Therefore I have come for Baba's darshan. Baba, you cure diseases of the body, please treat the mind also." The doctor gazed steadily at Ma. Many other people came including Gopinath Kaviraj Babu.

A number of varied topics came up for discussion. One boy told Ma, "Ma, Tulsi Das was a great *jnani* and a *bhakta*." Ma Ma shows pre- agreed, "Yes indeed he was." The boy  
sence of know- queried, "Alright, then why did he  
ledge and devo- look at Lord Krishna's image and  
tion in the say, 'I do not want to see you in  
statement made this form. I want to see you in the  
by Tulsidas form of Rama.' How was this an  
expression of knowledge? When all are but One then why feel that one form is different?" Ma replied, "Look, you yourself said that he was both a *jnani* and a *bhakta*, then his declaration was surely one of knowledge. The very fact that he said, 'Give me darshan in your Rama form, I do not want to see this form of yours, I want to see the Rama form.' It is proof that he knew that Rama and Krishna were one. 'Give me darshan in Rama form' - his saying this makes it evident that only forms are different but in reality both are One. By this his knowledge is established. 'I want to see you only in my *Ista* Rama form because

I love that.' - this expresses his devotion. In this manner both *jnana* and *bhakti* (Knowledge and devotion) are expressed." Gopinath Babu told all those who were present, "Ma never has to think before answering any questions. The reply which is apt and necessary at that moment emerges from her lips."

Gopinath Babu then went on to describe an incident that occurred when Ma and Dadamahasya were staying at Girin Babu's house on their way back from Navadweep with Dadamahasya. "Two or three of us went for Ma's darshan. It was raining heavily and we halted at a couple of places before we reached Ma. In the midst of conversation there Ma suddenly spoke up, 'I was clearly watching you with my eyes as you all were coming.' So saying she accurately described where we had halted on the way. The same day she told us numerous facts about *Ichha Sakti* and *Maha Sakti*. Once in Hardwar when the topic of the essence of creation came up Ma explained it so beautifully and simply that everyone was surprised."

Talk of going to Chittagong from Kashi was in progress. In the morning Ma conversed with

Jiten Dada. When Swami Purnananda of Rishikesh was mentioned Ma said, "While I was at Rishikesh Purnananda Swami sent his disciple to me. The disciple wanted to speak to me in private because his Guru had sent him and he did not allow even Jyotish to be present. He asked me, "My Guru has

Does Ma have dreams? Ma's answer to this question posed by Swami Purnananda

asked me to find out whether or not you have dreams. And, if you have dreams, what kind of dreams do you have?' I replied, 'If you talk about dreaming then my speaking to you now is also a dream. And if you don't accept that then those who are true knowers are always awake, they never sleep.' And so forth. Purnananda Swami was very fond of me and gradually I met him and spoke to him. When he was ill I visited him at his ashram. He was so good natured and simple that as soon as he heard that I had come he came down though he was unwell and sat on the ground with me. I called him Baba. How many times did he cook for me and feed me! When he recovered he visited me in my hut on the banks of the Ganga. That time I stayed in Rishikesh for nearly four hours." In the morning today Ma had gone to the banks of the Ganga with Jiten Dada and me and the above conversation occurred as we sat there.

We were to leave by the three p.m. train for Chittagong. Arrangements for Ma's bhoga had been made at Mahesh Bhattacharya's *dharmasala*. At one p.m. 'Charity without reasoning' Ma went there with us all and sat down to meet Mahesh Bhattacharya. Moving all others aside Ma said to Kanhai Dada, "All this time Babaji (Mahesh Babu) has been giving in charity after reasoning. Now let him perform charity without reasoning. Babaji once told me, 'When I and my wife were in Baidyanath a beggar came begging for alms, but I told the beggar to

work for his living and did not give him any alms. All my life through I have always given in charity only after reasoning in this manner.' Babaji remembers this incident therefore I say that once let him give in charity without reasoning." In response to Ma's advice he did so.

A person questioned Ma, "What is *aisyarya* ? Do you have *aisyarya* or not ?" Ma laughed and replied, "Is *aisyarya* different ? If there is something there is *aisyarya*. Where there is *aisyarya* there is difference. Only when there is *aisyarya* does distinction arise."

After lunch Ma set out for Chittagong by the three p.m. train. In the train the topic of protecting the sacrificial fire was raised. I asked, "Ma, why is it necessary to protect sacrificial fires ?" Ma narrated, "After the *Kalipuja* in 1926, a sacrificial fire was kept burning constantly.

At that time I had the *kheyala* that just as Kali sported in such a lifelike manner and at the time of her immersion (*visarjana*) obstacles arose, similarly there was no *kheyala* for the *visarjana* of the sacrificial fire. Just as there was no inclination towards immersing Kali, there was also no inclination towards putting out the fire and thus the protection of the fire began. Later when we were to go to the Kumbha Mela in Hardwar, a *kunda* was made near the pond in Shahbagh and the fire was installed there for protection. At the time when the *kunda* was prepared you saw me take

Journey to Chittagong. Revelation of the cause of protecting the sacrificial fire

Bholanath there and no one else was allowed to go there. Bholanath was asked to fetch three peepul leaves. When he brought the leaves I took a cinder from the sacrificial fire and began writing on the leaves. All this happened on its own accord; this was similar to the invocations which emanated spontaneously. Three different languages were written on the three leaves."

Ma was asked which the three languages were and she replied, "Try and understand; first of all there were three, then they became many; like *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*; Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva. From *vasana* arises creation (*sristi*), in *vasana* is maintenance (*sthiti*) and from *karma* arises destruction (*laya*). The exhaustion of *vasanas* is *laya*. As you first take one letter, then break up one to form three; from three you get many. Then again to go back to one, you break the many and get to three, break three and reach one. In the case of words and letters it is the same. Similarly, the basic language (*mula bhasa*) is also formed by getting three from one and again by splitting the three many are obtained. Understand these three languages to be thus. The three languages which were derived from the basic language were written when the need arose."

Further Ma said, "Those three leaves were then kept inside a coconut shell and covered. An incense pot was placed over that and mud was spread over the pot while preparing the *kunda*. These facts remained undisclosed for so long." After this incident Kulada Dada was entrusted

with the duty of performing yajna. When leaving Ma instructed, "If the fire gets put out for some reason, rekindle it in this manner." She explained the method to Kulada Dada.

Later when Ma had once been to Adinath with Dadamahasaya, she told him on a particular day, "Something has gone wrong with the fire." When they returned to Dhaka and calculated the day on which Ma had uttered this statement they found that the fire had in fact got doused on that very day. At another time after kirtan in Salkiya, Ma was talking to Biren Dada when she suddenly exclaimed, "The fire is not burning properly." That time again, on returning to Dhaka it was discovered that some problem had cropped up with the fire. I have heard that similar incidents occurred on many other occasions.

The width and depth of the *kunda* that was constructed in the Vindhyachal ashram was that of Ma's body. Ma was asked the reason for this and she replied, "Once when I was at Dehradun I saw the Vindhyachal ashram before my eyes vividly, just as I am now seeing you. A person was performing yajna there and it was visible exactly as it was happening. The person doing the yajna expressed his desire and therefore you were told to make a yajna *kunda* at that place. I do nothing of my own will. That person had some connection with Akhandananda and therefore he was made to prepare the *kunda*."

When she was questioned about giving the measurement of her body Ma replied, "You

wanted to know the dimensions. You normally take measurements using the hand, which is a portion of the body. I had the *kheyala* that *Savitri yajna* is *Brahma yajna* and *Brahma* is *akhanda* (unbroken) therefore the measurement of the entire body was given. It is true that when doing anything actually there is a limit and therefore the body is also limited, but your *bhava* was perfectly complete and unbroken (*akhanda*). Again as per your opinion the inside of the *kunda* was asked to be made by measurements of the hand."

A similar thing happened at the Ramna ashram. I often visited that place from Shahbagh in exactly the same manner as you take me to your houses. The people there expressed their desire but I said nothing to anyone because whenever necessary a particular job gets done anyway. Sometime later when you all tried to make an ashram there Niranjan once said to me, "We feel ashamed to go to see land for the ashram because whichever place we try to acquire, the deal falls through for some reason or the other and we are unable to purchase any land." I think that soon after Niranjan Babu said this to Ma, they received some instruction from Ma and the present site was acquired for the ashram. Ma said, "The temple and other constructions at that site came up in accordance with the desire of those who had lived there earlier."

## CHAPTER LXV

Saturday, January 16th, 1937. Today we passed through Goalando and reached Chandpur

On the way to Chittagong. Story narrated by Ma to show that God provides for those who have completely surrendered to Him

in the evening. Ma got into the steamer and lay down. At Ranaghat some people got into the train in which we were travelling to Goalando. They caught sight of Ma and came to do *pranama*, praising their good fortune on getting Ma's company thus. Four or five of them distributed Ma's *prasada* amongst themselves and began eating it happily. Some of their companions sat a little distance away and watched them laughingly, but did not come closer. Ma asked me to send them some fruit. I sent them some oranges with one of the persons who had already received *prasada*. On obtaining the oranges those people burst out laughing.

Meanwhile Ma said, "Listen, I shall tell you a story. Two spiritual aspirants sat down to do *sadhana* and resolved that they would not get up leaving their penance but would subsist on whatever God gave them as they remained seated there. Within a short time one aspirant became very hungry and he had grave doubts as to whether God would come to the forest and give them any food at all. So he told his companion, 'Come brother, let us go and get some food and then continue our penance.' The other replied,

'No brother, when I am seated in His contemplation I shall eat whatever He sends. Even if I have to go hungry I shall not get up.' On hearing this the other aspirant got up and went to some place to procure a meal for himself. While returning, it struck him that his companion was sitting in the forest and that he should take something for him. So he returned with some food for his companion and placed it near his companion's *asana*. The companion laughed and exclaimed, 'See brother, if one sits in contemplation of Him, He sends food even to the forest!'" Ma narrated this story and laughingly observed, "I was reminded of this story when you took *prasada* for your companions just now."

While in that train Ma began saying, "When I first started visiting Siddheshwari one day, as we were returning, Bholanath spoke somewhat contemptuously, 'What *sadhana* and *bhajana* are you doing? My dependence on my job has not ceased. Why does one have such sorrow in this house when the conditions here are of this nature?' This comment caused a fearful *bhava* in me and a strange change in my body made me walk out swiftly into the compound where it was raining heavily. Bholanath caught me and made me return. In the same *bhava* I kept saying, 'Then I shall go.' Bholanath consoled me in many ways and took me back to Siddheshwari." This incident occurred in Siddheshwari when rice was offered as *bhoga* at the time when Ma stayed there for seven days before returning to Shahbagh.

Later, when Ma returned to Shahbagh from Siddheswari after *bhoga*, Bholanath again made some comment in the same strain as before about his job which caused Ma to attain a strange condition. While in that state she told Bholanath, "Look after this body for another three or four years." Today Ma remarked, "Within those three or four years you all came and gathered." So saying she began laughing.

Today, as we were travelling in the steamer, Bholanath narrated an anecdote about the time when they were in Bajitpur and he had declared his resolve to build a house in Dhaka. Ma had replied saying that he already had a house in Dhaka. She then named a person who, long ago, owned the house where the present ashram in Dhaka is situated and told Bholanath, "That person's house is yours." Later when the ashram came up it was found on making enquiries that the name mentioned by Ma belonged to the earlier owner of that building. I have not yet been able to find out what the name was.

Monday, January 18th, 1937. We reached Chittagong this morning. Shashi Babu and others had come to the station and we were taken to the temple of Rajarajeshwar. I have heard that this is a very ancient temple.

Some days ago Ma had received the news that Jyotish Dada's daughter was seriously ill. Today after Shashi Babu escorted Ma to the temple, he went to enquire about the girl

because he had not received any news for the past two days. After he left his son and I were taking Ma to Jashoda Babu's house to give her a wash when she suddenly declared, "I can see a woman has died." Startled I said, "They have just gone to find out about Jyotish Dada's daughter and what is this you are saying now?" Ma did not say any more. A short while later Shashi Babu returned and informed us that Jyotish Dada's daughter had died last night. Ma said, "Last night, at that very time I saw that I was present near the death-bed and could see everything clearly."

Shankarananda Swami who had come with us from Kashi questioned Ma, "Ma, you have come so close, then what sin prevented the girl from having your darshan?" Ma replied, "Why do you say that she did not see me? Yes, you could not see. I shall tell you in your language. You say, don't you, that if one dies while on a pilgrimage towards Kashi one gains the merit of dying in Kashi? You may understand this similarly. There was no idea of coming this way. Only because we came here in spite of not intending to, shows that the girl was in my thoughts. Otherwise if I had gone that way I would not have thought of the girl at all." Hearing this we mentally extolled the girl's good fortune.

Jashoda Ghoshal's house was very close to the temple and so Ma's *bhoga* was prepared there. Ma went to a house where a gentleman came

forward to do *pranama*. The gentleman had many teeth missing. Looking at him Ma laughed and said, "What Baba! You are becoming toothless. To begin with you had no teeth and now again you are becoming toothless. In between for some time, for the sake of the teeth you took so much trouble. No teeth in the beginning and no teeth in the end, in between during the time there were teeth there was so much confusion!" Everyone laughed heartily on hearing this.

Someone asked a question dealing with *samskara* and Ma replied, "On seeing any object an impression is created on the mind and to remove that impression it takes that much time again." She told a girl, "You are studying regularly; take God's name also. If he comes in a gross form as your husband then it is well and good, otherwise Paramatma is the Supreme Lord." Ma advised the women folk, "If you serve your husbands in the right spirit then the feeling of 'What else can I do?', this inferiority will not remain. You are not able to do this properly and therefore, 'What can I do?', this question arises in your mind." Hearing this all the men started laughing. Immediately Ma spoke up, "Each of you should also try to regard your life as the 'Griha Lakshmi'."

In the evening Ma was taken to a couple of houses. At night Ma was seated on the verandah of the temple and many people had gathered for her darshan. Professor Girija Bhattacharya of

Nature of *sams-*  
*kara*. Advice to  
women about  
serving their  
husbands

Rajshahi who was then in Chittagong had also come. In the course of conversation the topic of *samadhi* came up. Ma said, "How can there be *samadhi* without the word '*samadhi*' *samadhana*?" A pandit who was present was very happy to hear this and remarked, "Ma, I have never heard such a beautiful explanation." Various other topics came up and the Panditji discussed them at length. Girija Babu commented, "What is the use of all this talk? We don't understand this at all!" Ma said, "Look, when you work out a sum even if you add and subtract correctly all along but make one mistake somewhere, you get it all wrong. Your situation is similar. Have faith in all, presume faith is the sum. Without actual experience all facts cannot be understood."

Girija Babu then began talking about incidents that had happened earlier, saying, "Once in Dhaka, Pran Gopal Babu, Baul, Atal and I were seated around Ma when she suddenly touched Pran-gopal Babu's hand as if she were giving him something. Prangopal Babu placed his hands over Baul's, Atal's and mine. It was a very marvellous happening that when this was done a wonderful condition came over us all, as if we had been struck by lightning. We all sat in this state for some time and then came back to normal." Further he continued, "When I first saw Ma in Dhaka she had a long veil and she spoke very little. One day when she went and sat on the

Reminiscences of  
Professor Girija  
Bhattacharya.

altar at Siddheshwari, she was no longer a housewife, her personality was completely different. For some time invocations poured forth from her lips and then she told me emphatically, 'I am seeing that all is One.' To this day I remember the manner in which she said that."

"Then once when I was ill Ma ate up the barley that had been cooked for me and told me to have the *prasada* of her *bhoga* at another house. First I received fruits which I ate and then I had all the rest of the items. The same day my fever ceased. I have witnessed many such incidents."

"I received Prangopal Babu's letter and went to Dhaka for Ma's darshan. Then I wrote to Atal and he also came to Dhaka for her darshan."

At twelve midnight everybody retired to sleep. At night Ma had spoken about Jyotish Dada's daughter, "At the time of this girl's wedding, Jyotish had told me that widowhood had been forecasted in her future. One night Jyotish kept a sweetmeat in a golden cup and fed it to me. Then he made all the ornaments for the girl at the time of her wedding with this gold. It was good that this girl was able to die a *sadhva*." Saying this Ma laughed.

Tuesday, January 22nd. Ma had a wash in the morning and sat down, she was not to eat today. Many devotees sat around her and conversed. Ma said, "Faith is blind but at first we can hold on only to this faith. Reading and studying also help, just as the Railway time table helps in

travel." Girija Babu said, "But, Ma, we don't even know how to ask questions." Ma laughed and said, "Whom will you ask questions? There can be questions and answers between a professor and his students, but here there is neither a student, nor is there a professor. Here, whoever asks the question answers it himself." Girija Babu said, "Bhakti sastras say that nothing can be achieved without the grace of *mahatmas*. But how do we recognise a *mahatma*?" Ma replied, "Making you recognise a *mahatma* - this is grace in itself."

Just then Jatu and Digendra Ghosal's wife arrived and took Ma to their house. Ma went and sat in their garden at the same spot where she had sat the previous day. Digendra Babu's wife and Surendra Babu's wife escorted her to the garden where they adorned her with garlands, draped a cloth on her and performed *arati*. Young girls sang before Ma. Then Ma was taken to the ashram of a *sadhu* who lived nearby. On returning from there Ma spread a blanket in Digendra Babu's garden and folded a *dhoti* to make a pillow and lay down. At four in the evening Ma went to Girija Babu's house for kirtan and there a large crowd collected. Bholanath became inebriated with the kirtan and everyone greatly enjoyed his company. At eleven thirty p.m. we all returned to the temple.

Wednesday, January 23rd. Today Ma was to have *bhoga* at Surendra Ghosal's house. In the morning after a wash, Ma was taken to two or three houses and we reached Surendra Babu's house at one p.m. Before the *bhoga* some girls sang kirtan. Then arrangements were made for Ma's *bhoga* in the large garden, because Ma did not enter rooms. All the people went and sat in the garden and Ma said, "Make the children sit to one side and let the teenager girls sit to another side." This was done and then Ma accepted *bhoga*. Ma said, "Kumaris, children and *sannyasis* are all seated for lunch. Now you all carry incense in your hands and perform kirtan while doing *pradakshina* all around." Jatu and others did accordingly and Ma joined them. She then sat down for lunch. Everyone began making the *ulu* sound, blew conches and rang bells out of joy. Shashi Babu was called to take photographs and all ate happily. Ma commented, "First *bhajan* and then *bhojan* -- *bhajan* and *bhojan* are both necessary." And she burst out laughing.

Then Ma made all the relatives sit together. The Ghosals of Chittagong were a large and well placed family who had all gathered including many daughters-in-law. Ma declared, "Right now, all the *Saktis* are seated for *bhajan*." A little later, Ma sat down to eat with them. Ma fed Chandra-madhav Ghosal's wife and was fed by her in turn. Then Digendra Babu's wife applied *prasada* to all

those who were present and Ma joined in the sport. Ma and all the devotees were smeared with the *prasada*. In the evening I heated water and bathed Ma. Ma went to the Radha Madhav Kutir with a big group of men and women and then to the Rajarajeshwar temple where ladies sang kirtan. A large number of people had gathered and the kirtan was wonderful. Even after the kirtan many people stayed on and though it was midnight no one wanted to budge. Suddenly Ma got up and went to the door of the temple and observed that Lord Narayan had not been made to sleep. As if she were addressing a human being she exclaimed, "What? Are you also not asleep as yet? Are you still sitting up?" This was uttered as though some person was seated there and Ma was speaking to him. Later Ma told me in solitude, "I did not realise and therefore I spoke thus suddenly in the presence of all." But all did not particularly observe this incident.

Glossary  
of  
Sanskrit Words



## GLOSSARY OF SANSKRIT WORDS

- Ajnata vasa* Living incognito.  
*Akhanda* Uninterrupted, unbroken.  
*Ananda* Bliss.  
*Ananta* Endless, infinite.  
*Annakut* A large heap of cooked rice.  
*Aprakrit* Unnatural, extraordinary.  
*Arati* A devotional ceremony in Hindu worship with the waving of lights, incense etc., before the object of adoration.  
*Asadh* Name of a Hindu month corresponding to June/July.  
*Asana* 1. Yogic posture or physical pose. Every posture corresponds to a particular state of mind.  
2. Small mat or carpet used as a seat by each person individually.  
*Ashrama* (i) The four *ashramas* (*brahmacharya*, *grihastha*, *vanaprastha*, *sannyasa*) are the four successive stages of life from the view point of a pilgrim on the spiritual path.  
(ii) Hermitage, abode of ascetics.  
*Astami* The eighth day in a lunar half month. The main day of *Durga Puja*, which is performed on *Saptami*, *Astami* and *Navami* of the bright half of the month of *Ashwin* (October).  
*Avyakta* Unmanifest.  
*Batasa* A kind of convex sweet drop of sugar or molasses.

**Bela** Wood apple (*Aegle marmelos*).

**Bhakta** Devotee. One who advances by the path of *bhakti*.

**Bhava** (i) State of being, inner disposition.

(ii) Divine mood.

(iii) Devotion for one's object of worship.

(iv) Spiritual ecstasy, transcendental mood, generally emotional in nature. *Bhava* usually occurs at elevated stages of the path of *bhakti*.

**Bhoga** Food offering to the object of worship.

**Boro Ma** Big mother (in Bengali).

**Brahmachari** A religious student who devotes himself to spiritual practices and to service, and observes strict celibacy.

**Brahmacharini** A female *brahmachari*.

**Chakra** A wheel shaped or circular object.

**Charanamrita** It is a custom to ceremonially wash (or dip into water) the feet of saints or deities. The water is then called *charanamrita* and is drunk by the people in the belief that power and purity are transmitted to them by it.

**Choto Ma** Small mother (in Bengali).

**Dharmasala** A rest house for pilgrims.

**Dhoti** A cloth which is worn around the waist.

**Diksha** Initiation into spiritual life, effected through the grace of the Guru who represents the Divine. During *diksha* a mantra or one of the potent names of God is usually

communicated to the disciple, who is asked to repeat it regularly in a specific manner.

*Ekadasi* The eleventh day of the lunar fortnight on which a fast is observed by Hindus.

*Ekamukhi rudraksha* A unidirectional seed of the *eleocarpus ganitrus* tree, sacred to Siva.

*Ghat* The bathing place on the bank of a river.

*Ghee* Clarified butter.

*Hakim* A magistrate, a judge (in Bengali).

*Japa* Repetition of a mantra or a name of God, imparted by the Guru at the time of *diksha* (see *diksha*). The repetition, as one of the daily disciplinary exercises may be for a fixed or indefinite number of times. *Japa* is of three kinds namely vocal (*vacika*), semi-vocal (*upamsu*) and mental (*manasa*). The last is supposed to be the best. The sound, should, as a rule, be inaudible to others. *Japa* may be done either without rhythm or rhythmically, following the natural rhythm of one's breath. The counting during *japa* may be done with the help of one's fingers in the prescribed manner, or with the help of a rosary.

*Jhoolan Purnima* The full moon day on which falls the Hindu festival of swinging.

*Jiva* Individual consciousness, monadic in character. It is conceived either as an eternal

aspect of the eternal Brahman or as an artificial manifestation of the Brahman under the influence of *maya* or *avidya*, (ignorance of the true nature of Reality) and ceases to exist when that influence subsides through the supervision of *jnana* (see *jnana*).

*Jivan mukta* One who has attained to *jivan mukti* (Liberation) while living in the physical world.

*Jnana* Literally, knowledge. True knowledge is immediate and represents the unity of Reality. Every other knowledge, be it through the medium of the senses or the mind, belongs to the category of *ajnana* (ignorance of Reality).

*Jnani* One who has attained to true knowledge of the Self or Reality, in other words to Enlightenment.

*Kalibari* Temple of Goddess Kali (in Bengali).

*Karma* Action, the result of action, as well as the law of cause and effect by which actions inevitably bear their fruits. *Karma* originates from the individual self in its ignorance functioning as an active agent. When man realises his own true self, *karma* ceases for him.

*Kartala* Cymbals.

*Kheyala* Ordinarily a sudden and unexpected psychic emergence, be it desire, will, attention, memory or knowledge. Ma, however, has given the word a much wider

meaning. She describes as *kheyala* the incomprehensible acts of the Supreme, as for instance His dividing Himself in creation etc. In Ma's case there is no ego to account for her movements, feelings and thoughts. When she uses the word *kheyala* with reference to her own person, it must be understood to denote a spontaneous upsurge of will, which is divine and therefore free.

*Khicdi* A preparation of rice, dal and vegetables, cooked together.

*Khol* A kind of drum used in kirtan.

*Kirtana* The chanting or singing of the names or glories of God. It may be performed by one person or by a group of people to the accompaniment of musical instruments, chiefly drums and cymbals. It is meant to be audible to others so that they may benefit by listening.

*Kriya* Creative action. In *tantric* literature *kriya* is used in the sense of activity that is eternally associated with knowledge and leads to perfection, in which knowledge and action are found to be identical.

*Kumari* The eternal, immaculate Virgin, divine in nature. The form assumed by the Divine Power before the creation of the world. *Kumari* is the Mother of the entire creation.

*Laya* Dissolution of something that nevertheless still exists potentially.

*Mahatma* Great Soul. Used with reference to a person who has destroyed his ego and realized himself as one with the ALL.

*Mahotsava* Great Festival.

*Mantra* A series of sounds of great potency. It is the sound representation of the *Ista Devata*. Name and form are inseparable; if therefore, the name is instinct with life, the form that it represents is bound to reveal itself, provided the practice is intensive enough. A mantra is a word of power, divine power transmitted through a word.

*Math* The dwelling of renunciates, a monastery.

*Mauna* The practice of silence. It may either mean to abstain from speech, or to abstain from signs, gestures and writings as well as from speech; or the complete stilling of the activities of the mind as well.

*Mauni* One who observes *mauna* or a vow of silence.

*Masima* Aunt (in Bengali), one's mother's sister is called thus.

*Mayavini* A woman skilled in magic.

*Mejo Ma* Mother who is second in order of seniority or age.

*Mudra* Particular pose of the body as a whole or of its parts, representing the expression of a particular *deva sakti* (higher natural force). Without that pose that particular *sakti* cannot function. The performance of

these *mudras* produces necessary changes in the mind or character. In Ma's case these *mudras* came spontaneously.

*Mula Bhasa* The root language, the foundation or basis of all languages.

*Nama Kirtana* Singing God's names.

*Nama Yajna* Singing God's names as an act of worship or sacrifice.

*Nagar Sankirtana* Act of singing religious songs in procession through a city or village.

*Natya mandir* A dancing hall.

*Navami* The ninth day of the lunar half month.

*Navaratri* The first nine days of the month of Ashwin (October/November).

*Pahadi* Belonging to a hill-tribe.

*Panchanga* A calendar or almanac describing five astrological details such as date, day, reigning star etc.

*Panchavati* A grove of five sacred trees, namely pipal, banyan, ashoka, bel, amloki, with a platform in the middle. A *panchavati* considered a congenial place for meditation.

*Pandit* A scholar, a learned man.

*Pisima* Father's sister (in Bengali).

*Prabhati kirtana* Singing of the names or glories of God early in the morning.

*Pradakshina* Circumambulation from left to right, so that the right side is always turned towards the person or object circumambulated.

*Prakrit* Original, natural, unmodified.

*Pranama* Obeisance. An act of surrender, indicating the sense of one's smallness in the presence of the One to whom obeisance is offered. There are various ways of doing *pranama*; the most common way is to kneel down and touch the ground with one's head.

*Pranayama* Rhythmic breath control. This control is extended over all the functions of breathing namely, (1) inhalation or inspiration which is termed *puraka* (filling up); (2) exhalation or expiration, which is called *rechaka* (emptying the lungs); (3) retention or holding the breath, which is called *kumbhaka*.

*Prasada* Food offered to a deity or saint becomes *prasada* when it has been accepted and blessed. It is then partaken of by the devotees.

*Pratipada* The first lunar day of the month.

*Puja* Ceremonial worship of the Hindus. Offering to the object of adoration various articles representing all aspects of oneself.

*Puri* A thin, flat cake of wheat flour fried in clarified butter or oil.

*Purusa* The Supreme Spirit.

*Rasa Yatra* The festival of dancing of Krishna and Radha on the full moon night of the month of Kartika (*Rasa Purnima*).

*Roti* A thin, flat cake of wheat flour roasted on

a flat pan.

**Rishi** Seer. The Rishis are said to form a class of beings by themselves, distinct from gods, men, asuras (demons) etc. They are the ones to whom *mantras* are revealed.

**Sadhaka** One who performs spiritual practices for the purpose of preparing himself for Self realisation.

**Sadhana** Spiritual practices performed for the purpose of preparing oneself for self realisation.

**Sadhu** One who has dedicated his life to spiritual endeavour and is free from family and business entanglements.

**Sadhva** A married woman whose husband is alive.

**Samadhana** Completion, termination.

**Samadhi** A state in which the mind is either completely concentrated on its object of contemplation (*savikalpa samadhi*) or ceases to function and only Pure Consciousness remains revealing Itself to Itself (*nirvikalpa samadhi*).

**Sama Veda** The third of the four Vedas (see Veda).

**Sannyasi** One who has taken *sannyasa* (renunciation) (*vividisa sannyasi*) or one who has spontaneously become a *sannyasi* (*vidvat sannyasi*).

**Sannyasini** A woman who has taken *sannyasa*.

**Samsara** Cycle of life in the world through a continued series of births and deaths. It is consequent on the ignorance of the true

nature of the *Self* and of the *karma* which originates from the self in its ignorance functioning as an active agent. Interpreted by Ma as "*sang - sara*". A play upon words : *samsara*, world; *sang*, clown; *sara*, essence. The clown (*sang*) mistakes his role for the Real, yet is only dressed up for the play. *Samsara* is "*sangsara*" in Bengali.

**Samskara** Literally purification, consecration. Impressions, mental dispositions, psychic traces left in the mind after any experience. They act as seeds and have a tendency to germinate into actions. These *samskaras* are often brought over from former births. They are burnt up when the Light of Supreme Knowledge (*jnana*) shines forth. *Samskara* in this sense means very much the same as *vasana*.

**Sandesh** A Bengali sweetmeat of posset.

**Sandhya vandana** Specific spiritual practice performed daily as a duty at sunrise and sunset.

**Sari** The dress of Hindu women. A long piece of cloth worn round the body and passing over the head.

**Satsanga** The company of sages, saints and seekers after Truth, either the physical company, or in an applied sense by reading holy scriptures or the lives and teachings of saints. Also religious meeting. In its widest sense the practise of the presence of God.

**Sevaka** One who serves.

- Sevika* A woman who serves.
- Siddhi* Realisation, fulfilment. Also an occult power gained by yoga.
- Sinhasana* Throne.
- Sindur* Vermilion, minium, applied in the parting of the hair as a symbol of the married state of a woman.
- Siva linga* A phallic symbol of Siva.
- Sraddha* Rites performed for a departed soul.
- Shavana* Name of a lunar month corresponding to July - August.
- Sristi* Creation, anything created.
- Sthiti* Staying, remaining.
- Stotra* A verse of praise, especially for a deity.
- Sūdra* A person of the fourth of the principal castes of the Hindus.
- S'varupa* The Thing Itself. The true nature of anything.
- Tapasya* Hardships undergone with the definite object of attaining to the Spiritual. Interpreted by Ma as *tapa* (heat, suffering) + *saha* (tolerance).
- Tyaga* Giving up, renouncing.
- Vaishnava* 1. The cult of the worship of Vishnu in any of his forms, such as Sri Krishna, including the worship of the Supreme Deity in His Supreme Form.
2. Worshipper of Vishnu, the Preserver and Sustainer of the Universe.

**Vasana** Mental dispositions which act as seeds and have a tendency to germinate into actions. They are burnt up when the light of knowledge (*jnana*) shines forth.

**Veda** Sacred scriptures of the Hindus. According to strict orthodox faith the Vedas are not human compositions, but are supposed to have been directly revealed by the Brahman and are called '*Sruti*' (what is heard or revealed) as distinguished from '*smriti*' (what is remembered or work of human origin). The origin of the hymns of the Vedas is ascribed to several Rishis, who were seers, not composers.

**Vijaya dasami** The tenth day of the bright half of the lunar month of Ashwin on which the image of Goddess Durga is immersed.

**Visarjana** Immersion, act of giving up.

**Vyakta** Manifested, clearly visible.

**Yajna** Sacrifice.

**Yajna kunda** The pit in which a sacrificial fire is kept.

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