

SRI SRI MA ANANDAMAYI

VOLUME 9

(16 April 1939 – 29 March 1940)

GURUPRIYA ANANDA GIRI
(GURUPRIYA DEVI)

Translated by Tara Kīni

*With an introduction by Mahamahopadhyaya Sri Gopinath
Kaviraj, Padma Vibhushana, M.A., D. LITT.*



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Ma Anandamayi

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Didi offering flowers at the lotus feet of Ma Anandamayi

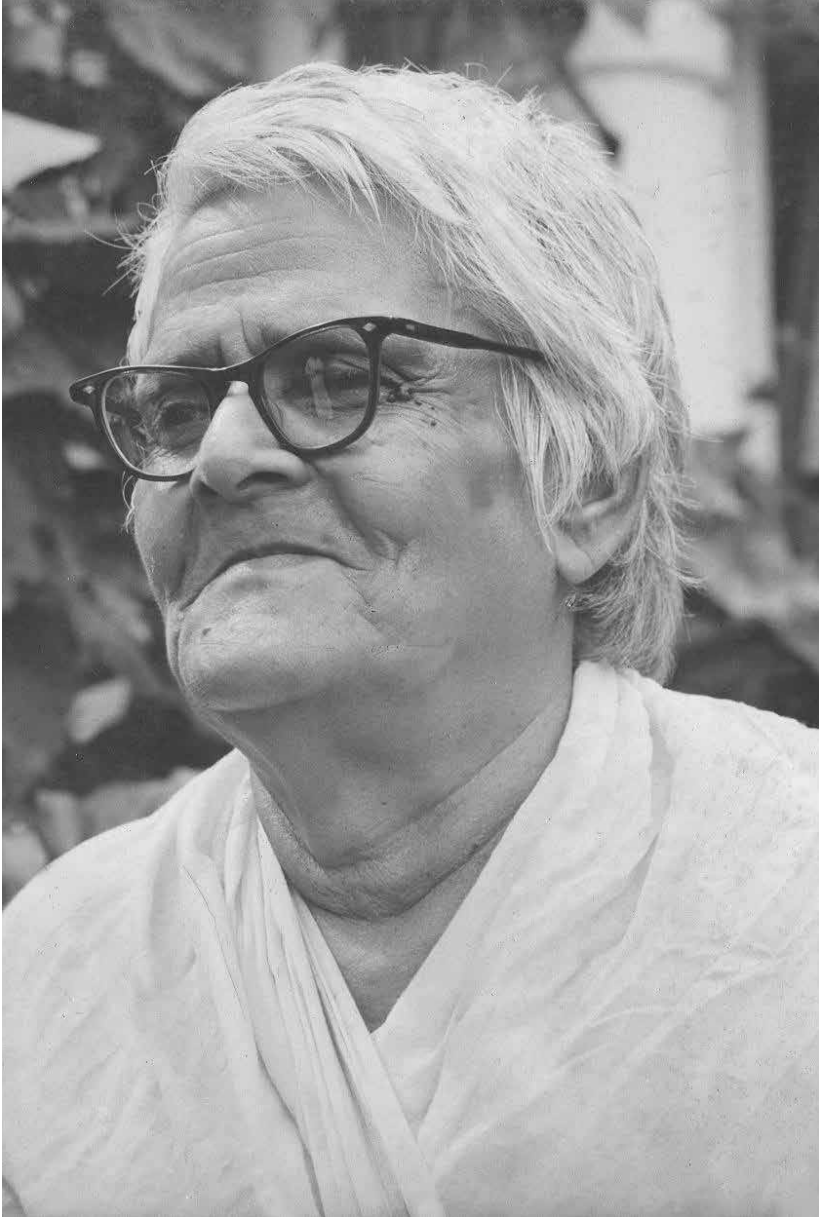
Offering

To the One who is beyond the grasp of the human intellect and who, though residing in Her own abode of complete bliss, for the sake of conveying the message of the effulgent and ever peaceful abode, through Her compassion has appeared in a human form in this world, and who has shown by Her own conduct how one can enter the *Mahābhāva* through the action, devotion and knowledge pervaded *khandā-bhāvā*, and how, after the ceaseless dancing of the waves of *bhāva*, eternal rest is attainable in the end in the ever peaceful consciousness of one's own true nature which is beyond *bhāva*, to that Mother of all who seek refuge, who is most worthy of worship, Sri Sri 108 Mukteshwari Mata Anandamayi's lotus feet which promote the welfare of the universe, I offer with profound veneration this small floral garland of Her own holy life story, in the form of an oblation of devotion and love, which is like performing *Ganga puja* with Ganga water.

Dedication

It was about twelve or thirteen years ago, when I first had Ma's *darshan* and was enthralled; at that time I once had the desire to write about these happenings, so that I could read them and derive bliss. Driven by this desire, I did write something, though most of my time was spent with Ma and not much leisure was available for writing. And when I sat down to write, I felt that it was not possible to communicate these incidents and divine lilā through language; yet I wrote a bit. After a few days my writing stopped due to unavoidable circumstances. When my father and I came away permanently from our home on Ma's instructions, all the note books remained behind. Later, when Ma left us at Siddheshwari my heart started pining for Ma. One day, I thought that if I read the stories of Ma's past, I would find relief, but though the whole house was searched, the note-books could not be found. I felt very sad. Some years later, the respected late Jyotish Rai (Bhaiji) requested everyone to write incidents from Ma's life (in whichever form each one saw and experienced them). I then decided not to write anything. But I do not know why and by whose inspiration, the desire to write awoke little by little. Jyotish Dada also said, "It is appropriate for you to write, because you have spent much time with Ma and witnessed many happenings, big and small." By his encouragement,

Dedication



Gurupriya Didi

the eagerness to write increased. At that time, the facility for this was also created by Ma — she left me almost alone at the Vindhyachal Ashram. In that solitary place, during my spare time, I started writing again. By Ma's grace, earlier incidents began to awaken in my memory more and more. Just as a definite time was allotted for the repetition of God's name (*japa*), similarly, I set apart a definite time for writing about Ma's life. I considered it a part of my spiritual practice (*sādhanā*). Though for a person like myself to write about Ma's life was like a dwarf's desire to touch the moon, still I wrote and felt it was good to do so. I knew that in learned circles this book would be considered worthless because I do not at all possess the necessary knowledge and intelligence needed to produce a book. But I thought that those who came in contact with Ma would read these anecdotes and experience bliss, and that the shortcomings in the language of the writer would not come in the way. Because I have experienced that when many of us get together and start talking about Ma, then taking one incident only of the past and thinking it over again and again, we have spent so many nights without anyone feeling the slightest boredom or fatigue. It was as if every detail about Ma were perpetually novel. And it is also very true that it is totally beyond our power to understand Ma's nature. I have only written that which I have understood, seen, or heard. I have tried very hard that there should not be a word of exaggeration. Yet, those of my kind brothers and sisters, who have come in contact with Ma, will notice any number of examples of my incompetency. I ask forgiveness for that. To those who have not seen Ma and who are coming to know her only through this book, I make an entreaty that if they misunderstand Ma's nature or character at any place, the failing is mine. There is no imperfection or shortcoming in Ma's conduct anywhere. Those who have met Ma will understand the truth of this statement.

It is a pity that several incidents of Ma's life are kept concealed because those special sayings which Ma has uttered privately to certain people, or some special activities of Ma which have been revealed only to certain individuals, remain secret, and may probably always remain secret, because no one may be prepared to reveal them.

I shall say one thing before ending my discourse. I wrote all this haphazardly and handed it over to revered Mahamahopadhyaya Pandit Sri Gopinath Kaviraj, D.Litt. (Ex-Principal, Government Sanskrit College, Benares) who worked hard to put this book into shape and who has also written an introduction to it. For this I am eternally grateful to him. Ma's old devotee Bāla Brahmachari Sri Nepalchandra Chakravartiji¹ helped Kavirajji in this work to the best of his ability. He has toiled over it day and night. He delights in doing Ma's work. I express my gratitude to him.

Jyotish Dada is not in this world anymore. It was only by his encouragement that I got involved in this work. How happy he would have been, had he been here to see Ma's life story being published. If anyone experiences the slightest bliss by reading this life story of Ma, I shall consider my effort to be successful.

-Gurupriya Devi
Varanasi, May, 1942

¹ Late Shri Nepal Chakravarti known as Swami Nārāyanānanda Tirtha after taking samnyāsa.

Excerpt from Introduction

by Mahamahopadhyaya
Sri Gopinath Kaviraj¹

It may not be out of place to say a few words here about the authoress of this work, Srimati Gurupriya Devi. Gurupriya is Ma's single-minded devotee and attendant, and the daughter of the Civil Surgeon Sri Shashanka Mohan Mukhopadhyaya who later became Swami Akhandananda Giri. She had the good fortune of meeting Ma first in December 1925 – January 1926. Ever since, her close association with Ma has been continuous except for some separations by Ma's order. Though she has been constantly absorbed in Ma's service and engaged in various related activities, she has attempted to write down Ma's life and teachings sequentially and is still doing so. For this, all Ma's devotees are indebted to her. Gurupriya is a Brahmacharini, replete with asceticism and renunciation and above all is extraordinarily devoted to Ma; moreover she is incomparably capable of subtle vision and skilful description, and has had the privilege of serving Ma and being in Her company to a very great extent. Therefore there is no doubt that she is specially suited to write this narrative. Needless to say, she has made use of this capacity and become blessed.

Sri Gopinath Kaviraj

¹ This is an excerpt from a complete and detailed introduction by Mahamahopadhyaya Gopinath Kaviraj in Volume I.

Publisher's Note

Sri Gurupriya Didi, known familiarly as 'Didi' (elder sister) to all devotees of Ma, has meticulously maintained a diary recording the *leela* of Ma from the very first day she met Ma in December 1925. Her diaries have become the first point of reference for Ma's devotees and spiritual seekers. She used to write in Bengali and has recorded Ma's *Leela* from December 1925 to middle of 1978

Her diary records have been printed in the Bengali language in 18 volumes covering a period from December 1925 to 29 December 1967. The Hindi translation has also been done for the same period in over 20 Volumes. So far there have been only 8 volumes translated into English covering a period from December 1925 to 15 April 1939.

These volumes have been out of print for a long time. We plan to reprint all of them soon. This latest is Volume 9 covering Her *leela* from 16th April 1939 until 29th March 1940. The translation of further volumes is in hand.

The 'front matter' of the book which includes the 'Offering', 'Dedication', 'Excerpt from Introduction by Mahamahopadhyaya Sri Gopinath Kaviraj' and an 'Introductory write up about the author by Bithika Mukherjee (1899-1980)' will be repeated in all volumes of the book

henceforth so that each volume is complete in itself, enabling the reader to be aware of the background of the book and the author.

Every effort has been made to capture the authenticity of these writings. A repeated theme throughout is the magnetic spell and attraction exercised by Sri Sri Ma on man and woman, rich and poor alike. We hope the reader will obtain peace and joy when following Sri Sri Ma's wonderful life and *leela* during her sojourn on this earth, so beautifully portrayed by our 'Didi.'

Sri Gurupriya Anandagiri (1899-1980)

The author of these Volumes which are now in print in four languages was known to all devotees of the Mother as “Didi”, that is “elder sister.” She, in fact, held this position amongst the conclave of devotees for more than fifty years by virtue of her complete all-absorbing dedication to the Mother and her joyful acceptance of all those who were similarly oriented. Her world began and ended with Ma Anandamayi. She has left for us an ideal of one-pointed devotion, unquestioning obedience, and an unwavering attention toward the *kheyāla* of the Mother. From the moment of her first *darshan* to the moment in which she breathed her last, she was as if in the presence of God. She never deviated from this level of awareness by a look, word or gesture. The priest at the temple of Rameswaram was so struck by her air of constant waiting upon the *kheyāla* of the Mother that he exclaimed, “Surely, you are the Nandi for the Devi (Goddess).” This indeed, was high praise for Didi Gurupriya because since her childhood she had been very fond of the statue of Nandi, exemplifying one-pointed devotion to Siva.

Didi Gurupriya was born in February 1899 in Silchar, a town in Assam where her father Dr. Shashanka Mohan Mukherji



Ma sitting & Didi lying on Ma's lap

(later Swami Akhandananda) was posted as Civil Surgeon. She was his fifth child and was affectionately named “Adarini”, that is ‘the well-beloved’.

She was a shy studious child. Much of her time was taken up in helping her mother to look after the large household. Her free time she devoted to the reading of religious literature and the devotional songs of the many inspired bards of Bengal. Her memory was very good and she would often recite the long narrative poems of Tagore, later in life, much to the delight of the students of the Kanyapeeth. Her pioneering qualities showed themselves early in life — she categorically refused to follow the conventional path of marriage and housekeeping. In those days, it was not considered seemly that a young woman should follow a career or live apart from her family. Didi’s predilections were for an ascetic way of life which she followed at home by staying away from worldly affairs, eating the plainest food possible and dressing simply.

The supreme moment of her life came, when she visited Shahbagh for the first time and saw the Mother. To use her own words:

“I was very shy by nature. It was extremely difficult for me to talk to strangers or even to come out before visitors at home. My parents would scold me for this, but I could not get over my timidity. Yet I did not feel shy before Mother. I approached her confidently and stood near her as if I had always known her. It is beyond my power to describe the personality I saw. One look at that radiantly beautiful form, and my head, of its own accord, bowed down in adoration.”

Mother on her part, spoke in welcome these significant words : “Where have you been all these days ?” Didi found a ready niche in the ever growing family of Ma Anandamayi who at that time (1925-26) was staying at the Shahbagh

Gardens in Dacca. The most onerous role of the caretaker of the Mother's divine form came spontaneously to Didi. She would be constantly in attendance when Mother lay in deep *samādhi* or moved in ecstatic states during *keertans* or cooked enormous meals for the concourse of devotees. Didi learnt to move confidently amongst strangers, communicate with people from other provinces, undertake the management of functions, travel long distances and sometimes also to live alone to practise *sāadhanā*.

The most precious gift left as legacy to us by Didi are her diaries. She was in the habit of maintaining a diary in which is recorded the way of life for this group of people from the year 1926 up to almost the last years of her life. Her accounts are simply stated, with no sentimentality, idealizations or inexactitudes. She has recorded Mother's words with painstaking care. Of necessity the diaries are one-sided because Didi could write only about what she herself saw or heard; since she was obliged to be busy elsewhere rather than in the vicinity of the Mother she missed many important incidents. This however is not an irreparable loss and more books need to be written to supplement the diaries, which will ever remain the main stem of the profusely flowering tree of *lilā-katha* of Sri Ma Anandamayi.

The highest tribute to Didi's memory was paid by the Mother when she said, "Has she not shown to all by the manner of her passing away the culmination of the *sāadhanā* of one-pointed concentration ? Was it not apparent that she merged herself with the *Iṣṭa* of her undeviating meditation ?"

Didi had adopted unreservedly all those who came to the Mother in devotion and humility. She never tired of talking about Ma Anandamayi; she was closer to the devotees of the Mother than to her own family. Through the present

Sri Gurupriya Anandagiri (1899-1980)

translation of her diaries, the crystal-clear, pure stream of her devotion will, no doubt, touch and transform many hearts toward the quest for the only worthwhile ideal of human life : to live constantly in the thought of God.

Bithika Mukerji

Translator's Note

Ma's grace works in the most mysterious ways. Since the publication of the English translation of Volume 8 in 2019, the completion of Volume 9 in just over 2 years is evidence of how Ma's living presence in our midst makes everything happen.

To begin with, Christopher Pegler, who edited Volume 8 with such precision, supported the translation of Volume 9 with a continuous edit as I translated pages from Didi's original Bengali writing. This was not just an encouraging learning experience for me, but also helped me to stay on track with this work amidst the continuous demands of other projects and pressures of life. His persistent engagement with this work is surely Ma's blessing.

It is being revealed to me at every step, how the mechanics of Didi's dedicated writing of a daily diary, recording every detail of Ma's life, over five decades, is now coming alive to more and more people across the globe.

Vinay Goenka's coordination in the formatting, printing and final publication of the translations, is a crucial part of this process. Speaking to him about the immense effort going into publishing authentic documentation of Ma's wonderful life for future generations has been an eye-opener for me.

In this volume, Didi has described extensively, periods of time spent by Ma in Solan, with devoted service from the Raja of Solan and his family. She has also described days spent in the kingdom of Suket with warm hospitality from the Raja of Suket. We have tried to accompany these narratives with photographs from that period. We are grateful to Anil Relia for the use of a picture of the Raja of Suket from his collection.

Didi has also described Ma's visit to Kheora, Agarpara and other places of her childhood. We have included photographs of these places to help readers visualise the time and ambience of these events in Ma's life.

My deep gratitude to our beloved Ma for her infinite love that is helping us all to keep journeying on this path.

Jai Ma!
Tara Kini



Ma Anandamayi sitting on *aasan*

Shri Shri Ma Anandamayi

Volume Nine

1939

16th April, Saturday, 1939

We are in Giri Maharaj's ashram. Muktanand Giri (Didima) is with us.

21st April, Thursday

We set out for Raipur today following Ma's instructions.

22nd April, Friday

This morning I went to Kishenpur *ashram* for Ma's *darshan*. Just before evening, Ma came to the Raipur *ashram*.

24th April, Sunday

This afternoon, Ma returned to the Kishenpur *ashram*. She told us to stay on here. Her physical health is very poor, yet she continues this ceaseless coming and going. She pays no attention to how convenient it is to be served and just does what leads to irregular schedules. When we say anything about this she replies, "It will be managed somehow. I stay only in one place."

Just before she set out for Kishenpur, many people from here and Dehradun had gathered for Ma's *darshan*. In the

course of the conversation, Ma indicated towards herself and said, “Keep your attention on this girl. Don’t you see how much effort parents put into raising their sons and daughters? When they grow up, the children do so much for their parents. The children manage everything and the parents get to relax. Therefore, it is good to look after this child and raise her too!” Saying this, Ma laughed.

Seva has arrived. Mention has been made already about the fact that when Seva touches Ma, or meets Ma’s gaze, she enters a strange state. Some of her senses cease to function. Today again Ma said to her, “Check my pulse, let’s see.” As soon as Seva took Ma’s hand in hers, her body became numb and her eyes closed. A few moments later she was able to speak, but it took longer for her to be able to open her eyes. A discussion began with Abhay regarding this state.

Abhay said, “She (Seva) has developed a belief that if she touches Ma she will surely enter this state. Therefore, this happens. Then the fact that she is unable to speak, why does that happen? I have heard about the exalted states of many *mahapurushas*, great souls. Even in those states, they do not have this condition.”

Ma replied, “You have no knowledge of what the initial states of those great souls were. Sensory functions cease for some time, an introverted mind develops, that’s it, what else?”

Seva explained, “Listen Abhay, even if I desire it, this state does not occur. Several times I have touched Ma with the hope that I will experience this state, but nothing happened. But I think, on some days, it could be because of the good deeds of my past, this *bhava* arises in Ma that I should come into this state. Ma herself has no desire or reluctance, the fruit of my actions causes this *bhava* to awaken in Ma, and I enter this state. Not just Ma’s touch, sometimes when Ma’s gaze meets

mine from afar, this condition comes on.”

When she was asked to describe what she experienced in this condition, she replied, “Usually the mind is so restless, constantly flitting here and there, but this same mind becomes absolutely still.” On being asked whether she experienced bliss, *ananda*, she said, “I do not know what exactly is described as *ananda*. But there is a state of peace, and sensory functions of the body cease.”

Ma remarked, “Sometimes she begins to laugh or weep in a way that is frightening.” Seva added, “It is not as if I enter this state when I do *japa*, but when I am in this condition *japa* goes on continuously. I also (usually) do not sit (in meditation) for long. (In this condition) I do not know who forces me to sit, and take the Name with every breath.”

Ma said, “She has so much within her that gets destroyed because of not performing the appropriate *kriya*, action. Seva has no idea of what lies within her, because of which she enters these states through touch and eye contact. Seva declared, “I feel that something that is within Ma, enters inside me.”

Just before dusk Ma set out for Kishenpur. Mezdi left for Delhi to go to the Mahila *ashram*. Raipur is a very peaceful town. Ma had come here first when she left Dhaka. We stayed on here clinging to memories of Ma.

25th April, Monday

Abhay stays in a hut a little way up the hill. In the evening I went to his hut. In the course of conversation with him, the reference to Vrindavan arose. In Vrindavan Ma had said, “When you do the work that you are assigned to do, then spontaneously *kripa*, grace, manifests and unfolds. As true as this is in itself, so is grace without cause. Why this happens cannot be explained. There is no question of a cause here. His

true nature, *svabhav*, His *leela*, He transforms into the *bhava*, whenever in whichever manner it is to be revealed. He is also present as the witness and there can be no partiality in Him, who is without flaw. Creation, *srishti*, is without beginning and actions are also without beginning. Why is creation limitless? Who will answer this question? The only answer to this is His *leela*.”

29th April, Friday

This afternoon, in conversation with a *sadhu* and Abhay, Ma spoke about *kripa*, grace, “If you see any *kripa* from this body, know that it is all just happening. When you go near a fire it is natural to feel it’s heat; in the same way if you see this body’s *kripa* it is exactly like that. It is not as if the *bhava* “I shall grant *kripa*” ever exists here. Neither is there the duality of desire and it’s opposite.”

In an earlier conversation Ma had said, “Grace can occur without cause. Why does it happen? There is no answer to this question. Everything has been done by this body.”

Abhay asked, “Alright, then is there no desire nor unwillingness even in ordinary mundane actions?”

Ma replied, “Absolutely none. This coming and going, do you know how that happens? If you see desire being manifested then that is also just happening spontaneously. Here, desire as you people experience it, is not there, understand that. Just as a breeze blows a piece of paper, whatever is necessary at any point, that happens.”

I don’t know in what context Abhay blurted, “*Poorna Brahma Narayan*, that is what you keep saying,” and he began to laugh. Immediately Ma said to the *sadhu*, “See Baba, what shall I do? Just as when you need to pass stools, you do it, this is exactly like that. You cannot give an analogy that fits in all aspects.

Desire, unwillingness, thoughts, intellect, and what will people say, and suchlike never come close to this *bhava*. Whatever has to happen just happens.”

Abhay said, “Alright, did Ma have a past life or not?”

Ma laughed and pointing to everyone she said, “All this is previous birth, past life! If you say that you can see everything in this world, gross and subtle, then it is all That.”

Then the conversation turned to how Ma would perform *aasan* during worship that was similar to (the posture of) the Goddesses, to the extent that she even saw their vehicles, *vaahan*. Around 4pm we left for Mussorie.

1st May, Sunday

After staying for a day in Mussorie, Ma set out towards Uttarkashi. She was accompanied by Akhandanandaji, Ruma Devi, Abhay, Kanu, Shishir, Kamalakant, myself, the Parsi brother mentioned earlier, Kheresh¹, and others.

Ma has become very weak but her travelling is not being reduced at all. Often, the state of her body causes us much concern. Everybody advises that she must rest, but Ma listens to none. She roams about immersed in her own *bhava*. Sometimes we observe that in the midst of all this effort Ma’s health seems to be improving, and sometimes it worsens dramatically; Ma declares, “You are unable to keep this body in good health when kept at home. And then again, when it is moving here and there the body is not doing so badly. Whatever has to happen will happen.” Nobody has the courage to obstruct this and so it goes on in this way.

On coming to know that Ma was leaving for Uttarkashi, Hariramhans, Govind Bhajji and others had come to Mussorie.

¹ He was given *deeksha*, initiation, from Bholanath many years ago. He has now been travelling with Ma. He works in Jamshedpur.

They accompanied Ma's palanquin some way as she set out on the journey. They were in tears. Who knows when Ma will return? Ma smilingly gave assurance to all.

2nd May, Monday

As we were walking, Shishir became extremely exhausted. So Ma made him sit in her palanquin and she began walking. When we reached Baldiyana in the evening Ma was feverish. It was decided that we would halt at this hill top the next day. Everybody was tired and worn out.

At night, Abhay was questioning Ma on various issues. The conversation that ensued was about whether people who have shed their bodies but not yet acquired another one, retained memories of this life or not.

Ma said, "All do not have the same state. Some have memories and others have none. Both states exist." Many other discussions arose.

I am reminded of another discussion that occurred a few days ago. I am writing about it here. A person once asked Ma, "Ma, I am unable to focus on any form, shall I think of emptiness, *shoonya*?"

Ma replied, "*Shoonya* is itself another form. Fine, if you like it, sit quietly and think of the form of *shoonya*. Later you will see that even the thought of *shoonya* does not exist."

Many a time Ma has said, "It is good to attempt to sit quietly for as long as you can. It is good to sit still without awareness of the body, with an empty mind. Or else focus the mind on the breath and merge the *mantra* with the breath, you will see your job is done. When you sit, just focussing the mind on breath is helpful."

3rd May, Tuesday

We stayed on in Baldiyana today.

4th May, Wednesday

Today we reached Dharasu. It is the 19th day of Baishakh, which is Shri Shri Ma's birthday. Devotees wanted to perform Ma's *puja*. This hilltop on the banks of the Ganga is very beautiful. Incidentally, I had not eaten anything since morning, so Kamalakant and Abhay requested me to do the *puja*. They scoured the mountain side and collected leaves of the *Bilva* tree and flowers. Tonight there is a full moon as well as a lunar eclipse.² It was decided that the worship of Ma would start at dusk.

Meanwhile, on the way to this place, Swami Akhandanandaji's outer clothing had got torn. Seeing this, Ma remarked, "Very good! When the clothes have got torn, just discard them in the Ganga here. There is no need any longer, to wear clothes. You have a loin cloth anyway. Whenever necessary you can cover yourself with a cloth." That was done. Ma laughed and said, "Uttarkashi is the place for *sannyasis*, renunciates. Baba's clothes were discarded on the way to Uttarkashi."

In the evening I sat down to offer *puja* to Ma. The boys started singing *keertan*. The lunar eclipse lasted till 10.30 pm. After that hour, food was cooked in whatever way possible and *bhog* was offered to Ma. In the midst of so many inconveniences, Ma's birthday was celebrated with such great joy. We slept at 2 am.

5th May, Thursday

Uttarkashi is now 18 miles away. We set out early in the morning. We stopped on the hillside on the way for lunch, and reached the temple in Uttarkashi at 5 pm. Satish Mukhopadhyay Mahashay is the person in charge of the worship and other rituals here. As soon as he saw Ma, he prostrated fully on the

² This reference to Ma's birthday being on the 19th day of Baisakh is following the solar calendar. As per the lunar calendar Krishna Chaturthi in the month of Baisakh would have been on 7th May, 1939.

ground before her with great joy. A few others also arrived for Ma's *darshan*.

Ma's state of health is so poor that she is unable to digest any food. In this circumstance we found that except for potatoes no other vegetables were available here. It is also impossible to get cow's milk. Ma alone knows why she has come to such a place. Neither do we know how long she will stay here. I have been ordered to manage to keep her body in good health for the next month here and then leave. I have to go to Vindhyachal for a few days. Ma is not paying much attention to her health. She just goes on doing whatever has to be done. No one can stop her.

6th May, Friday

This morning Ma woke up quite late. In the afternoon I had finished offering *bhog* to Ma and she was speaking to Abhay and me. Abhay asked me, "So, have you ever seen Ma drowsy and dozing off?" I replied, "I have never seen her do that. Even when she has been seated day and night amidst people, I have never witnessed this."

The conversation then turned towards dozing off. I told Abhay, "Look, Abhay, I have seen something remarkable. Whenever I have started dropping off during *keertan*, or at other times, and Ma is seated in the midst of many people, and I am seated far away and I start dozing off, when I start and look at her, I find her looking at me. I am astounded that this happens every time. This is the reason that whenever I am overcome by sleep, the worry that Ma will be gazing at me, causes my drowsiness to disappear, and my heart to start beating loudly. At that moment when I look at Ma apprehensively, I find that, sure enough, she is looking at me. No matter how big the crowd she is surrounded by, what music is playing around her, the moment I start dozing off, Ma's gaze falls on me. And then I am

not drowsy any longer. When I am awake and alert and I look at Ma, I find Ma never looks at me at all. And then I wonder, now that I am awake, why does Ma not look towards me at all?"

Hearing this, Abhay remarked, "This is truly remarkable!"

Ma laughed and responded, "That is true. Do you know what happens? My gaze is drawn at that very moment, and she" (pointing to me) "starts and looks at me. The reason why this happens is because her attention is focussed on me all the time. She may be talking to others but her attention is here." (Pointing to herself). "But when she becomes drowsy, her attention shifts from here and my gaze is then drawn towards her."

This kind of conversation created much joy.

Ma rested for some time in the afternoon and then everybody surrounded her again until 10 pm when we retired for the night.

In the evening we went walking with Ma. As we walked on the banks of the Ganga, we came to an open space and sat down there. Many *sadhus* arrived for Ma's *darshan*. While speaking to them, Ma asked a *sadhu*, "How long have you been here?"

Sadhu - "For about three years."

Ma - "What has been your experience? Do you not appreciate the value of this place more and more? Meaning, do you not find joy in very little?" Saying this, Ma laughed in her characteristic, sweet manner.

A group of boys and girls started walking alongside Ma. Nobody was speaking to them, but they kept walking beside Ma. After some time, Ma asked them, "Would you like to become my friends?" Hearing this, some children were overcome with shyness and covered their faces, while a few nodded in affirmation. Encouraged by these children, and hearing Ma

repeat the question over and over again, many more agreed to be friends with her. In this way Ma collected many friends. She laughed and said, "I can see that I have a great many friends. So, friends, would you make me a promise?" The children nodded and gave their assent. Ma then said, "Five points. 1- as soon as you wake up every morning, you will take the Name of God. Then you will pray saying, O God, enable me to be a good girl or boy. 2- you will obey your mother and father. 3- you will speak the truth. 4- you will attend to your studies whole heartedly. 5- after observing all this, you can indulge in some mischief."

Saying this Ma burst into laughter and the gang of children laughed with her. These children live around here. One of the people in our group exclaimed, "How is it that these children will not let go of Ma? Possibly, they are drawn to Ma by her childlike nature."

We returned to the temple at dusk and sang *keertan*.

7th May, Saturday

Today is the day of Ma's birth. Ma is in a very quiet mood. *Keertan* was started in the evening and will be sung from dusk to dawn. The Name was sung all night. At dawn, Kamalakant Brahmachari performed Ma's *puja*. Thus, even out here, we managed to celebrate Ma's birthday.

8th May, Sunday

On the occasion of Ma's birthday, sweets were served to all present. II priests were requested to chant the *Rudri*.

Ma started speaking about proceeding to Gangotri. Palanquins are not available to go up there. But the moment people heard that she was going, they set about making arrangements for a palanquin. If all preparations get done, we will leave tomorrow.

Groups of *sadhus* and pilgrims are coming to the temple for Ma's *darshan*.

9th May, Monday

Due to prevailing circumstances, we were not able to set out for Gangotri today. We will start early tomorrow in the morning.

10th May, Tuesday

This morning we set out for Gangotri. Ma is very weak and she alone knows why she is undertaking such a difficult journey. Pilgrimage cannot be her purpose. Who knows what the reason for this is? The surprising thing is that the stomach which could barely digest milk, and was being fed with the juice of gourds and raw papaya, is now being given mountain leaves and shoots and old stocks of potatoes which are all being digested.

I said to Ma, "Ma, I have been observing this all along. Whenever you do anything in your own *bhava* nothing seems to go wrong. You have been up in the mountains of late and you are able to digest all this kind of food. Till now there has been no problem at all." Ma smiled and said, "That is exactly what I am saying. How is all this getting digested?"

In the afternoon we stopped on the hillside for a meal and by 4 pm we continued on our journey. We hoped to spend the night at a hilltop called Bhatiyali. Night drew on as we walked. Ma had got down from her palanquin a little while ago and was walking with us. Walking another three miles after nightfall, we reached Bhatiyali. We continued traversing through challenging terrain. We were all walking because Ma was walking too. She, whose heart starts palpitating while walking even on a level path, whose body we take such good care to maintain in good health and which then still becomes unwell, she walked a good distance today along difficult

ground, having managed to digest equally difficult food.

11th May, Wednesday

Having spent last night in Bhatiyali, we resumed the journey this afternoon. By evening we reached Ganganani. As we trudged, I found I had come ahead of my group. Absolutely alone, on a lonely, difficult path with no one around, as evening set in, I walked even faster, because the enveloping darkness would make it more challenging to proceed on this terrain. As I had no idea how far the group was behind me, I kept walking. I experienced some fear only for a while, because I had the faith that Ma was right behind me. Walking in solitude on this trying route, I also experienced joy. Just as in complete solitude you suddenly feel the existence of God, so did I feel that when Ma is there why fear?

Before reaching Ganganani I came across some waterfalls with warm water, where I washed my face and hands, and then moved forward again. I had gone some way ahead and it was dark now, when I saw three mountain dwellers coming down the hillside. They came to me and asked, “Mataji, will you not bathe in Hrishikund?” I replied, “Not now. There are many others with me. When they reach here, we will ask them.” The three men, who were *pandas*, pilgrimage priests, followed me to the hilltop.

As soon as I reached the hilltop I dispatched a person with a lantern to assist those accompanying the palanquin in our group as they would find it difficult to walk up in the darkness. Also, it was likely that since I had walked up here alone, others would be worrying about my whereabouts, therefore I sent someone as soon as I reached here. Mountain folk are very trustworthy. No robbery or dacoity is prevalent in these areas. Some time after dusk, Ma arrived with the others. Shishir and Abhay had had a bath in the warm waterfall on their way up.

Kanu had arrived soon after I did.

All around are high mountain peaks, and the Ganga roars close by. Waterfalls are aplenty here. Some small, some big. We are on this journey with Ma, nothing compares with this joy!

Ma went to bed at night as did all the others. As we would be journeying again the next day, we readied all our luggage and then, late at night, Deviji and I went to sit beside Ma for a bit.

A little later, when I lay down to sleep, Ma called out indistinctly, “Khukuni.”

I jumped up anxiously and went to Ma and started stroking her feet and body. I asked her, “What is the matter Ma? Why were you calling me?”

Ma replied faintly, “This body felt very strange.”

I continued to stroke her body and feet gently. After some time she said, “Will you not go to sleep now?”

I asked, “What is the condition of the body now, Ma?”

Ma replied, “It is not alright yet.”

I said, “I shall sleep later. I would like to sit up for some time now.”

After some time, when I observed that Ma was not saying anything more, I went to sleep.

12th May, Thursday

We set out early this morning. Today’s trek was very treacherous. The palanquin could not be carried in several places, and it was very difficult to walk as well. With much trouble and with the help of the palanquin bearers, we were able to navigate this route. We could barely imagine how such a path had been crossed. Every moment we felt we would fall off the cliffside. In places, the path had collapsed completely.

Hanging to creepers at some spots and to the mountain coolies at others, we kept forging ahead. Everybody lay down exhausted. After resting at one spot for quite some time, we continued the journey. Ahead the climb was very steep. We decided to halt at Shuki for the night. It was evening by the time we had a meal.

At some point Ma asked me, “What time did you stay up till last night?” At that moment, I could not recollect what had occurred.

I said, “When?”

Ma said, “Last night. You were sitting up weren’t you?”

Only then did it all suddenly come back to me. I replied, “Yes, I sat up for quite some time. You started behaving strangely.” I went on to describe what had happened.

Ma smiled slightly and remarked, “Had you been able to catch a glimpse of my face you would have been frightened.”

I asked, “Why is that, Ma?”

Giving no answer to this question, she continued, “I thought nobody should see this face. I had covered my face completely.”

I said, “The room was dark. I could see nothing.”

Ma did not discuss the matter further and so I also did not pursue it.

As everybody was very tired we decided to stay here for the night.

13th May, Friday

Today it was late by the time we set out. We reached Dharali and had lunch. We had hoped to reach another hilltop six miles ahead by the afternoon, but hearing that the trek was very difficult and steep, we decided to stay here for the night.

Ma is slightly feverish. Here, a *sadhu* called Krishnananda Brahmachari, heard about Ma and came to meet her. He was practically naked, with only birch leaves covering his loins. We came to know from a merchant here that he is attired thus in hot and cold weather alike. And every day, for three or four hours, he stands in the cold waters of the Ganga at whichever spot he chooses. In this region even when there is snowfall, he does not allow this routine to vary. He is from Bengal. Today, according to his daily schedule, he had already been standing for an hour in the Ganga. He keeps a staff behind him for support, the top of which he has smoothed to make a seat. He stands on one leg and interchanges one leg for the other now and then. After an hour, he turned around three times while facing Ganga and then bowed down to the river. He then climbed up. There was no significant conversation with Ma. He has been engaged in this *tapasya*, penance, for the last 18 years. His skin seems to be thick. It is very cool here even during summer, but he remains practically naked even in winter. We also came to know that he had been to Gangotri. Seeing him perform this *sadhana*, spiritual practice, in the Ganga, some other *sannyasis*, renunciates, also tried to do the same, but they gave up, defeated.

Ma remarked, “When the desire to do *sadhana* is strong, everything can be tolerated. See what can be achieved through practice.”

On this topic, Ma reminisced about her past, “When I was living the life of a householder I never wore a blouse or bodice. At that time, getting thoroughly drenched during ceaseless rain in the monsoons, the skin of this body was discoloured, but no attention went towards it. Heat and cold never manifested at all. Then, see, when I started wrapping a patchwork shawl, *kathri*, around myself, then the sensation of cold was experienced,

that was the wonder.”

After this conversation Ma lay down for a while. We continued to sit around her. I asked Ma, “Ma, what happened that night? You have not said anything. If I had seen your face I would have been frightened, what was that about? Tell us please.”

After I questioned her thus again and again, she said, “That day’s occurrence.....”, and then she was quiet for some moments, and then continued, “That day some *sadhus* had come.

Narayan Dada asked, “What were the *sadhus* wearing?”

Ma smiled slightly and said, Himalayan *sadhus* don’t wear anything!” She then returned to answering my question, “ In their *bhava*, this body became strange. Do you understand?”

Abhay asked,”What was their *bhava* like, Ma?”

Hesitantly Ma replied, “The *bhava* of Mahadeva, what else? In their *bhava*, this body underwent a change. Therefore I said, had you seen it you would have been afraid.”

Abhay asked, “What do you mean? Did you have another eye in the middle of your forehead?”

Ma laughed softly and did not answer this question, but said, “Then what happened was, as we have heard about *Rishi* and *Muni*, seers and sages, travelling from one place to another.”

I asked, “Do you mean by the path of emptiness, *shoonya path*? “

Ma said, “Exactly that. The body was travelling one knows not where, in that manner. And a few moments later the body was becoming light in that way. That was when I called out to you.”

Abhay questioned, “In what way did the body go away? Was just the clothing left behind without the body which had gone elsewhere?”

Ma smiled slightly and said, “You people may have observed that the body was here, but was transformed into a very different form.” Pointing to me she continued, “Look, many a time it has happened, that I am lying alone and it is like this, you know, as if people open a closed door and come to meet you. That’s it.” She fell silent.

It is already very cold here, and we are 13 miles from Gangotri.

14th May, Saturday

We set out quite early today. 6 miles ahead, in Bhairava, we stopped for a meal and then continued the journey. By evening we reached Gangotri. The natural beauty of this place is enchanting. A disciple of Brahmajnya Ma, Paramanand Swami, lives here. He had seen Ma earlier and was also staying in the Kali temple in Uttarkashi. We have been accompanied by Narayan Dada from Brahmajnya Ma’s *ashram*. He had reached the Kali temple in Uttarkashi before us, following Ma’s instructions. He has now come here with Ma.

There is an *ashram* belonging to Baba Kala Kambliwala in Gangotri. They offer great hospitality at this *ashram*. They provide blankets, *kambli*, and ensure that travellers lack nothing. Paramanand Swami organised every detail. No householders live here. We heard that the Raja of Tehri has specified that no man could stay here with his wife.

A famous *sadhu* called Krishnashram lives here. Many know his name. He is said to have performed penance immersed in ice for several years. He now lives in a hut. He has a woman disciple living with him. In winter when this place is completely snowed in and no one stays here, Krishnashram

continues to live here, without clothes. We are going for his *darshan* tomorrow; his hut is on the other side of the Ganga. Small huts inhabited by other *sadhus* dot the opposite bank of the Ganga. This place is 10,000 feet above sea level and it is extremely cold here. We occupied a *dharamshala* on the bank of the Ganga. The post office here is Uttarkashi and post is received twice a month.

15th May, Sunday

Today is *Sankranti*³. We went with Ma to see Krishnashram Swamiji. He was seated naked. He lives in a hut made of pine branches. In the corner was a mattress made of grass and leaves on which he sleeps. He is served by a woman living there. We learnt that she has been serving Swamiji for the last 8 or 9 years. She gave up her domestic life and came here, and has taken initiation, *deeksha*, from Swamiji. She wears saffron and a turban. She looks like a young man, a *brahmachari*. There are two adjoining wooden huts; one in which this girl lives, and one in which food is cooked. We also came to know that these huts were built after this girl arrived. No one knows where Swamiji lived in the surrounding snow before that. Mountain folk would search for him and offer him some food. If some devotees offered food he would eat it, otherwise he subsisted without it. He maintains silence, *maun*, all the time. When it snows nobody is able to live here, except for Swamiji and his disciple. Everything gets covered with ice. Their skin has thickened considerably. We heard that sometimes Swamiji goes to the forest to cut and bring wood. He also attends to other necessary work in between.

We also heard that some people complained about Swamiji living with a woman disciple, but once they saw Swamiji, they

³ A festival celebrating the passage of the sun from one zodiacal sign to another.

objected no more. We spent an hour there. We liked it very much. The place, the time and the characters, *sthan*, *kala*, *patra*, were all beautiful, pure. Their small huts on the bank of the flowing Ganga, the incessant reverberation of the Ganga creating a kind of holy atmosphere- we liked this place very much.

16th May, Monday

There is nothing special to write about today. Tomorrow we will leave from here. Paramanand Swamiji has been living here for the last 5 or 6 years. In winter he moves to Uttarkashi. He is very active. He has been looking after all the arrangements for our stay. A place called Gomukhi is 14 to 19 miles away. Abhay and others were keen to go there but as the terrain is treacherous, Paramanand Swami did not give us permission to go. Gomukhi is the source of the Ganga. We heard that near Gomukhi there is a tunnel of ice that is thirty miles long. Travellers are often killed in landslides along the route.

At one spot I had observed a part of the hillside had collapsed, breaking down a building, a doorway, and part of a stone temple of Ganga Mayi. Here there are only 15 to 20 huts made of pine wood, a Ganga Mayi temple, and a forest of cedar, *Deodar*, trees- very beautiful scenery!

17th May, Tuesday

Today we set out for Uttarkashi.

18th May, Wednesday

This morning we reached Uttarkashi. Having traversed the very difficult route, everyone is exhausted.

19th May, Thursday

Ma has given orders to Swami Akhandanandaji and me to go down the mountain. Whether Ma will go with us or not has not yet been decided. This morning I was seated next to Ma.

A letter arrived from Mahamahopadhyay Gopinath Kaviraj Mahashay. He has written the letter to me after reading a part of this diary. I feel it is important to present a section of this letter here and so I am doing that.

“A question arises in this context with respect to the nature that Ma displays, but your diary does not cover this point. I think it is appropriate to have a discussion about this. It is not necessary for me to specify that I am posing this question from the standpoint of an ordinary reader.

There is no doubt that Ma’s body is different from that of any ordinary person. Ordinary humans, and even gods are ruled by the *gunas*, qualities. These bodies act depending on their actions, *karma*. To reap the fruit of their past deeds, ordinary humans take on a suitable body. After taking on the body they have to reap the fruit of their actions. And since they identify with their bodies and their feeling of doership is not destroyed, their bodies also accumulate new fruit of their actions.

And the gods or realized souls, *siddha purush*, who are incarnated in this world of life and death for the good of the world and take on a human form with compassion for the grief-filled lives of mortals, they take a human form by their own will in order to serve humanity. They are full of *ānanda bhava*, blissful. They have a single goal - to lift souls from sorrow and take them to *ānanda bhava*. The practical application of compassion is displayed on this path. It is not necessary to specify that all these great souls are pure in spirit but individually are not beyond all *bhava*. In ordinary humans the three *gunas*⁴, qualities, act in different proportions, but in these great souls, *mahapurushas*, only the very pure, *sattvaguna*, functions.

4 The three *gunas* are *sattva*, *rajas*, *tamas*, pure, active, inert.

Ma's body is beyond the *gunas*. I think that on the one hand, no *guna* acts in her, and on the other, based on the emotional needs of the souls or their nature, any *guna* or *bhava* can come into play.

In the Gita, the Lord has declared '*Ye yatha mam prapadyante tanstathaiva bhajaamyaham*⁵. I have heard many remarks by Ma which are based on this principle. What is the essence of this? Whatever colour appears before a clean mirror, it seems that the mirror is coloured by it the same. (In a mirror it is only the pure untarnished form of a child that is seen). Ma is not bound by any *bhava*, so someone before Ma sees only his/herself reflected in her. This is the reason that whoever seeks Ma in whichever form, that person finds her in that very form. Being beyond *bhava*, no difference exists between any *bhava*, and without achieving completeness in all *bhava* the kingdom of *bhava* cannot be conquered.

But if we were to accept that Ma is established in a special *bhava*, then we would have to say that the nature that is beyond everything, of everything and is free is not manifest in her. In that circumstance, in whichever *bhava* she is established, she will reign ever victorious in that very *bhava*. No other *bhava* could even touch her remotely. Just as there is no room for any darkness where the light shines, so can no other *bhava* emerge within the scope of a perfectly pure *bhava*. If Ma truly resided in purely motherly *bhava*, then whoever came in contact with her, would experience the motherly *bhava* overwhelmingly. Even if he harboured any other *bhava* in his mind, it would be absorbed. As soon as he went near Ma, whether he was conscious of it or not, he would be compelled to behold Ma as mother. No other *bhava* could ever enter his mind. Every pure *bhava* has this limitless impact.

5 As each one worships me, so do I respond

If Ma goes beyond *bhava*, we would have to say she is not established in any *bhava*, but rather, being established in all *bhavas*, she is present in *brahma bhava*, in the permanent form of the Self, which is not established and is independent. In this field, the question of purity of *bhava* does not arise. Whosoever wants to see her with a particular perspective she will manifest in that form. She has no *bhava* of her own so her *bhava* becomes that of the person's *bhava*. In this happening the person's own *bhava* remains intact. People could perceive her as mother or father or friend, or any other *bhava*. Though she is not bound by any *bhava*, she can be perceived in any *bhava*. Pure, *sattvic*, truth, and truth that is beyond the *gunas*, *gunateet*, is clearly distinguishable in this way, I think.

A question - why did worldly tendencies arise within Bholanath although he was in such close and meaningful contact with Ma? If we say that Ma is beyond the *gunas* and obstructing the play of the *gunas* was not in her nature, then whatever Bholanath thought and did was prompted by the *samskara*, mental impressions, of past actions. Ma neither nurtured it nor dissolved it. This should lead us to the understanding that Ma is beyond the *gunas*. Although there is no doubt that the long association with Ma rendered Bholanath's mind and life to develop in extraordinary ways. This brings us to the conclusion that Ma is extremely pure, of the nature of Truth itself. If we do not accept this then as a result of his association with Ma, we should not have perceived any transformation in Bholanath's life. Because, with the contact of anything that is beyond the *gunas*, a person experiences the strengthening of his own *bhava*. He cannot go beyond the limits of his own *bhava* and assimilate the difference in *bhava*. Just as the rays of the sun entering a room only light up the objects in a home without creating any special, new objects, so does the effect of *nirgun chaitanya satta*, the effect of truth

without attributes, consciousness, make apparent the inherent quality of the underlying nature. Whatever is not present in the underlying nature cannot be manifested.

The actual epistemology of this is very simple. In my thinking, the only difference between '*satvik satta*' (pure truth) and '*mukta satta*' (free truth) which is beyond the *gunas*, is that by the effect of pure truth, tarnished *bhava* is eclipsed and *satvik*, pure *bhava* presents itself - the tarnished *bhava* is not eliminated completely. When pure truth no longer has its influence, this tarnished *bhava* may exert its overriding influence again. By the effect of *satva guna*, the quality of purity, the mental traits are temporarily obscured. But by the effect of *nirgun satta*, truth that is without attributes, this impure *bhava* is aroused and sustained, manifests as worldliness and other such tendencies, and then gradually recedes. In the final moments a condition is reached when even the mental impressions, *samskara*, do not remain. Therefore this state of purity is not temporary but permanent. Later, when even pure qualities do not show themselves, then pure consciousness without attributes is revealed and the *jiva*, the individual soul, attains freedom, *mukti*. The pure qualities of *satvik mahapurushas*, great souls who are pure, cause the increase of *satva*, not the absolute attainment of pure consciousness. But the effect of a person who is beyond the *gunas* is to dissolve *samskaras*, enabling the *jiva*, soul, to ascend the path to freedom.

This profound secret can be very well understood from Ma's words regarding Bholanath and the transformation in Bholanath's life. Please speak to Ma about this element and tell me what she says."

Many discussions ensued from this letter from respected Gopinath Kaviraj Mahashay. Ma said, "Gopinath is '*Nath*', lord, is he not? Therefore he is able to tease out hidden meaning.

Frankly, look, when *kriya* and other actions kept occurring, Bholanath did not obstruct it in any way. I have spoken to you all about these matters very often. I now remember one incident from those times. Everything is not recalled all the time. Suddenly, when I am speaking to you all, some events surface. At that time, Bholanath would often exclaim with surprise, “I have become good!” He would be astonished by his own transformation. It would happen like that. Perhaps it was then seen how *satva guna* obscured a person’s *bhavas*.”

Ma was quiet for some time. Then other topics came up for discussion. Ma started saying about herself, “In fact, according to your estimate, the *bhava* that existed earlier is the same as that which you see now. In between, you all have seen from the outside, the transformations caused by the play of different kinds of *yoga-kriya* that occurred. You people needed all that.”

The thinking of Kaviraj Mahashay is wonderful indeed. After listening to his letter, Ma said, “Such ideas have not been articulated very much by this body. You people have observed that this body never speaks about matters related to *shiksha-deeksha*, teaching-initiation. Whatever emerges of its own accord, at a particular time, naturally, that just happens. You observe these actions and *bhava*, and understand them the way you think because you know only the results. Truth shines of its own accord. The coming together of Name, *bhava* and action is also natural. His name is Gopi and so the secret of hidden elements becoming clear to him is natural. You will hear just those kinds of explanations that go with the mixed up *bhavas* of this body.”

Ma is not going out very much. She remains inside and we sit around her. In the evening she sometimes goes out for a little while or sits in the verandah of the temple.

Since the last 2 or 3 days, Narayan Dada has been reading out

the Yoga Vashistha from the Ramayana, and we sit and listen to it. After the reading everybody leaves but I remain seated.

That day, as soon as the others left, Ma said, “Khukuni, the body is becoming very strange.”

I got up and started stroking her body. She continued speaking softly, “Wherever the attention goes- like there was talk that Belu was going to die in four years- suddenly the *kheyal* occurred that that could not happen. And in fact, nothing happened to him. And there are other instances like this. There was a feeling that Krishna Ma (Manorama Didi) was going to die within three years. *Kheyal* turned towards that as well and nothing happened to her. In this way, in whichever direction the *kheyal* goes, so things come to pass. But my difficulty is that the *kheyal* functions in it’s own way. Therefore you all see so many calamities occurring before your eyes. Sometimes some people ask why does that happen? But the thought never comes that all that could be an obstacle. Whatever has to happen will happen - that is the only *bhava* that exists.”

I said, “Yes, exactly Ma. Before you both the good and the bad will play out, because with you there is no difference between the two. Nor is there the *bhava* that one should be stopped. With God everything happens without partiality and that is how it always will be. It may be that nothing untoward happens to a *sadhak*, a spiritual practitioner, because he is bound by *samskara*. They still carry the feeling that this is good and that is bad, and so because of their spiritual wealth it may be that adversities are annulled. But that does not apply to you.”

Conversation like this proceeded late into the night. Ma and I then became quiet and fell asleep.

20th May, Friday

This morning we were all seated around Ma. In the course

of conversation, Ma suddenly said, “Yesterday I saw a group of dark, well built, chubby-cheeked boys, about this high” (with her hands she indicated the height of a 10 or 12 year old), “entering here. All the boys were dressed like Lord Krishna. They were all carrying flags and were saying all manner of things and coming inexorably towards this body. In their childlike way they indicated “Come with us!” While this body’s response was, “Let it be for now, not right now.” But as this feeling to not join that group was not strong, it was not clear what would happen. To the extent that this body wanted to mingle with that crowd. In this situation I went to a room upstairs, but the boys did not stop pursuing me. This condition persisted and this body was going to join them. This brought on a strange *bhava*. At that moment I called out to Khukuni and said “This body is feeling very strange.”

In the afternoon Ma was sitting up and I was speaking to her. Ma’s earlier *bhava* came up in the conversation. I said, “Ma, in those days, sometimes you would be salivating and your eyes would be full of tears.” Ma replied, “Yes, all that happened when the *bhava* was being interrupted and yet it would continue.”

I have witnessed these states. When she was fully immersed in *bhava*, or lying motionless, I never saw such things. When this *bhava* was maintained for hours, interrupted and then continued, and she opened and closed her eyes, at that time her eyes were filled with tears and she dribbled. When all the functions of the body were inactive, how could this happen?

In reply to this question, Ma said , “ I shall clarify why this happened. When the *bhava* has ceased and yet not ceased, as you observed, before that the fluid that came from the eyes and mouth could not escape. You observed the saliva. Because all the centres that cool every limb are loosened, moisture is released.”

I have seen these conditions - just as I put a small amount of food into her mouth, her bodily functions would cease. The morsel just stayed where it was; at times I have observed that the same food remained in Ma's mouth for one or two days! Neither was she able to swallow it or spit it out.

The conversation again turned to *kriya* and other such actions - the *yoga*, *kriya* that occurred in Ma's body. Ma said, "As you all see, the progress of activity in this body is now just as it was in childhood. In between when *yoga* and *kriya* occurred in this body there were all kinds of transformation. This was probably because it was necessary to specify how *yoga* and *kriya* should manifest in the body and therefore it all happened. In that time, Bholanath underwent quite a change in his *bhava*. To the extent that he would exclaim with surprise, "See how much I have changed! I feel so happy."

Bholanath had spoken to us often in this context, "I never obstruct any work that she (Ma) is doing." And Ma has also said, "Truly, he never obstructed anything that happened. He had let go fully, just as *mahapurushas* do. Later, you people observed anger and other such emotions, but in those days when *yoga* and *kriya* occurred spontaneously in this body, those emotions were just not there."

I could now understand the import of Gopinath Kaviraj Mahashay's letter- this was perhaps an instance of how the *satva guna* of a *sadhak*, could bring about the same *bhava* in others who were in close association. No other *bhava* in Bholanath could surface in the face of the effect of Ma's all-conquering *satva guna*. But I also saw that that did not last. And I understood further that gradually, in the company of someone who is beyond the *gunas* all *bhavas* can be removed.

Referring to the subject discussed earlier, Ma said "Look, for some time, *yoga* and *kriya* were displayed clearly in this body.

Do you know how it was in the early days of this body? Like when someone was going to cuddle the little baby, lifting it in their lap and bouncing it around and so on, the baby's attention was not in that direction at all. It was probably playing in its own *bhava*. Probably, immersed in its own *bhava* it slipped down and ran away. And those who were lavishing affection on the baby enjoyed the *rasa*, the essence, of this. This sort of play happened with this body for some time. Later, when *yoga-kriya* began to emerge, in such a visible manner, Bholanath never opposed it in any way. In fact he observed his own responses and remarked in surprise, "I have become so good. Not a single negative thought arises in my mind!" That was the reason he neither opposed anything nor did he have the inclination to do so. This is the fruit of *yoga* and *kriya*. Bholanath was also immersed in that *bhava* to some extent."

"Then there was yet another state- when a person with impure intentions approaches a *sadhak*, the latter experiences heat in the body. Exactly in the same manner, whenever any worldly desire arose within Bholanath, this body experienced internal heat. To the extent that if he even sat near this body it would become uncontrollably debilitated and collapse."

"Another condition occurred- Bholanath may have been sleeping next to this body, and as soon as that worldly *bhava* was sensed, the body would display special kinds of breath control, taking up different *asanas*. Seeing these states Bholanath would feel afraid. Then another situation followed. As soon as such *bhavas* were perceived, the rate of breathing changed completely, this body started rolling around, with no sensations, it would take up an oval shape with the head downward, like in the lotus posture, and perform some kind of *asana*. This body would lie lifeless for a long time. Speaking, eating, it all ceased. This *kriya* would commence in such a

pronounced way it felt as if the life breath would cease. All this convulsive activity would make the nails and other extremities turn blue. You all have seen this condition once. When this body went into this condition, Bholanath would be fully focussed on trying to save this body from harm and the *bhava* that he had had earlier would disappear.”

Having said so much, Ma continued to speak, “I would not talk about all this to you people. In your view, whatever state I was in as a child, that state continues even now. For days on end, unusual actions occurred internally and later all the day-to-day work would be done as well. You are observing the condition prevailing now, and it could be that *yoga-kriya* and other states that you call stages in spiritual practice are being encountered if you people are in need of them. Some of those are manifested in this body or maybe they are not. You may say, ‘But if those stages have already been attained why would they appear again?’ But such rules do not apply to this body. This body is not uplifted by *sadhana-bhajan*, nor is it connected with such *bhavas* at all. Therefore based on your needs, whatever has to happen at any time just happens.”

After all this conversation, the topic of looking after Bholanath came up. Ma said, “Just before the death of this body’s father when we had met in Kolkata, I was seated outside. This body’s father was seated in the room. Before this body got up and went into the room, he called out ‘Ma, Ma, Ma’ thrice and he looked towards this body in an unusual way, with a very different *bhava*. Then I rose and went to him. 3 or 4 days after this incident, he passed away. Bholanath also kept calling out ‘Ma, Ma’ repeatedly, 3 or 4 days before his death. But on the day of his death his *bhava* underwent a significant change from the morning. As soon as he opened his eyes that morning he said, ‘Where are you? I can’t see you.’ I replied, ‘I am right here,’ and

then he saw me. The same day - *I will eat prasad, you feed me, I want to touch you* - and other such *bhava* arose within him. In the afternoon he was lying with hardly anything on. He said, 'I am feeling cold.' All the clothes were lying torn but there was a sheet that was not. I covered his body with it. He wrapped that sheet around himself and slept. What happened then was not by my own will. I watched, this hand stroked Bholanath from head to toe. The hand stayed steadily at the centre of the top of his head for some time. Then he was asked, 'Are you in pain?' The patient replied joyfully, 'No, bliss.' Before the hand stroked him, when he had been asked, he had said he was in distress."

Hearing this narrative from Ma I remarked, "What is impossible when there is grace? You had stroked his whole body, then how could there be any pain? Finally you placed your hand on the top of his head and elevated him spiritually." Ma replied, "I do nothing out of my own desire like you do. I saw this hand had gone and rested on his head. Just before that the question had been asked, 'You people like to sing the Name. Should the Name be chanted?' On hearing this people thought "Ma is asking us to sing the Name in the evening." Just see how everything was happening just as it should have. No one suspected that the Name was being chanted because his last moments were nearing. Nor did anyone realise that he was going to give up his body because, until then, there was no change in his physical condition. Had it been said to Bholanath, 'you are now going to hear the Name being chanted', then everybody would have been afraid that perhaps he is going to give up his body and so Ma is saying that the Name should be sung. Everything happens of its own accord. These events do not take place this way in your case because you desire them. Whatever is needed at each moment, that just happens."

“Later, when he gave up his body, I asked Shivshankar Kaviraj, “In your opinion has it not happened just the way it should have?” What answer could he give? Bewildered, he looked at Bholanath and said, “Yes Ma.”

In the evening again, we sat surrounding Ma. I then asked, what sort of objections Bholanath would raise at the time before I first met Ma. I remarked, “You faced such challenges!” Ma was speaking to Abhay. Kamalakant, Narayan and others were also present.

Laughing sweetly, Ma said, “ I would say to Khukuni - tales of Radha’s *Badha* (obstacles). Wasn’t there a song that went something like this - concealed by the smoke, I weep.” Saying this, Ma again began laughing. Then she broke into a very melodious song, describing how much suffering Krishna was taking on for Radha’s sake. She said, “You spoke of Radha’s pain, I made you hear about some of Krishna’s suffering too.” Hearing this everybody laughed, and Ma joined in the laughter. Whenever Ma sings her eyes turn red and tears well up and that happened today too. In the midst of this was her laughter - she looked ethereal.

Before sunset Ma was strolling up and down in the small yard. In the distance a fire had been lit in the mountains. As we watched, the flames grew larger and we were fascinated by the sight. We were absorbed in watching the light of the fire. It was like a great sacrificial fire into which trees were being offered. Against the darkness of the night that fire lit up the surroundings, making it like a picture. Swami Akhandanandaji remarked, “Ma, we sometimes see ice covering these mountain peaks, and sometimes fire dancing. All are beautiful.”

We slept very late.

22nd May, Monday

As soon as Ma woke up she sat on the verandah of the

temple. Many womenfolk from the mountains have arrived. Ma started joking with two old women. One lives in Kedar Ghat and engages in spiritual practice, she carries a *kamandalu*, a special water pot, made of copper, and wears a *mala*, a rosary. The other has an ordinary little water pot.

Ma said, "Rice can be cooked for me in this pot and I can drink water from this *kamandalu*. Will you give me both these?"

One woman said, "I offer water in temples with this pot."

Pretending to drink water from the pot, Ma said, "I would also offer water this way. Tell me, will you give it to me?"

Both the women said, "Sure. Since you want them, take these pots. If we give it to you, God will surely give them to us again."

Ma said, "Give me your *mala* as well."

Agreeing to that as well, the old woman gave the *mala* and the *kamandalu* to Ma and declared, "That's it! You have taken the *mala* and *kamandalu*- you are now my disciple."

Ma said, "Good!", and started addressing them as *Guruji*. The woman said, "Ma, I know nothing. I am just joking with you!"

Ma rejoined, "Now what is this? If you know nothing, how are you going to guide me?" As she chatted, Ma returned the *mala* and the *kamandalu* to the woman, "Here, I am also giving you a *mala* and *kamandalu*. You are my *guru* and I am also your *guru*. Great, we are now friends!

The old woman said, "Ma I live on alms, I am a *bhikshuk*. So I am your disciple. You will give me food and clothing." Saying this she whacked Ma so hard that it hurt her. Ma smiled and said, "Guruji, don't hit so hard, my arm is hurting!"

In the course of the conversation that followed, Ma said to me, "Look, I am also a *bhikshuk*. See, for those who know me,

they and I are one. For those who are trying to know me, I am close to them. And for those who do not know me, to them I am a *bhikshuk*.” Saying this, Ma looked towards me and smiled enchantingly.

The lawyer Banke Bihari has come from Allahabad and will stay here with Ma for a few days. He said, “Ma, a Westerner was saying that every *mahatma*, great soul, has their own special characteristic. Ma’s speciality, I have observed, is laughing. What is the meaning of this?”

Ma laughed and replied, “Everybody, good and bad, loves this body. Their joy, their love is revealed as laughter and joy here. If there had been any particular feeling or emotion here, then even if you people were to laugh, I would not have been able to do so.”

Abhay remarked, “That is the reason you say you have no particular *bhava* of your own.” We understood that others’ happiness is Ma’s happiness because Ma has no *bhava* of her own. Just as water itself, being colourless, takes on any other colour.

As instructed by Ma, we will start our descent tomorrow or the day after. A palanquin has arrived from Mussorie. Perhaps Ma will not leave right now. Her stay here is undecided.

In the evening we were seated near Ma on the verandah of the temple. The topic that came up was the voluntary death of Ma’s paternal grandmother’s mother, that is Ma’s great grandmother, when her husband died. Ma said, “I have heard this story from my paternal grandmother’s aunt. The husband was dying and everybody was saying he did not have long to live. Meanwhile, his wife ate a full meal, wore a *saree* with a red border, ate a betel leaf, and anointed the parting in her hair with vermillion, *sindur*. Then she dipped her finger in *ghee* and

held it in the flame of a *ghee* lamp. The finger was burning but she was untroubled by it. She was experiencing being burnt alive by burning a finger first. When the dead body would be taken for cremation, she would accompany it to die herself. Then she circumambulated her husband's dead body. She applied the *sindur* from the parting in her hair on to a leaf for the other wives present. She then said, 'The toe of my left foot will tremble, because once, when he was asleep, my toe accidentally touched his pillow, so when it is burning, it will move.' Saying this, she went to her death happily. I heard this whole story in my childhood."

Abhay asked, "Ma, are all these stories true?"

Ma replied, "If they were not true they could not have been described in this way. The one who narrated it, had actually witnessed this incident."

In the evening, two or three people sat near Ma and chanted *stotras* and sang *keertan*.

23rd May, Tuesday

This morning Ma woke up and said, "If you want to see Jnyanasu, then let us go." Jnyanasu is about a mile away. There, along the banks of the Ganga, are many huts belonging to *sadhus*. We have not been to see that spot. A palanquin has arrived from Mussorie to take us down the mountain. We went in the same palanquin with Ma to see Jnyanasu.

A Punjabi woman called Balvant Mayi had met Ma in Rishikesh. She is in Jnyanasu at present and had requested Ma to go there. We reached Jnyanasu and after sitting by the Ganga for some time, we strolled along the bank, looking at the *sadhus'* huts. The place was deserted. The scenery all around was enchanting. Most huts were locked and only a few *sadhus* were present. We went to Balvant Mayi's hut. She wanted Ma to

stay with her. Ma said, “Let us see what happens.” We returned before sunset.

Banke Bihari read out from the Ramayana again this evening, and *keertan* was sung. We are to leave for Mussorie tomorrow.

24th May, Wednesday

This morning we set out. As I touched the dust of Ma’s feet, she placed her hand on my head and said, “Go and immerse yourself deeply in your *sadhana*.” As Swamiji (Akhandananda) did *pranam*, Ma placed her hand on his head and declared, “I have touched Narayan.” She spoke to us in different ways, giving us consolation and appropriate advice as she bid us farewell. To me she said, “Were you to stay on here, it would be so convenient on all fronts, yet I am sending you away. There is a need for this for a few days. I am sending you for a much larger purpose than would be served by you here. Understand that by serving God you serve this insignificant creature.”

Then, in her *bhava* she spoke at length about God. At that moment it was decided that I would go to Kolkata for a few days. With tears in my eyes we bid Ma farewell and set out. Ma came to the door and stood there. Gazing at Ma, we got into the palanquin.

By the evening we reached Naguna peak and spread our blankets on the verandah of an ancient Shiva temple, where we spent the night. As we moved ahead on our journey, my heart was crying within. In what sort of a place had I abandoned Ma! Ma was now so far away. How many discomforts was she going to suffer in this spot! My mind was assailed by all kinds of worries. Following Ma’s advice in the midst of all this, I placed my faith in the Name and moved on. I felt Ma’s presence in the Name.

25th May, Thursday

We had lunch in Baldiyana and reached Bundelgaon by the



Ma resting her chin on her hands

evening where we spent the night.

26th May, Friday

After lunch in Kaanitaal we proceeded further in the afternoon, reaching Ghanouti by the evening where we rested. We will spend the night here and reach Mussorie tomorrow, which is 14 miles away.

27th May, Saturday

We set out early this morning and reached Mussorie by afternoon.

29th May, Monday

This evening Abhay arrived suddenly, saying Ma had ordered him to go to Kolkata.

Ma is gradually sending everybody away. This *bhava* that Ma has is worrying me greatly, but there is nothing I can do about it. It takes Ma no time at all to make or break! This is the way it happens with her.

Abhay went on to elaborate, “I often do not obey Ma, and I could have disobeyed this order as well. But somehow a rebellious thought got hold of me and I said, “Alright, let us see if I can really leave you and go away!” I found I had the desire to come away and I was delighted at the thought of going to Kolkata. As soon as I set out, on the very first day I thought, ‘why did I come away?’ If I had not wanted to leave Ma would not have insisted on me going. I felt very upset, and I thought perhaps I could still return. Then surprisingly, in the next moment, my mind did an about turn again and I had no desire to return!”

Another interesting point was that Abhay just happened to speak about going to Kolkata. Ma set about making arrangements for his journey so swiftly that there was no opportunity to say any more after that.

I have often observed that when Ma wants to do something, she gets it done come what may. Seeing Abhay's condition, Ma had not been able to make him leave till now. Abhay, too, had not been able to stay away from Ma very long. She had tried a couple of times to send him away, but he had been unable to stay anywhere for more than 2 to 4 days.

Surprised at himself, Abhay said, "How did such a feeling come to me? I am mystified. I had reached the conclusion that it was best to stay with Ma. Yet such a thought (about leaving) rose within my mind. Ma, also immediately took up making arrangements for my departure and sent me off straight away."

I have seen Ma do this often and it did not surprise me this time either. However, I was very worried about her. I never know what and when changes happen in Ma's *bhava* and therefore I am always concerned..

A person has been sent to Ma and he will return within 4 or 5 days. We are waiting here with the hope of hearing from him about Ma.

Today a man and his wife arrived from Bareilly. They have never met Ma, only heard about her. They departed from here to go and meet her. They did not take any coolies with them, but carried what they needed themselves, and set out on the challenging journey with the desire of seeing Ma. It is difficult for us to even imagine how Ma attracts different people and in which way they receive her grace and feel blessed.

13th June, Tuesday

We reached Kolkata today and came to know from Kamalakant's letter that Ma has reached Raipur. In dribs and drabs we got the news that she has reached the Kishenpur *ashram*. Her health is deteriorating.

5th July, Wednesday

I had gone to Puri for a few days. I received news that Ma was

sometimes in Raipur and sometimes in the Kishenpur *ashram*. Yesterday I received the news from Kamalakant's letter that on the request of devotees in Shimla, Ma had gone there with a group of people for a *Nama yajna*, an offering of the repetition of the Name. The *Nama yajna* concluded on 2nd July and *keertan* continued in Pankaj Babu's house. Ma stayed there for a couple of days and returned to Kishenpur *ashram* via Solan.

9th July, Sunday

Ma has returned to Kishenpur and left for Raipur.

23rd July, Sunday

Today I came to know that on 19th July, Wednesday, Ma had gone to Haridwar from Dehradun with Abhay and Deviji, and stayed in the Nanki Bai *Dharamshala*. From there she went to Muradabad. No one knows where she will go next.

27th July, Thursday

It has been raining often in the past 8 or 9 days. At 3 pm when I sat down to cook, I saw - Ma had arrived suddenly! Abhay and Ruma Devi were with her. I learnt that Ma had arrived from Muradabad via Bareilly, Lucknow, Faizabad and Vardhaman. Every day I had been worried about Ma, but today my mind was extremely restless. Particularly, when I sat down to cook, my heart was filled with the pain (of separation). In this condition, a prayer rose in my mind, 'Ma, how much longer will you stay far away? Call me now so I can serve you.'

Within half an hour of this prayer, Ma turned up. Not just this time, but I have witnessed on several occasions earlier that when an intense longing has risen within me, Ma beckons me to her holy feet. Today was no different. I had felt that repeatedly Ma was separating me from her and my mind was filled with this vain thought. Today, when that conceited thought was given up and my mind surrendered, Ma appeared. Ma is so compassionate, yet I do not understand it. By the time I cooked

a meal and offered *bhog* it was evening.

In the evening Ma went for a drive in a car. She went first to Rai Bahadur Surendranath Banerji's house and started singing at the door,

*Krishna Keshav, Krishna Keshav,
Krishna Keshav pahi maam
Ram Raghav, Ram Raghav
Ram Raghav raksha maam*

Everybody came running down from upstairs and seeing Ma unexpectedly they stood there astonished. Their joy was unbounded. Ma left immediately to visit other houses and so Rai Bahadur and Nani set out with her. Ma performed the same kind of *leela* at the doorsteps of Nripendra Lal, Manish Guha, Revati Sen, Priyanath Mukherji, Gangacharan Babu and others and returned to the Birla temple. From every home, a group of devotees accompanied her to the Birla temple. *Keertan* was sung. Ma retired for the night, very late.

28th July, Friday

Many people started gathering on hearing that Ma had arrived. There was a great festival of joy in Birla temple. Discussions were in progress. A question that was raised was that though so many people were in the company of Ma, why was it that no transformation in them was perceivable?

Ma replied, "Who is keeping company? Is proximity equal to keeping company? Or if you listen to a few words, is it keeping company? That sort of company is kept by flies and mosquitoes too!"

People requested her to say something to them. Ma said, "I am your daughter, what shall I say? But as you ring the bell so will it sound; this is the truth. This mouth will utter whatever you make it say. Look, desire does not prompt my words as in

the case of you people. A topic that comes up often nowadays is - '*samyam vrata*', a resolve to maintain self control. You should aim to spend 15 days every month, or a week, in *samyam* (self control) and maintain purity in those days. In those days, you should serve your children as *balgopal* (baby Krishna) and *kumari* (the Goddess as a little girl), and your husband as *param pati*, (the great Lord) and your wife as *devi* (the Goddess). To the extent that even if any child misbehaves, you do not get angry. A spirit of sanctity should rein in the whole family. You will observe that as you do this, no ill feeling will ever come up. You need to take the support of all this so that you can be immersed in God-thought all the time. You should do the *samyam vrat* involving the whole family. In those days if you write down your shortcomings and how you will be alert about not repeating them, gradually you will find yourself being purified from the inside."

Someone said, "Ma, I have come for your *darshan*."

Ma responded immediately with a laugh and said, "Exactly, Baba! I would like you to have *darshan*. All this *sadhan-bhajan* is to enable you to know yourself. "Observing how Ma had turned the remark on its head, everybody laughed.

Again, as the discussion proceeded, Ma said, "Mention was made of taking the Name with every breath, focussing on the breath - do you know why? Breath is air, and air is present everywhere- it is all-pervasive. If you maintain focus on that, your *bhava* may also be rendered all-pervasive."

"You have to take the help of such supporting actions in order to purify your mind. The movement of air is like waves of different *bhava*. Do you know what that means? You have to calm the pace of *vasana - kamana*, latent desires and those present in the mind. Whatever the support may be, though there may be several priorities, if one priority that is the

foremost, is not there, - then that which is the true one - you will not find that.”

She speaks in this manner to so many different people. Day and night it goes on in this way.

Dilip Rai asked Ma, “Alright Ma. Some people claim, ‘If you practise *sadhan - bhajan*, that is, if you make the effort, only then does the work get done.’ There are others who say, ‘Unless the time is opportune, nothing will happen.’ Which of these statements is true?”

Ma replied, “Both statements are true, Baba. The fact is that when you are putting in effort, then the effort must be continued. Nobody knows when the opportune moment will arrive. It will be like the water in a flood, it will wash you away. Your duty is to make the effort. As long as your intellect is functioning it is for you to make the effort. All moments could be that moment. Waiting for that moment, and meditating on That, both are fine.”

One person proposed, “There is no such thing as grace. There is no way forward other than doing one’s work for oneself.”

Someone else disagreed, “The work that is being done, is because of His grace.”

Smiling, Ma addressed the second person, “Baba, do you know the fact of the matter? There is a state in which one becomes conscious of grace. Until that state is reached, the person thinks, ‘I will do it all, I am doing it.’ That is it, what else? In essence the truth of this matter is that without His grace nobody can even think about Him.”

Many such matters were discussed.

29th July, Saturday

This afternoon, Ma was offered *bhog* in the residence of

Shri O. N. Mukherjee, at the special request of his son, Yamini Babu. The *bhog* was offered in their temple. Ma returned to Birla Mandir after the *bhog*.

Ramtaran Babu had arranged for the singing of Srimant's Mashaan. His brother is one of the performers. It was decided that the recital would begin in Yamini Babu's house in the evening. Ma was taken there at that time. In order to give Ma some rest, Yatish Dada requested the singers to shorten the narrative. This upset the singers and they said to Ma, "Ma, we were so looking forward to performing for you, and now this suggestion makes us very upset." Ma replied, "You all sing just as you wish. Do not feel bad. He only said what he did with a view to giving this body some rest." Incidentally, all this was accompanied by some disturbance in the crowd, but Ma's words soothed the disquiet. What she said established peace all around and the music continued. We returned to the temple at 3 am to find that Ma's devotees were still waiting for her. It was 5 am by the time Ma retired to rest.

30th July, Sunday

A crowd had gathered even before Ma woke up. Today, Ma is going to Shrirampur at the invitation of Trigun Dada. From there she will proceed wherever she wants to go. As each one was with Ma only for a short time, no one was satiated. Yet, having her visit unexpectedly, they were all immersed in an ocean of bliss. Ma set out from Birla Mandir at about 10.30 am, accompanied by a large crowd of devotees.

Ma went to the temple of Mahaprabhu in Shrirampur. Ma's *bhog* had been organised in Trigun Dada's house. Trigun Dada's family is special. Father, mother, son, daughter-law, even the children, have the same *bhava*. All of them are so devoted to Ma. In addition, their very graciousness impresses all who they meet. They do whatever they can to serve Ma and her devotees.

Ma left for Nalhati by the evening train, taking Abhay and Ruma Devi with her. She told us to go to Vindhyachal for the time being. Many devotees had gathered at the station. They were all gazing at Ma. Some time elapsed before the train arrived. Ma was seated on a bench. Many people had arrived from Kolkata. Yamini Mukherjee Mahashay was sprinkling perfume on Ma. Ma neither likes nor dislikes anything. I have been observing this for a long time, that while some offer worship, others hurl abuse. Some make her sit on the ground, others on the banks of a river. Some embrace her, others offer *pranam* from a distance. Some watch her enchanted, while someone else transfers pus from a wound onto her feet to help its recovery. In the face of such different behaviour, Ma's steady, unwavering *bhava* shows absolutely no change. She accepts all equally.

Sitting in the station, she spoke persuasively and clearly, "Keep doing the work. It will surely happen."

One person asked, "Ma, will it happen for all of us?"

Ma replied, "For sure, it will happen. Do not ever harbour the thought that it will not happen. Don't you see, as you keep thinking about God, you become absorbed in that *bhava*? Therefore, not with the thought 'it will not happen' but with the attitude 'it will happen' it will surely happen. It is a sin to allow doubt. Why do you worry? It will happen for everyone."

The devotees felt at peace hearing this assurance.

The train arrived. Ma set out on her journey, leaving her devotees sorrowful. Something invaluable had been experienced by devotees for a few days. Having lost it now, they were overwhelmed. Slowly they made their way out of the station. Some drove away, some returned by train to Kolkata.

3rd August, Thursday

This morning Abhay arrived suddenly. I learnt that he had

arrived in Kolkata last night. Ma has gone to Azimgunj from Nalhati. They have located a good *dharamshala* and she will move there on Sunday. Abhay has come here to tell us about that. We have been called there. We set out with Abhay by the 3 pm train to meet Ma. Others will follow by and by. Ma had sent someone to Behrampur station to meet us. We came to know that Ma had come via Nasipur to the Kalibari at Vishnupur (Behrampur).

We reached the Kalibari and had *darshan* of Ma's holy feet. *Keertan* was in progress. People were coming and going till midnight. Ma was then taken to rest.

4th August, Friday

Ma woke up in the morning. A person started Gita *path* sitting near Ma. Ma went for a quick wash and was offered some fruit as *bhog*. She then went to the temple and sat down.

A man asked Ma, "Shall I go to my residence?"

Ma smiled and replied, "Yes, make arrangements to go home. That is the origin of breath. Look, how wonderful this is. Everyone wants to go home. They are fully engaged with that. Only they do not know where their home is!"

Saying this, she addressed the man, "Baba, make it a *dharamshala*. Would you do that?"

The man replied, "If your grace is present, I would make it Ma."

She is conversing thus with all present.

Another person asked, "Ma, why has He filled us with ego and other such flaws?"

Ma laughed and replied, "Who has He filled? He is also another form of Him. You are also He. What fun! You think you are different from Him." Saying this she burst out laughing.

Abhay said, “Had you been a *jiva*, an individual soul, it would have been good. You would have understood the pain of a *jiva*. Now you laugh at our plight. Chaitanya Dev and Ramakrishna Dev were much better than you. They would weep sympathizing with the sorrow of the *jiva*.”

Ma laughed and said, “Can everybody be good? Manifestations are innumerable. All cannot be alike.”

Abhay asked, “When we gain nothing by being with you, in what way are you superior to us?”

Ma answered smilingly, “Who says I am superior? I am also just a person like you. Can you not see? Am I superior because I am seated on a mattress? They make me sit on a mattress so that the joints and muscles do not give trouble. Moreover, I speak in any old way. What can I do? Whatever emerges from my lips it just happens!”

Further she said, “You people have nothing to fear. You have the strength to make the effort and therefore I say ‘keep trying’. Else, if He does not make you do it, nothing could happen.”

When some people agreed with what she had just said, she added, “But there is this, that just as you do not leave other jobs half done, you complete them to the extent possible, so should you not let go of this quest. You have to keep at it. Then whatever has to be done, He will make it happen. This is similar to your submitting an application for a job and waiting. You have no idea who is destined to get the job. But it can happen that by just sending your application you may get the job. Is it right to have acquired a human birth and yet do nothing? Everyone is engaged in filling their stomachs like birds and beasts. Today you may be enjoying yourself, but what guarantee is there that tomorrow a thousand sorrows will not descend upon you? That is the reason I say get your pension organised. You will

receive this pension as long as you breathe and neither will it ever get destroyed.”

One person interjected, “It is necessary to look after our body. If my body is not there how will I engage in *sadhan - bhajan*?”

Ma replied, “Why should you look after the body? It is necessary to give that your attention. If you think “I want to call out to Him, and for that I need this body to function”, then you will do that, not for enjoyment of pleasures. Birds and beasts pursue the pleasures of the body. Do your duty. Keep your focus on Him.”

Another person questioned, “Looking after a wife and children - is that any sort of duty? Whose wife, whose son, who is looking after whom?”

Ma said, “If this understanding is rooted in the right spirit, then it is very good. Chaitanya Dev had given up his mother, his wife, all of them. But all are not Chaitanya Dev. Therefore, those who stay with their children, grandchildren and family, they need to live their life in the spirit of service, that is, manage the household with the spirit that ‘all that I am doing is His service.’ Further it is recommended that *samyam-vrata*, be undertaken for as long as possible, 2 to 4 days in a month, or if you have the will power, for a whole month. To make a resolve that, ‘for this month I will live a pure life.’ Eating just enough to sustain the body. Not eating for pleasure. Sleeping only when sleep overtakes you. Spend time reading scriptural texts about the Truth, taking the Name or any other pursuit that encourages thinking about what Truth is. You people have to attend to your office or business, but the women are free of these commitments. They work with their hands but in those days they must focus on Him alone. Speak the truth, be truthful in your dealings. It is possible that on a particular day you may not be able to do this fully, but with practice it

will become easier and you will begin to find joy in it. Look at children, at first they do not want to study. Their mind is drawn to playing. Later, they realise that if they do not study they will fail in examinations so they begin to pay attention to their studies of their own accord. Then they do not need to be supervised. Similarly, we may not like what we are doing initially, for are we not extroverts by nature? Later, as you practice, you will begin to enjoy it. Therefore I say *tapasya*, or penance, comes from *taapa saha*, bearing the heat. Do penance for God, that is endure.”

Ma spoke further. “Who is the *Guru*? Not just our parents, but all those who reveal to us what we do not know; by who the unknown is revealed; they are all our *Gurus*. Whoever shows us even a little bit of the way, is our *Guru*. Many hide the truth with pretensions. Where is the peace in doing that?”

After this conversation, Avani Babu offered *puja* to Ma. All the people seated around Ma wanted to read out the *Aadyastava*. Ma smiled and said, “That is good! Read out the *Aadyastava*. All of you listen and so will I.”

Ma is seated. As I have explained earlier, Ma accepts criticism, praise, worship and insult alike. She displays no reaction either way.

Ma was seated on the verandah. *Keertan* was sung. It was decided that in the afternoon Ma would go to an *ashram* where *keertan* would be performed again.

In the afternoon, Ma was taken to the *ashram* of the late Moha Babu, on the banks of the Ganga. There was a reading from the *Bhagavat*. Then there was conversation on different topics. An elderly person asked, “Ma, I want to ask a couple of questions. Will you answer?”

Ma laughed and replied, “If you people can play this

instrument then go ahead and play it.” The dialogue proceeded for some time, and at one point Ma said, “Baba, it is said, ‘that which is imprisoned, that is the *jiva*. Have you not observed stagnant water smells, but flowing water has no scent?’”

Keertan was performed in the evening. There was a big crowd of people. Ma was made to lie down to give her a little rest, but because of the earnest requests of the people it was not possible to shut the door of her room. The *keertan* about ‘Nimai Sannyas’, started at 11 pm. At 3 am, after the *keertan* was concluded, Ma went to sleep.

5th August, Saturday

Shri Kamalajaran Rai took Ma to the *Rajbhavan*, the palace situated here. Very beautiful, the whole family is so devoted. The *Raja* and *Rani* are so full of devotion. We spent some time there and then returned. As we were leaving, the *Rani* declared, “What is this? It would have been better if we had not met at all. See what has happened to me. Ma has done something to me and she is leaving now.”

By 12 noon, after finishing our meal, we set out with Ma for Azimgunj. Devotees arrived from all around. Local people also gathered. The singing of the Name was started at night. Tomorrow *keertan* will be sung.

6th August, Sunday

This morning *keertan* was started at dawn. The Name that was sung:

*‘Hare Krishna Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna Hare Hare
Hare Ram Hare Ram, Ram Ram Hare Hare’*

The surroundings rang with the *keertan* as it picked up in intensity. All the people were inebriated with the Name. In between, Ma would go into the centre and move around, sometimes she would sit in the midst of the people. This went on for the whole day. The Name was sung for 24 hours.



Ma's earliest Ashram at Siddheshwari, Dhaka

7th August, Monday

Today the women will sing *keertan* from 12 to 3 pm. The *keertan* does not stop, it goes on continuously.

People took Ma to meet Surpati Singh, the *zamindar* of Nalaksh. *Keertan* went on till 5 pm. After that the people took Ma to the *Rajbhavan* of Azimgunj. Then she was taken across the Ganga to the residence of Raibahadur in Jiyagunj. As the boat neared the bank, people sang *keertan*, and escorted Ma. *Keertan* was sung till 7 pm. After that we returned to the *dharamshala*.

We left by the 11 pm train with Ma.

8th August, Tuesday

This morning Ma alighted from the train at Baidal. We have no idea where she will go. According to Ma's instructions, I returned to Kolkata.

In this morning's post there was a letter from Abhay that he had written from Naihati, which informed me that Ma was going to Dhaka. She had asked me to go there as well. I set out by the night train for Dhaka.

9th August, Wednesday

In Azimgunj, various thoughts were expressed- water that is stagnant, smells, but that which flows does not. This stagnant water, or this *bhava*, is the *jiva*. To follow the Guru's words without fail is what helps on this path.

10th August, Thursday

We arrived in Dhaka and heard that Ma has come to Dhaka all of a sudden, without informing anybody. First, she went to Siddheshwari. Then to Ramna ashram. At 10 pm she returned to Siddheshwari ashram. The next day she again went to Ramna ashram. I met Ma in Ramna ashram. Most people had not yet heard of Ma's arrival and therefore there is not a big

crowd. Children sang *keertan* throughout the night.

11th August, Friday

People have started arriving as the news of Ma's arrival spread slowly. Women sang *keertan* right through the night. Ma accompanied them in between.

12th August, Saturday

This morning Ma took us all to the Siddheshwari ashram. We all bathed there. At 10 am, Ma went to Narayangunj, where she had been invited by Dvijendra Bhowmik. She then visited the home of the late Gopalchand Chattopadhyay Mahashay, where Kiran Didi has been encouraging women to sing *keertan*. Kiran Didi had taken the initiative and organised Ma's visit. *Keertan* was sung continuously by the women. Ma also visited other houses. At 2.30 pm she returned to Dhaka. Today a *nama yajna*, continuous chanting of the Name, will commence. All arrangements have been made. At night, after the *adhivas* ceremony, the *nama yajna* was started.

13th August, Sunday

Today *keertan* was sung for 24 hours.

14th August, Monday

This morning we left at 8 am for Munshigunj. We stayed there for two days. *Keertan* was sung in Jagadhatri Mandir. Ma spent one night in this temple and one night on the boat. *Keertan* was sung at the residence of Shri Veerendrachandra Mukhopadhyay Mahashay. Having created a festival of joy in Munshigunj, Ma proceeded to Kheora on 16th August, Wednesday.

16th August, Wednesday

We reached Kamala Sagar at 10 pm and left for Kheora. Many residents of Kheora had come to Kamala Sagar to escort Ma. We reached Kheora around 10.30 pm.



Ma Anandamayee Ashram at Ramna - Dacca

It was raining. Quite a few people had gathered in the *ashram*. All the people welcomed Ma with ululation⁶ and made her sit in their midst. A lady who was about the same age as Ma and also had the same name as Ma, was Ma's childhood friend. She sat next to Ma and talked about some incidents of the past, and then said she was feeling unhappy. I said, "Why are you feeling sad? Is this not a matter of joy for you?" The woman replied, "If your own people become foreigners, it is cause for sorrow."

Ma visits this place now and then, speaks to local residents in their dialect and laughs with them. They experience great happiness. That happened today also. We slept at 2 am.

17th August, Thursday

People from Kumilla and other towns and villages close by have started coming on hearing of Ma's arrival.

A woman who knew Ma, came to her and said, "Before I saw you I was thinking, 'I wonder what she is like now.' I used to imagine that you lay with your eyes closed day in and day out and never spoke to anyone. I had a great desire to see what your condition was like. I come here and see that you are chatting with all of us. You are even laughing and joking with us. I am overjoyed to see this."

And this is true. Ever since Ma arrived here she has been interacting with everyone in such a way that people feel - "Ma is ours." A person started saying, "This is our, our, our King!"

I laughed and remarked, "What you say is so true."

People were immersed, heart and soul, in this kind of bliss.

Ma replied to the question about how the mind could be purified. Nowadays she often refers to maintaining *samyam vrata*. "Resolve that every month, for as many days as possible, you will look upon your husband as the *Param Pati*, the Supreme

⁶ This is a sound made by Bengali women indicating auspiciousness

Lord, your wife as *Devi*, the Goddess, your boys as *Bal Gopal*, the child Krishna, and your girls as *Kumari*, the Goddess as a little girl. In those days, if anybody is unfair, you will not get angry. You should think God is testing your patience in this way. Maintain discipline in eating, sleeping and all other activities. If you all behave this way, the children will also become good. Eat just enough to maintain your body. Speak only what is essential. Apply this to all that you do. In the context of how to keep the mind steady, see, when you want to allow the cream to rise to the surface of milk, you have to keep the milk still, even a slight breeze will break the skin forming on the milk, that is how still your mind needs to be. If you sit quietly and take the Name, your mind will become steady. Again, see, if you eat the same kind of food every day, you start disliking it. So you make a variety of dishes. In the same way, it is necessary to make the multi-faceted mind point in just that one direction. The mind is nurtured thus. The body is nourished externally with food, the mind is nourished with this kind of food.”

18th August, Friday

Ma was taken for a boat ride in a lake. An old woman, who knew Ma, started recounting incidents of the past and then starting expressing her regret. In the midst of this, a person came up with, “What if we were to bring pots of water, give Ma an oil massage and a bath?”

Ma laughed and replied, “That kind of a bath is given at the time of a wedding. So, am I to be wedded to you all?”

The old woman, who probably belonged to Ma’s grandmother’s generation, was a widow. Ma laughingly slipped into the colloquial language and remarked, “Those whose husbands have departed in this manner, shall I marry all of them, what do you say?” Saying this, Ma burst into laughter.

In the evening, the old woman asked, “Will there not be the



Ma sitting cross legged

‘bridegroom’s bed’, the ‘*bor shoyya*’ tonight?”

Again, laughing and replying in the local dialect, Ma said, “Look, the kind of ‘*bor shoyya*’ that was experienced by those who have departed, can never happen to this body. The reason being that no marriage in that way has happened to this body. The ‘*bor shoyya*’ with this husband will occur mentally. The consequence of this will be complete union - dissolution, what else? No separation will exist. *Ek brahma dvitiya naasti*, one Brahma no second. One soul, what else?”

Having said this, Ma burst into peals of laughter like a child. Then, suddenly, in some context she said, “Baba!”

I asked, “Which Baba? You have so many fathers!”

Swamiji laughed and said, “The one that belongs here (meaning the father who caused the birth) - there is no father like him.”

Ma smiled and said, “Who is a father? If you look at it in that way, then I am my own father and I am my own mother. The one who creates is the father. I am my own creator. *Srishti, sthiti, laya*, creation, sustenance and destruction, are within Brahma by its very nature. Therefore I am my own father.” Having stated this she asked, “What else will you say, speak up, let me hear?”

19th August, Saturday

Many people had gathered and conversation was in progress. One man declared, “Ma, we cannot do anything. Why do you tell us to do something? You will do whatever has to be done. Do not load us with responsibility. Why do you place the burden of this work on us?”

Ma smiled and said, “Baba, do you know why you are told to do it? You are asked to do it because you people think ‘I am

doing it, I am able to do it'.”

Ma was asked the question, “What is the difference between the Name of God and the *bija (mantra)*?” In answer to this, Ma said, “The *bija mantra* carries the Guru’s power, *guru shakti*, which causes a vibration in the body that infuses consciousness in the *mantra* and takes you towards that goal. The same *bhava* arises when just the Name is uttered. If the Name is taken with *bhava*, then by the power of the Name, *naam shakti*, the *Guru* you are destined to have, will appear and everything will just happen. When *guru shakti* is present in the Name or the *bija*, the work will all be done.”

20th August, Sunday

Today Mukund Choudhury, of Paatai Saar, took Ma to his house. Quite a few people of the town have been offering *puja* to Ma every day. Most of them offer fruits to Ma as *bhog* and then take some as *prasad*. *Arati* is performed as if it is *Durga puja*. After this *bhog* and other activities in Paatai Saar, Ma went to Maakhan Babu’s house at his invitation. All the people accompanying Ma were accommodated in three or four boats. The boats cut through with fields of paddy on either side. *Keertan* was being sung. Along the way, at some *ghats*, river banks, crowds of devotees gathered. Ma, meeting people she had known earlier, was asking about their welfare as she moved on. The people were delighted with just this short exchange with Ma. We returned at 3 am.

21st August, Monday

This morning again, Ma set out in a boat and returned to the *ashram* after some time. A girl wants to follow this path but she does not appear to display this *bhava*. In this context Ma said, “Do not feed your mental modifications, *vritti*, but it is necessary to nourish *nivritti*, letting go of your inclinations, would you agree? The manner in which you are all feeding

your *vriddhi*, you will reach a point where the inclination is so strong, it will be beyond your control, and it will make you helpless. Therefore I say, do not feed your thoughts, *vriddhi*, but nourish *nivridhi*, giving up your mental modifications.”

Tonight will be the *adhivas* ceremony to start the *ashta prahar keertan* tomorrow, continuous *keertan* for 24 hours. People started arriving for that. The local residents of the village offered *puja, arati* to Ma and sang the Name. At 1.30 am, past midnight, 30 devotees, men and women, arrived unexpectedly from Dhaka.

After *adhivas*, the women started singing *keertan*. Flowers were not available. Ma showed the women how to string leaves with hemp to make garlands. Beautiful garlands were made with these two components. Ma manages to arrange with whatever is available. Wearing these garlands and applying sandalwood paste, these women started singing *keertan*, which went on through the night. The people of the village were ecstatic about having Ma in their midst. They were present all the time in the *ashram* for *puja, arati, keertan* and every other activity. Hearing about this, people from Kumilla, Chattagram and other towns began arriving. Ma alternately gave advice about *samyam vrata*, and the greatness of the Name, *nama mahatmya*.

Because of the crowds Ma was taken out in a boat for a large part of the day. She was taken by boat to a banyan tree, some distance away, and made to sit in its shade. I heard from Ma that a fair, a *mela*, used to be held under this banyan tree. Ma would visit that *mela*. The surprising thing was that even when there was no breeze anywhere else, there was always a cool breeze under that banyan tree. Ma had recounted these facts earlier, and now we were witnessing it for ourselves. The boat was moored under the banyan tree for many hours. Meeting

people she knew from the village, Ma was speaking to them so sweetly in the local dialect and questioning them about various matters - it was beautiful *leela*. Everybody was overjoyed with these interactions with Ma. *Leela*, in a variety of ways, was in progress!

22nd August, Tuesday

This morning *arati* was performed after the *keertan* by the women. Simultaneously, the men, adorned with sandalwood paste, started singing *keertan*. Ma went with the women to bathe in the pond. After *balya bhog*, offering to the child Krishna, she went with all the people in the boat to show them her birthplace.

On the shore many Muslim men and women were waiting eagerly to see Ma. Ma spoke to them all as she was passing by. One person, seeing Ma, ran off to call another. The Muslim residents of Ma's birthplace were narrating incidents about Ma's childhood and giving much joy to all present. Ma, in turn, was chatting about the olden days, adding to the happiness.

The devotees reached Ma's birthplace and started rolling on the ground. At the request of Vaikunth Das, everybody proceeded to his house. On the way, Ma indicated, "I would come to this pond to fill water pots. I have eaten innumerable *jamun* from this tree. The mangoes of this tree are sour-sweet." In this way she described different places and associations as she went along.

At the residence of Vaikunth Das, she pointed towards Mahim Das' wife and said, "This person taught me how to weave carpets."

In this way, Ma spoke to different people individually, reminiscing about various incidents, making each person feel so joyful. Here again, many people offered flowers at Ma's feet.

Ma returned to the *ashram* from the house of Vaikunth Das by boat. Ma was made to rest for some time. She was taken to the *ashram* for *bhog* and *puja* and *arati* were performed. After spending some time in the *ashram*, Ma returned to the boat to rest. Ma has been advising people to spend more time in repeating the Name. She has repeatedly reminded everyone that breath is the source of life-force.

Today *ashta prahar keertan*⁷ was commenced. More than a thousand people received *prasad*. Wherever Ma goes, big crowds gather. Today is *jhoolan poornima*⁸ and *keertan* went on for 24 hours.

23rd August, Wednesday

Early this morning, the group of *keertan* singers went around the whole village, singing *keertan*, and then gathered at the *ashram*, dancing energetically as they sang. Following local tradition, they balanced pots, *kalasha*, on their heads as they danced. Then they poured water on each other and had fun. Then the fan ceremony began.

Ma said, “It would be good to roll in the mud here, where the *keertan* has been sung.”

As soon as they heard Ma say this, the whole group of *keertan* singers lay down wherever they were and started rolling about on the ground. Ecstatic singing and dancing of *keertan* went on. Everything with Ma is taken to extremes - seeing the energetic rolling in the mud, some people were alarmed. However, in a little while, Ma went to the pond and entered the water. As soon as she got in, crowds of men and women jumped into the water. Ma’s water sport with the devotees continued for quite

⁷ *Ashta prahar* refers to 8 *prahars* each of 3 hours, making a 24 hour day.

⁸ *Jhoolan Poornima* is the full moon night on which Lord Krishna is said to have played on the swing with Radha. This the next most important festival, after Holi, for Vaishnavites

some time.

After lunch, Ma was taken to the boat for some rest. After *keertan* and *arati*, we left for Sultanpur with Ma around midnight. We left the boat and walked on land. The place was so delightful in Ma's company on a moonlit night. For the rest of the night we travelled by land to Sultanpur. There was talk of stopping at Mehari on the way.

24th August, Thursday

We reached Mehari very early in the morning. Those people who had arranged to bring Ma here were all present and took her to their house. Ma had remarked in Kheora, "How would it be if we were to go to Mehari for a meal and then set out for Sultanpur?"

We found that the people who had come to take us to Mehari did not say anything in this regard and so we did not mention it either and decided that we would go to Sultanpur and arrange for *bhog*. At the request of the people who took us to Mehari the boat was turned towards the residence of their priest, the late Maheshchandra Bhattacharya. They said, "Everybody will have Ma's *darshan* when we go there because they have all been asked to come there."

When we reached we came to know there is a Shiva temple there. Ma went to the temple as everybody requested. The temple was very beautiful. The owner of the house we visited was a spiritual seeker. He declared, "Ma, I did not go myself to bring you, but I prayed mentally that you are coming here and will not leave without partaking of *bhog*."

I saw, Ma agreed⁹. Yesterday, when we were leaving Kheora Ma had said, "How would it be if we were to stop in Mehari for a meal?"

⁹ Here, Didi probably means, "I could see Ma had answered his prayers."

I remembered this suddenly. So many people request Ma several times to stay for a meal but Ma does not agree each time. But on this occasion, without anyone having to say anything, Ma fixed it all herself.

Bhog was offered to Ma in Mehari. *Keertan* was sung. Ma walked around the house several times. At about 2.30 pm we left Mehari. When Ma got into the boat, the person whose house she had visited, broke down and wept like a child. Others on the bank also had tears in their eyes. The boat set off and we reached Sultanpur shortly after dusk.

This is Ma's hometown. It was raining and the village roads were muddy. People had come singing *keertan* to the edge of the water to welcome Ma. Ma's maternal uncle's living conditions are not good. At one time he was well off. There is a makeshift tin roof on the hut. They were looking after all the guests to the best of their ability. *Keertan* was sung for some time. Then all the people known to Ma from her childhood started coming to her one by one and chatting. "Do you remember me?" The moment this question was asked, Ma began asking about the rest of that person's family by name. They were delighted that even in her present situation Ma remembered them all. Some asked again, "Do you still remember incidents from your childhood?" Conversation went on in this manner. Late into the night, arrangements were made for Ma to sleep.

25th August, Friday

We stayed at Ma's maternal uncle's home. Ma's cousins, Nishikant and Shashikant Bhattacharya, looked after everybody's comfort. Every person of the village arrived to have Ma's *darshan*. Some people from the neighbouring village also turned up. Food was served till the evening and many people received *prasad*. Then the village folk took Ma to visit various homes. *Keertan* accompanied her all the way. Midway

they made Ma sit on a *chowki* which they hoisted on to their shoulders, and carried her through the streets. This kind of joyous *keertan* went on till about 10 pm. At 2 am we left for Kumilla.

26th August, Saturday

Shri Rohini Babu, Shreesh Babu and Paresh Babu, employees of the late Mahesh Chandra Bhattacharya, arrived from Kumilla to escort her with great respect to the latter's residence.

27th August, Sunday

Keertan was sung for twelve hours. Jatu performed *arati*. Many devotees arrived from Dhaka and the crowd became so large that it became difficult to protect Ma's body. Wherever Ma sat, people desiring *darshan* would gather like honey bees. It took great effort to look after Ma in this crush. People seemed to be dying for *darshan* of Ma's feet. They were restrained with much difficulty. Ma was taken to the Nivedita boarding school for some rest.

28th August, Monday

At the request of the residents of Nivedita boarding school, the girls who had come from Dhaka sang *keertan*. Ma arrived to hear them and was then taken to see the girls' school. The students sang a prayer to Ma. The teachers and students were all given leave from lessons so that they could also hear Ma's advice, which was to take the name of God and attempt to maintain *samyam vrata*.

Shobha Ma arrived from Barakanta to meet Ma. All are enjoying themselves. There is talk of going to Chattagram today.

After dusk such a huge crowd gathered that the room became hot due to the warmth of exhaled air. Meanwhile Ma

chatted happily with everyone. Seeing the situation we took Ma to the station earlier than usual. We stopped at a couple of places on the way.

One person said laughingly, “Ma, give me some blessing!”

Ma laughed and replied, “Take me then! If I can be the flowers or *bel* leaves that are the blessings of *puja*, take me.”

In the context of breath, Ma reiterated, “Repeat the Name in unison with the breath. This practice steadies the mind. Other than that, our life breath, *pran vayu*, pervades the whole universe. If you can just enter that great *bhava*, eventually that stream will take you towards Him. You have to take the plunge into that stream once.” She spoke on many matters in this manner.

29th August, Tuesday

We reached Chattagram this morning and went to Rajeshwar’s home. When large crowds had gathered in Kumilla, and people said, “Look Ma, we have come in such large numbers for your *darshan*”, Ma said, “Why do you create this distance? I would say that you people have come to give *darshan*. Moreover, we are all residents of the same house. Perhaps that is the reason you all come because you have affection for this body and you want to see this little girl.” Ma said this so endearingly that everybody’s heart melted.

30th August, Wednesday

The festival of joy continued in Chattagram. *Keertan* was sung every evening and people gathered in large numbers. In between if someone asked a question, such precious words would emerge (from Ma). Whenever anyone posed a question Ma would say, “Very good! If you are able to play (this instrument), you will hear and so will I.”

31st August, Thursday

This evening Shri Surendra Ghoshal took Ma to the

residence of Digendra Ghoshal Mahashay. *Keertan* was sung. People had brought refreshments for Ma. Meanwhile, hidden from the view of all present, Ma managed to slip the *aamsotto*, a fruit bar made from mango pulp, from the plate into her shawl. When refreshments were being served people started looking for the mango bars. Ma told me, “Here, put this shawl on Ma’s (Surendra Babu’s wife’s) lap.”

Surendra Babu’s wife knew nothing of this secret. She sat with the shawl on her lap. Ma said, “All of you stand up and shake your clothes.” As she said this she laughed and stood up herself. Just then, the mango bars fell out of Surendra Babu’s wife’s lap and Ma burst into laughter. People laughed for a long time at this incident. Witnessing Ma’s playfulness, everybody experienced great joy. Laughing, Ma remarked, “See what you people have to contend with. *Sadhus* and *sanyasis* look so serious and give so many sermons, while this girl only eats, drinks and sleeps. What is it you people see and then forget yourselves? But then, it is natural for parents to love their daughter!”

1st September, Friday

Today, again, Ma was taken to a few houses where *keertan* was sung.

2nd September, Saturday

Last evening, seeing me packing things up until midnight to go to Cox Bazar, Ma remarked, “You make whatever arrangements you like.” Eventually we were unable to go to Cox Bazar. People had arrived to take Ma to Vidyakoot. Today Ma set out for Vidyakoot and reached there in the evening.

Within a short while many people arrived. Ma started chatting with them. She spoke to some people about incidents that had occurred long ago. They were surprised and said, “Oh Ma, you remember all this still!”

The presiding deity of the village is a greatly awakened Kali. Many declared, "Nirmala is now a human Kali!" Ma laughed and responded, "Oh dear! How have you made me Kali? It may have been possible if I had been dark skinned. What do you say?" Her older sister, her aunt, older brother, uncle - they all sat surrounding her. It was late at night. People left only after much persuasion. Ma was taken to rest at midnight.

3rd September, Sunday

In the morning Ma left her bed and went and sat on a *chowki* under a tree. Ma had been put up in the residence of the late Bihari Bhattacharya Mahashay.

An old aunt (father's sister) came and said, "Do you recognise me?" Ma laughed and replied that she did. The aunt said, "Ma, my mother who gave birth to me, is gone." Ma smiled, "Vah! Would she not go! A fruit that is ripe falls from a tree."

When asked to sit on the *chowki*, Ma remarked, "Why? Do you think I cannot sit on the ground? You were just saying, 'our Nirmala', then why do you keep me at a distance? May I not sit in my older brother's (*Dada's*) or aunt's (*Pishi's*) lap?"

An elderly person said, "No, you sit on a raised seat, so that we can all see you. And look, I cannot call you Ma because you are my granddaughter." Someone else said, "Whatever each one feels like calling you, you are alright with it." Ma laughed. "Each one can call me whatever gives them joy. I have no problem."

Some were addressing her with the familiar pronoun '*tui*' and then wondering how we would respond to that they said, "This is the way we address her. You have taken away what belongs to us!" I laughed and replied, "That is perfectly alright. You can call her whatever you like. We find joy in that."

The women had arrived and *keertan* was begun.

4th September, Monday

Ma is being taken from house to house. Many people are following her. A broad red bordered *saree* has been draped over Ma. Ma's face has become red with vermillion powder, *sindoor*. Meanwhile the residents of this place are feeling confused. They are unable to forget their old relationships and address Ma as 'Ma'. Nor are they satisfied with just what their old relationships with Ma were. Also Ma is sometimes referring to her older brother as 'Baba', father, and sometimes as 'Dada', older brother. People are finding this delightful. Ma said, "You desire to retain the old relationships, and therefore the terms corresponding to those relationships emerge from my lips!"

They replied, "With you, even brothers are being called fathers. It does not happen with us."

I have observed that there is a great change over the last two days. People are not being able to keep up their old relationships with Ma. They are going along with Ma's *bhava*. All kinds of ideas are emerging from Ma as she speaks. A couple of days earlier this was not the case. Just as the people of the village were considering Ma to be their very own, Ma was responding to them with the same emotion and preserving their feelings. Today, along with a change in their attitude towards Ma, many ideas pertaining to Ma's spirituality were emerging. Each person was taking Ma to his or her home and expressing gratitude. *Anand leela*, the play of bliss, was palpable.

Today *bhog* was offered at Dr. Hema Babu's house. He has constructed a Kali temple here. Ma was taken to that temple. The doctor's wife practises *sadhana - bhajan* and there has been much change in her condition. *Keertan* was sung here at night and went on till 2.30 am, after which Ma went to sleep.

5th September, Tuesday

Ma was taken to 'Merkooti' this morning. There she was

taken from one house to another where she was worshipped with offerings of leaves, flowers, sandal paste, cloth and other things. The atmosphere resonated with the sound of ululation and *keertan*. She was also taken to the house of cowherds, where the women offered Ma a drink of milk.

Ma remarked laughingly, “Ma, once upon a time, Gopal had drunk milk in the homes of cowherds and today it is my good fortune that I too drank milk similarly.” Ma went to the homes of all those who invited her, regardless of whether they were rich or poor. Observing how the boundaries of some homes were marked according to particular cultural traditions, Ma laughed and said, “All problems begin with boundaries. Water only smells when it is stagnant, not otherwise. So has the *jiva* become like the smell of stagnant water.”

Having showered bliss all around, at about 5 pm, Ma set out for her return with all those who had come with her. The villagers bid her a tearful farewell. They stood and watched her boat until it sailed out of sight. We went to the station in Bramhan Badiya and spent the night there.

6th September, Wednesday

Early this morning we set out for Dhaka and reached by 9.30 am. Having Ma in their midst unexpectedly, people were extremely happy. It was decided that we would leave the next day for Kolkata.

7th September, Thursday

Today we set out for Kolkata. A great dispute was going on in the *ashram*. Today the conflict escalated. Ma said, “You all get together and do what you consider is appropriate.” No one was able to come to a solution. It was indeed surprising that just before she left she made two or three comments and the dispute was resolved. The matter that Ma took up was a worldly one and it had not struck anyone till then. When Ma

raised the matter everyone was surprised. Although at the start Ma had been absolutely quiet about this matter. She heard everyone arguing, and said nothing. When the conflict reached its climax, Ma made a couple of remarks. I said laughingly, “Ma, this is very good! When we were all arguing hotly, you watched us calmly. Had you spoken these few sentences at the beginning we would not have had such a commotion. When you see that your children are unable to manage, then you give them a little push and then you go your way.” Ma replied with a smile, “There was no *kheyal*, what could be done? Whatever has to happen will happen only when it has to!”

Many people had come to meet Ma in the steamer. A gentleman did *pranam* and said, “I work in a jail. I have a question. We treat the prisoners in the jail badly. Will that sin be ours to bear?”

Ma replied, “When you have been appointed for this work, fulfil your duty, but do not act beyond that. If you mete out ill-treatment beyond your duty, then you will surely suffer for the sin. This is one side of it. The other aspect is that when you are in the company of such people some of their qualities will rub off on you as well. That is the result of keeping this type of company. Other than this, every action has its consequence. Therefore pray to God constantly.”

A comment was made, “That which cannot be understood “; Ma spontaneously remarked, “*abodhya*”, a term with identical meaning. Then she turned to me and smiled, “Look, if it can be understood, then it becomes of the nature of matter. Moreover, that which can be understood, that is within limits. That is why it is called, ‘*abodhya*’.”

I remembered that many people had said, “We are unable to understand Ma in any way.” That is so true. Had we been able to understand fully, we would have become That; what other

way is there to comprehend the limitless?

8th September, Friday

We reached Kolkata this morning. This time Ma stayed in the *ashram* of Siddha Baba. We left by the night train with Ma for Jamshedpur.

In the car, Abhay had questioned Ma, “Ma, when you had seen yourself in the *Chinnamasta* form, the headless form of the Goddess, you had seen the two *yoginis* in two separate channels, *nadis*. Did you see them as separate from your body?” Ma’s answer was, “Yes.”

What had happened then was that in Vidyakoot, Ma had entered a house and sat down in the *puja* room. That room had a picture of Chinnamasta Devi. Looking at that picture Ma had said, “This body has experienced exactly that. Although externally the body was not without its head, the *bhava* was explicitly that of having its head cut off. The head held in the hand, blood spouting from the top, exactly that way. Just as it happens with high blood pressure, the blood was gushing with great force. And, in that *bhava*, the two *yoginis* on either side drinking the blood, were myself too. Whoever enters that *bhava*, can see that form clearly.”

I said, “I think Pramath Babu witnessed this that day?” Ma replied, “Yes, and much more had happened.”

I said, “His peon saw ten forms.”

Ma corroborated that and said, “Yes, all kinds of experiences occurred.”

Abhay remarked, “It appears the peon’s *samskara* was good.” Ma nodded assent. She said, “Understand that each form has infinite manifestations.”

Today, during the car journey, Ma revisited some details of

that incident. Talking about such experiences Ma appeared visibly animated.

For the past few days Ma's *bhava* and body have been rather subdued. Some days the words, "Ban kar"¹⁰ were being uttered from her lips. Now such utterances were not occurring. She herself commented that the body seems to be becoming quiet. Conversation, walking about is happening, but, suddenly, in between, the body seems to become still. This *bhava* seems to be displayed in external matters also. Her food intake is also affected in some strange way. She seems disinclined to eat. She seems to be forcing herself to eat or speak. Ma alone knows what will happen. We are very worried.

9th September, Saturday

Early this morning we reached Jamshedpur. Many devotees were present at the station. Ma was taken first to the Kalibari, and then to a newly constructed house. Devotees expressed great joy in seeing Ma after such a long time. Many people have accompanied Ma from Kolkata. The devotees here had spared no effort to serve Ma and had made beautiful arrangements. There was not even the slightest lapse in looking after all those accompanying Ma either. Their devotion is beautiful.

10th September, Sunday

Today arrangements are being made to have *keertan* until sunset. The Name is being sung:

*Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna,
Krishna-Krishna Hare Hare,
Hare Ram, Hare Ram,
Ram-Ram Hare Hare.*

In the afternoon Ma was taken to an open space. She was

¹⁰ This is a typical expression and it is not possible to translate these words into anything meaningful.

taken around the ground and brought back. After sunset the *keertan* was brought to a close. A little later, however, everyone sat down to resume the singing. It was as if the intoxication arising from the *keertan* could not be restrained.

After the *keertan*, *Ma* was taken outside under a pandal, and made to sit. People wanted to hear *Ma* speak. *Ma* spoke for nearly three hours. She spoke to the devotees about *samyam vrata* and many other topics.

I took *Ma* to rest at about 11 pm.

11th September, Monday

There was talk of leaving for Kolkata by tonight. The devotees remonstrated, but finally gave in to *Ma*'s decision. When asked, "When will you give us *darshan* again?", *Ma* replied, "Baba, *Ma*, whenever you bring this girl again, she will come. If she does not come then that means her father and mother have not brought her here." Conversation went on in this strain. The wife of Dr. Jatin Babu had started weeping yesterday. Whenever her eyes filled up, to avoid others noticing her, she would turn away and engage in *Ma*'s service. The hearts of all the devotees are filled with the pain of separation. *Ma* had come after such a long time. People had been longing for her to arrive - now who knew when they would get *darshan* of *Ma*'s holy feet?

Yet no one sat near *Ma*. They were fully engaged in serving *Ma* and all those who were with her. In the evening they sat in a room with *Ma*, eager to weave *Ma*'s sacred words into their hearts. This would be their treasure. Most of them are restricted by their times of work. They do not get sufficient leave to travel to other places and have the good fortune to meet *Ma*. Perhaps this is the reason why these people open themselves so much to *Ma* when she visits, and even if they cannot be close to her physically, they do not want to lose the opportunity to be with her fully in *bhava*. *Ma* responded by filling their hearts

with bliss in everything she did - sitting, standing, speaking on different matters. She spoke of *samyam vrata*, “Nowadays, you people make me repeat this idea in many places. Try to make the effort to observe this *vrata*. Do you know what will happen if you do that? Have you heard of *chitta-darpan*, the mirror of the mind? That mirror will be cleaned. If the mirror is not clean, how will you see your *svaroop*, your real form, in it? Again it is said, take the Name with every breath.”

One person asked, “Ma, how shall we take the Name with every breath? Please help us understand this properly.”

Ma answered, “Now and again direct your attention to every breath and take the Name in that rhythm. Inhaling and exhaling alternately. Some people find that their head gets hot and they are unable to maintain this for long. Do you know why that is so? It is because *brahmacharya*, celibacy and other disciplines are not being followed. When this one *ashram* is destroyed, the other *ashrams*¹¹ are also ruined. Whoever finds his or her head getting hot while taking the Name in this manner, should not do this at all. Rather, such people should focus on their breath, sit completely immersed, and repeat the Name internally. There is no need to accompany the breath with the Name. Not everybody can tolerate all forms of practice. Just sitting still in this way will accomplish the work.”

“Again, see this, you are asked to bring together your mind, the *mantra* and your breath. If you look closely at this breath that we are taking, this breath is connected with everything and everyone else, it moves in union with the rest. All of us inhale and exhale this life breath from the same spot within ourselves. On this account we all have *yogayog*, union, with each

¹¹ The reference here is to the four *ashrams* or stages of life: *brahmacharya*, *grihastha*, *vanaprastha*, *sannyas*: the celibate life, householderhood, retiring to a forest, becoming a renunciate

other. Whoever the *sadhu* or *mahatma* may be, they are united with all others by way of the life breath. The contemplation of this gives rise to a great *bhava*. This breath is like a wave in this great *bhava*. Our goal is to move from this wave to the calmness with no waves. The wave, too, is water. This is the first way to go to wavelessness. We should find a path within the wave itself. It is like going under a huge wave in the ocean and then rising with it. Go on doing this with as much strength as you have. After that, nothing happens without His grace, that is the actual truth.”

We took Ma for a walk after the conversation. With the belief that their homes would be sanctified by the touch of Ma's holy feet, many people took Ma to their homes, their temples and their courtyards. On her return, *keertan* was sung. At the appointed hour they all accompanied Ma to the station. When the train departed around midnight, they all returned to their homes feeling bereft.

12th September, Tuesday

This morning when we reached Kolkata, the group of devotees took her to the Birla temple. When they heard that Ma would leave for Dehradun today, the devotees were very sad but Ma's departure was fixed. Ma left for Dehradun at 10 pm. Ma instructed Swami Akhandanandaji to go to the Dhaka *ashram* for some time.

13th September, Wednesday

We alighted at Benares at 2.30 pm. Ma went to Hari's *dharmashala*. Gradually, as they heard of Ma's arrival many people started coming. Hearing that she would leave for Dehradun the very next day, they were saddened. Yet they were overjoyed to have Ma with them for however long.

14th September, Thursday

We set out at 10 am. I was seated next to Ma in the second

class compartment at night. The conversation covered many topics. Referring to the story of Durvas *muni* who had eaten a full meal and then declared, I haven't eaten, one person asked, "Why did the *muni* utter a lie?"

In reply to this, Ma said, "That was not falsehood. In his state who could be said to be eating anything at all? We are constantly swallowing the saliva in our mouths. We do not call that eating. His eating and sleeping are not comparable to your experiences. This is why you are unable to comprehend his language. Honestly, very often, when you all observe some phenomena, you do not stop to reflect upon it."

Another question was raised, "Did Shri Krishna have a mind with thoughts, *vritti*? He fathered children. Ma replied to this as she did to the previous question, "Who is enjoying anything at all if He contains all within Himself? It is only if you are two, like you all are, can there be enjoyment. If He is said to be within Himself, then this, that is called the observer; who will observe whom, and what will be observed? As long as there is *drishti*, seeing, so long will there be *srishiti*, creation. Only if two exist, can there be an observer."

After this dialogue, in the course of further conversation, Ma laughed and remarked, "Some are talking about this body, that people are saying 'Ma, Ma, or God, God, or *avatar*, *avatar*, and glorifying her to such an extent that she has gone mad!' Saying this she laughed heartily. She continued, "Truly I am mad, because whatever anyone says I am, I am that."

This *bhava* that Ma has is so beautiful. Whenever Ma is in *bhava*, such a remark is heard from her. "Whoever regards me in whichever way, I am exactly that way to that person."

In Kashi, Krishna Ma (Mouni Ma or Manorama Datta) had met Ma and spent a long time telling her privately about her

own *sadhana*. She is in an advanced state. At present she is with Siddhi Ma in Kashi and has been the recipient of her grace. Krishna Ma had asked, “Ma, when will you give *darshan* again?” As Shashank Brahmachari got ready to leave, Ma replied to this question. “Tell Krishna Ma, whatever *darshan* she has at any time” (Krishna Ma has had different kinds of *darshan* and other experiences) “they are all this” - and Ma pointed to her heart.

I laughed and declared, “I am going to tell everybody what you just said!”

Ma also laughed and replied, “Go ahead, what can I do? What can I do about whatever it is that comes out from my lips?” She burst into childlike laughter.

15th September, Friday

This morning we reached Dehradun. In the afternoon, Ma was sleeping. After a long time, with her eyes closed, she uttered these words.

Padmaavatibuddhi
Birogaanand
Veergatiyaanand
Virajaanand

Some other words emerged that I could not catch. I questioned her about these utterances, “I think some people came to you? Were you speaking to them?”

With her eyes still closed, Ma replied, “Yes. I was telling one person - this is Padmaavatibuddhi. This Padma, her *buddhi*, intellect, is like that. And this is Birogaanand, that is *anand*, joy, without *roga*, disease. *Roga-shoonya*, disease-free, means released from the disease of the world. Veergatiyaanand, is the *anand* of *veergati*, martyrdom, what else? Birajaanand is one without *rajas*, the active quality, what else?”

I asked, “Who were you speaking to?”

Ma replied, “I will not say.”

She continued to sleep without speaking any more, with her eyes shut.

I have mentioned earlier that Ma has become quiet in her body, her *bhava*, and she has said that herself. This is the reason her speech is slurred at times and very often, she bites her tongue. In the evening Ma woke up and went for a walk. At night she went to sleep in the Moun Mandir, the temple of silence.

16th September, Saturday

This afternoon we made Ma lie down. For a few days now we have been maintaining silence, *maun*, when feeding Ma. Today, too, we were in *maun*. Suddenly Ma turned towards me and said, “*nirvaak*, without speech.” A little later she said, “I shall also maintain *maun*” and then became quiet.

All who were present became fearful, because Ma’s *maun* is not ordinary. Who knows why she was doing this? When we were washing Ma’s face, both Buni and I requested Ma not to keep *maun*, and Ma spoke normally. We were relieved that Ma was not maintaining silence. However, she went to the verandah and became quiet again. Her facial expression changed. In a partially reclining position she shut her eyes for some time. We again tried to persuade her to speak normally to us. Ma began to laugh and spoke a couple of words as well, but watching her laughter and manner of speaking, as well as the colour of her face, we felt more afraid. Buni started crying because she feared that Ma was going to keep *maun*.

A little later Ma said, “Shall I go to sleep?”

In order to interrupt her *bhava*, I asked, Would you like to go

for a walk?”

Continuing in her *bhava*, Ma asked, “Where?”

I observed there were no means to take her anywhere, and moreover Ma seemed to have become limp. So when she said again, “I shall go to sleep”, I took her inside the room and asked her to walk about for a little while. She began pacing around the room. She would not speak. Her laughter was strange and her gaze was unusual. I am fearful of this laughter and Ma’s gaze. Though she is laughing, it is as if she does not recognise anyone. Were I to die at this moment, Ma would not even notice it. That is the kind of *bhava* she is in. A little later she suddenly stumbled and stopped, and fearing she would fall, I supported her and took her to her bed.

Ma sat for a few moments in a deeply absorbed state and then asked, “Now shall I sleep?” Saying this she lay down and closed her eyes.

Abhay and I called out to her several times, but Ma was unable to respond. She was lost in some unknown *bhava*. An hour later we observed some change in her but her eyes remained shut.

At about 5 pm, Ma sat up. Many people had arrived and conversations were ongoing. Ma was also asking questions, but her self-absorbed state stayed for a long time. In the evening, a man who was out walking, found his way to the *ashram*. He liked what he saw and spoke to the *brahmacharis* to get detailed information. He also met Ma. Later we came to know that he is a doctor. He had never met her earlier.

Ma asked him, “Who else is there with you? Where do you live?”

He replied, “I live in Dehradun. There is no one else with

me.”

Ma asked, “Absolutely alone?”

He replied, “Yes.”

Ma said, “And you do not seek help from anyone either?”

He said, “No.”

The dialogue was being carried out in Hindi. Ma said, “But I see that you do take help, nor are you alone.”

Then he understood and said, “Yes Ma, that is true. What would we be able to do without His help? And He is always there with me!”

As the conversation proceeded, Ma said, “In worldly matters we cannot manage without help and on this path that is very hard, we cannot cope without a *guru*. A *guru* is essential on this path.”

The man responded, “I do not understand this point. Is it difficult for the child to find his mother?”

Ma remarked, “Pitaji’s statement is very right, but the issue is that the desire to attain the mother and the firm faith that ‘I am the son’, has to be there. This attitude is not there in everyone and therefore they find it difficult. I am referring to such people.”

In the course of conversation we discovered that the doctor had great faith in this path. He narrated a couple of incidents from his life. He has the faith that God is with him at all times.

Ma laughed and said, “That is the reason I asked you right in the beginning, ‘who is with you?’”

He replied, “I did not understand you. I thought perhaps you were enquiring about a wife and children.”

After sunset we all went in a car for a drive.

About 11 pm Ma went upstairs to rest. Tonight, again, she slept in the *maun mandir*.

17th September, Sunday

In the afternoon, Haridas Mukherjee arrived. During his conversation with Ma he spoke about a *sadhu* and said, “What happens if anger persists? It should be turned into mud, *mati*.”

Ma responded instantly, “Exactly. If you don’t turn into *mati*, mud, you cannot reach Ma - ti¹².”

Today we heard that Hariram’s brother, Madan, is in a serious condition. We came to know that he has been unable to sleep for the past 15 days. Ma slept at night, in the east facing verandah on the ground floor. She talked about Madan often during the night and had no inclination to sleep. Suddenly, her body also became very unwell.

18th September, Monday

This afternoon Hariram arrived with the news that last night Madan was able to sleep a bit and his condition has improved.

Ma’s condition appeared to worsen considerably by the evening. Seva arrived and examined Ma’s pulse. She was astonished. “It is impossible for one to have such a feeble pulse. It is so very faint, it can hardly be felt.” Jatish Dada also confirmed this.

Ma smiled sweetly and said, “Yes. That is the condition of this body.”

We then took her for a drive. She was saying, “This condition came on suddenly. The whole body feels very light. The head

¹² This is a play on words - *mati* is mud, and Ma probably speaks of humbling yourself like the mud beneath your feet, only after which you can reach Ma.

feels extremely light.”

She was unable to stand and so we made her lie down on the verandah. At 8 pm Ma started speaking, but the condition of her body had not returned to normal. She said, “The rate of breathing is strange and no stools have been passed either. The body is simply not functioning properly.”

19th September, Tuesday

This morning again, Ma declared, “The body appears to be unable to rise.” I massaged her body for a long time. A little later, she got up, but then lay down again. Many people wanted to speak to Ma privately. Ma was speaking to each one.

Ma said we would proceed to Solan today and by evening we set out. *Keertan* is being sung in Simla, and devotees there have sent a telegram requesting Ma to go there. Ma said, “Don’t inform anyone. If the *kheyal* arises, we shall go across immediately.”

20th September, Wednesday

We reached Solan this morning. Ma had a phone call made to Simla in such a way that they would not know that she had arrived in Solan, but still she could find out how long the *keertan* was going on in Simla.

At 6 pm we set out for Simla in a car belonging to the Raja *saheb* of Solan. By sunset we reached the door of the Kalibari in Simla. *Keertan* was in progress in the hall on the first floor.

Everybody decided that Ma would secretly cover her head with a shawl and enter thus veiled. She would enter alone and we would all wait outside. As she entered Ma had the *kheyal* that no one should see her. Her head was covered like the others. Ma walked through the crowd, went upstairs to where the women were congregated and found an empty chair. She sat on it. Her face was not visible clearly. Bhupen Vasu’s *keertan*

was in progress.

Seeing Ma, the women started whispering to each other, “What is this? Has a boy come disguised as a woman and sat down here?” When Ma leaned towards a woman near her, the woman pushed Ma away gently. Just then, seeing Ma’s hair come loose, and some other recognisable features, those who knew her began to wonder. They came closer and when they recognised Ma, they uttered cries of joy! The moment Ma went near the railing and looked down, the men saw her and were beside themselves with happiness.

So as not to interrupt the *keertan*, Ma requested everyone to be seated quietly and went down the stairs and sat down amidst the *keertan* singers. The *keertan* being performed was the story entitled “*Kalanka Bhanjan*”, the ‘Eradication of Wrongdoing’. We also entered slowly.

People were overjoyed to have Ma present all of a sudden, without prior notice. The *keertan* performer, Bhupen Babu was ecstatic and declared, “I had a deep desire to sing *keertan* for Ma once again. It is my great good fortune that Ma has come here today.”

After the *keertan* many went home, and many gathered and sat around Ma’s bed. A comment was made, “Ma, we understand that anyone who spends a night near your bed becomes a new person.” Ma laughed at this and remarked, “What is sleep, anyway?”

She said to Charu Babu, “It is good to keep the company of truth, it is good to speak on uplifting topics; maybe something will touch you when you speak. It is good to sleep. Maybe you will experience real sleep when you sleep. I am saying this referring to what you were saying about good consequences (of spending a night near me).”

We stayed with Ma in the same hall for the night. Tomorrow is *raas poornima*, the full moon night on which Krishna danced the *raas*. *Keertan* will be performed tomorrow as well. It was decided that after the *keertan*, Ma would return to Solan. Everyone objected to this, but seeing Ma's resolve to leave, nobody had the courage to stop her. It was about 1 am when Ma went to sleep.

21st September, Thursday

This morning Ma's physical condition suddenly became very weak. Ever since she reached Dehradun, Ma has been growing weaker, though there has been no illness. A great weakness, very erratic pulse, and she was having palpitations. She has travelled to Solan and Simla in this state. But today her condition is far worse.

Ma laughed and said, "There is no trouble whatsoever. I am fine. The whole body is growing quiet. I am ready at all times."

Hearing this we were extremely worried. We could see that she was unable to speak properly. We made her lie down quietly.

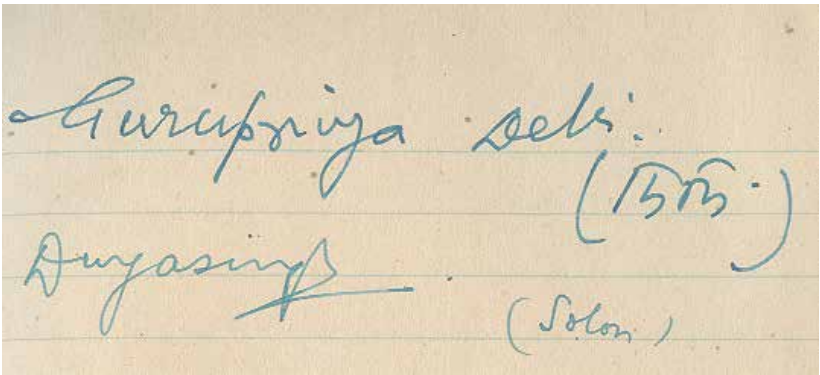
Since Ma is visiting for a short time, it was not possible to prevent people from coming and going entirely. Despite her physical condition, Ma was smilingly enquiring about each person's well-being. We were continuously reminding her, "Ma, your body is weak, do not speak too much." To which Ma responded by cheerfully telling all those who were present, "Sure. These people are telling me to be quiet. I don't remember to do so all the time. Alright, I shall remain silent now." Saying this, in a childlike manner, with a smile, she would stop speaking. Again, when anyone made a request, she would start speaking, and then would pay no attention to what she had just said.

Ma laughed and said, “There is no problem, right? Whatever has to happen will happen. If you people need to, you can keep an eye on me.”

By evening Ma’s condition showed some improvement. She went out accompanied by a big crowd. Many photographs were taken. We returned to the Kalibari after dusk. *Raas leela* was started at 7.30 pm. Since Ma was to leave, the *keertan* came to a close by 9.30 pm. As soon as Ma stood up, there was a rush of people surging towards her to offer *pranam*. Ma stood with folded palms, smiling, saying, “I take your leave”, and sought permission from everyone to leave.

We reached Solan at 12 midnight. As soon as the car halted, Raja *saheb* arrived to take the dust of Ma’s feet. Ma enquired, “You kept awake so late at night?”

As Ma entered the house and sat down, Rani *saheba* offered prayers at Ma’s feet. Hearing that Ma was unwell, they were worried, they told us. A little later, they took permission from Ma and left. As they were leaving, they informed us that a new house had been constructed and requested that they might take Ma there next morning, so she could remain in solitude.



The image shows two handwritten signatures in blue ink on lined paper. The first signature is 'Gurupriya sebi' with '(B.M.)' written below it. The second signature is 'Durgasingh' with '(Solan)' written below it.

Signatures of Didi Gurupriya and
Raja of Solan Durga Singhji

22nd September, Friday

This morning Ma was taken to the new house. No one had occupied this house till now. Ma's physical condition continues to be as it was. All arrangements were made to keep Ma in complete solitude.

This morning Amal Babu's wife, *Mezdi* (middle sister) and Shanti arrived from Delhi. They were very eager to see Ma. On learning that Ma had arrived, many people had gathered to see her. Ma's condition had improved slightly. Devotees from Simla were going to Delhi one by one, and were stopping here on their way, to meet Ma.

23rd September, Saturday

Jiten was going with his family to Delhi. He stopped for an hour here. He requested Ma to go to Delhi for Sharada *pooja*. He said, "Please grace the occasion. If you do not come the *pooja* will not be performed.

Ma responded to this request by saying, "You are present all the time. If you were not present would you be able to do *pooja*?"

Jiten replied, "I do not understand all that! You should be present!" Ma laughed and said, "You will be present!"

Jiten did not understand this statement and asked, "What will happen if I were to be present?"

Ma burst out laughing and said, "Look, there is no possibility of going to Delhi during the *pooja*. Yet, if madness overtakes me, there is no saying what I will do. Apart from that there is no thought of going anywhere. *Pooja* will be performed in the Dhaka *ashram* also. They have asked me to go there as well, and that does not seem possible either. If this body is well enough they will take it to Baijnath, Suket-Tuket."

The Raja of Suket has been trying to take Ma there for the

past three or four years, but this has not happened. Ma said, “If *yogayog*, synchronicity, occurs, perhaps; you people keep making the effort.”

The Raja of Suket has been informed and he has sent people to escort Ma. To get to Suket we have to go via Amritsar, Baijnath. Taranand Swami had sent a special invitation requesting Ma to go to Baijnath for *Navaratri*, because he wanted an idol of Tara from Ma. The late Jyotish Dada had had it made in Kashi. It had been decided that Bholanath would install it in Baijnath. But Bholanath gave up his body before the temple was ready. Now the idol will be installed in that temple and there was a special request for Ma to be present at the installation. The Raja of Solan is a devotee of Taranand Swamiji. If Ma were to go, he said he would accompany her with his Rani. If Ma has the *kheyal* and she is well enough, then she may go to Baijnath. As Ma’s condition has been very bad, there is a delay in setting out.

Ma slept in the afternoon and woke up at about 5 pm. Just ten minutes before she woke up, I spread my blanket near her feet and lay down. Ma sat up and asked me, “Were you sleeping?” I replied, “I was lying down, but did not fall asleep.”

Ma asked, “Did sleep (*tandra*) not come then?” I said, “Who knows? I do not understand what you mean.” At that point there was no more talk about this. A little later, finding myself alone with Ma I asked her, “Ma, why did you ask that question?”

Ma laughed and replied, “Do you know what I was seeing? That you were under water and were not coming out. I was saying to you, ‘You do not know how to swim; hope the water is not very deep? Are there *khuds* or hollows there?’ So saying, I extended my foot to that spot. As soon I touched you with my foot I saw that your eyes were half shut (your fingers were moving) as if you were getting drowsy during your *japa*, meaning

you were overcome by *tandra*. But you could remember what was happening and you were conscious. That was exactly how you were behaving.”

Saying this she burst out laughing. I understood that I was drowning in the ocean of delusion, *moha*, and Ma had lifted me out with her feet.

The wife of Amal Babu has brought a *saree* for Ma from Delhi with a special request that Ma should wear it. At night, after everybody had left, Ma said to me, “Bring it here, let me wear that *saree*.” When the *saree* was draped around her, she began to fool around like a child. She covered her head with it, sang a song; there were hardly any people in the room. Someone spoke about Krishna, and Ma, with the *saree* around her, walked about singing,

“*Krishno ongo gondho paay*
Tvorito gopini dhaay”

“Krishna’s scent she catches
The *Gopini* swiftly dashes”

She started singing many songs in this strain, smiling sweetly all the while. The whole room seems to vibrate and dance with Ma’s radiance, this form, the strains of her melody. The four directions seem to be smiling in consonance. This house is located in a solitary spot, surrounded by mountains, a beautiful scene. Ma went to sleep at 12 midnight.

24th September, Sunday

Tonight Ma made all kinds of sounds in her sleep. Suddenly she said, “Allah Hastiphal.” She turned over several times, smiling all the while. Though her voice was deep still she uttered those words rapidly and clearly. In spite of trying repeatedly I am not sure if I managed to catch any of it. I have written whatever I made of it.

She then laughed and said, “Hearing all this perhaps some people will say that a Muslim soul has entered this body. Those who do not know will say that.” A little later she said, “I will say no more. I have been told not to. I tell my own body not to do something and it says it will!” Some minutes later she said, “What is the meaning of *svaroop mandita*?” She was asking everybody.

Then words like ‘*ban kar*’ and several other words were uttered. Along with that she was also conversing with me and answering my questions. A little later, she started clapping her hands and sang, “Hai Gourang, Hai Nitaai, Hai Nitaai, Hai Nitaai” and sat down, stood up, swayed and moved with the rhythm of her song. Then she sang, “Jai Gourang, Jai Nitaai” followed by “Jai Radhe Govind.” This kind of playful action went on for quite some time. Finally, she went back to sleep.

25th September, Sunday

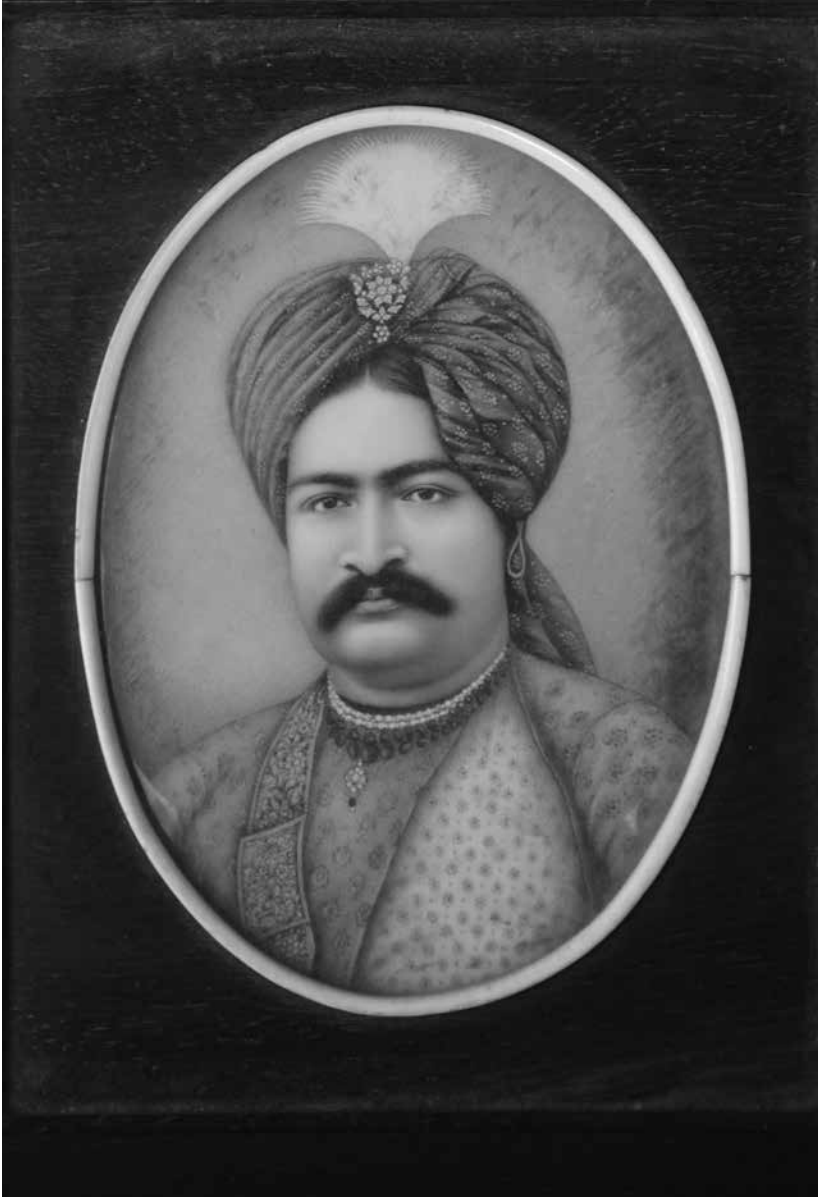
In the morning Amal Babu’s wife asked, “Ma, do garlands have life too? People say you should not let a garland starve.”

Ma replied, “Surely, living consciousness is present in everything.”

At night, seated on her mattress, she declared, “Look, you all speak on many matters, I shall also speak to you. My speech seems to be fading in some way.”

Hearing this, all those who were present were afraid and agitated. Their minds were struck by the thought that Ma would stop speaking altogether. Ma said, “I will speak when I am able to, and will not speak when I can’t. I cannot say when speech will cease. Whatever happens will happen. Right?”

Looking towards me she said, “Listen, I do not remember everything. Tomorrow morning, be sure to remind me of this, do you understand?”



Raja of Suket

I nodded and said, "Very well."

26th September, Tuesday

Today there was talk of going to Baijnath, Suket. Raja Saheb came and sat down. He was opposed to the idea. Ma said, "What will happen? All places are the same to me. I could be seated here on this mattress, or in a train. As for my health, that will be whatever it is. I am ready at any time."

Ma is not keeping well. Yet she told us to get ready to leave. Raja, Rani and all others knew that if it was Ma's desire to leave, no one could stop her. All expressed their sadness that Ma did not stay as long as they would have liked, but nobody had the courage to prevent her from going. This day was spent thus.

27th September, Wednesday

This morning Ma said, "Get ready to leave. Then whatever has to happen will happen."

We left with Ma by the night train, Buni, Deviji, Abhay, Yatish Dada, Hariram and myself. On the 28th morning we reached Amritsar and from there we reached Pathankot in four hours. A car had been sent from Suket to drive her there. We started at about 12 noon. Suket is 150 miles from Pathankot.

Ma halted at Baijnath on the way (84 miles). Taranand Swamiji was extremely happy to see Ma. He showed her the Tara Ma temple that was under construction and the room was being built for Ma to stay in. The image of Tara Ma will be installed during *navaratri*, the nine day festival. Swamiji made a special request that Ma should be present for the installation. Ma replied, "Watch, whatever happens!"

Ma went to see the room where she would stay. It was in a deserted spot. She sat there for a little while and then took leave of Swamiji.

We reached Suket a little after sunset. On the way we saw

Noorpur Dharmashala, Mukti Prabhriti and other such beautiful places. The Raja's staff had phoned earlier and Ma was taken to the Raja's temple. The temple doors were shut at that time. A house had been built next to the temple for the Rajaguru Haradatta Shastri, or some other *maha purusha*, great soul, to live in. Arrangements had been made for Ma to stay there. It is a very comfortable set up.

This is a very large state. The officers of this princely state were all engaged in serving Ma. A little later Raja Saheb arrived and washed Ma's feet with water (*arghya*) and performed *pooja* with a silver plate decorated with incense sticks, a lamp and *bhog*. All details had been organised, from the mattress to the mosquito net, silver vessels for preparing Ma's *bhog* had been arranged beautifully and even the bathroom was very clean. Raja Saheb sat near Ma and conversed with her for quite some time before he left.

29th September, Friday

This morning Ma was taken to see the temple. We were all very happy to see the temple. It was equipped with everything one could need. Different rooms had been constructed for those who wanted to engage in spiritual practices in solitude. Everyone praised the Raja's tastefulness and his spirit of service. In one section of the temple there was an idol of Lord Narayan reclining in the *ananta shayana*¹³ posture, with Goddess Lakshmi at his feet. At the entrance of this sanctum was Garuda¹⁴ with folded palms. Another room had an idol of the ten-shouldered Goddess Durga and at the entrance was a lion. Another section had a large Shivalinga, with Goddess Parvati on the side and a bull at the entrance. In the last room was a bed for the Goddess

13 *Ananta shayana* is *Vishnu* lying on *Shesha*, the 1000 headed serpent- a pose also referred to as *Padmanabha*, as a lotus, *padma*, springs from his navel, *nabhi*, in which is seated *Brahma*, the creator.

14 *Garuda* is the eagle who transports Lord *Narayana* from place to place



Durga Puja at Solan 1946

and all the items needed for her adornment and decoration were displayed beautifully on a table. These included a silver box with vermillion, *sindoor*, a comb, a toothbrush, a container for betel leaf, all made of silver. An attached bathroom was equipped with all necessary fixtures, beautifully arranged. Lamps were burning continuously in this bedroom, fitted into specially made niches in the wall. In another section of the temple, behind a glass door was a fire, *dhuni*, that was kept alight continuously. This *dhuni* has been burning for the last 8 or 9 years, since this temple was built.

There were more rooms next to this temple. We heard that the Raja comes to stay here occasionally. The rooms opened into a large courtyard. This had a room above it in which there was the idol of Shiva and Parvati that belonged to the time of Lakshman Sen, who was an ancestor of the Raja. Shiva and Parvati are seated on a bull. We heard this idol was originally up in the mountains. On receiving instructions in a dream, this idol was installed and the finest arrangements for its worship were made.

At about 9 am, the Raja's children, three boys and two girls, arrived to offer their *pranams* to Ma. These children do not speak any language other than English. Soon after they left, the Raja arrived. A little later, the Rani arrived with the Raja's brother's wife. They placed several flower garlands around Ma's neck. They offered various silk cloths and flowers and fruits at Ma's feet and did *puja* and *pradakshina*, circumambulating Ma. They had also brought lunch and the Rani herself fed Ma a few morsels. They stayed for an hour and conversed on various topics. We learnt that their ancestor, Lakshman Sen, hailed from Bengal.

In a room below the temple is a large lion. The story narrated by the Raja about this lion was quite extraordinary. They have

brought this lion from Lahore; he is an African lion. He was brought here during the installation of this temple. Once this lion had escaped from its cage somehow. All the people seeing this were terrified. But the lion walked straight to the temple of Durga and started walking around the idol, doing *pradakshina*. And then in one leap he returned to his cage and stood near the entrance.

The lion keeper thought, "It was my fault that the lion escaped. I could be executed. Now if I try to restrain the lion it might kill me. So either way my death is certain." Having reflected thus, he went and stood next to the lion. The lion placed his front paws on the keeper's hands and started sniffing him. The keeper then gently held the lion's ears and led him into the cage. The lion did not resist and slowly entered his cage. The keeper had almost fainted by this time. He shut the door of the cage behind him as he walked out and dropped down unconscious.

We also heard that this lion fasts every Wednesday and drinks only milk that day. Another incident was described in which a man came to see the lion and cursed him using foul language. As a result the man fell seriously ill. He returned to the lion and begged to be forgiven, after which he recovered without any medication.

We heard legends about this place - it was believed that Shukadev had performed penance for several years here. This place was named Shuket in his memory. The cave in which Shukadev did his penance has been preserved with great care, and it is said that the five Pandavas had lived in the cave for some days. During that time, a large rock that was dislodged from the mountain side was about to fall on Kunti Devi, and Bhima stopped the rock with his bare hands and saved his mother - so the story goes. Bhima's hand print exists on that

rock to this day.

We heard from other people that the Raja's first born was a girl child who died. When this child died, the Raja issued a ban on hunting and the tradition of offering *bali*, animal sacrifice. The Raja also had no further children. Then, the Rani had a dream in which the Goddess Bhagavati appeared before her and said, "You can offer me some service." It was after that, that the Devi idol was installed and special Devi *pooja* was started. After that the Raja and Rani had their first son followed by the other children.

In the afternoon Ma was driven in a car to see the cave, accompanied by the Rani. The place was very beautiful. There is a reservoir bringing together Ganga and Jamuna. We learnt that there is path from the cave through the mountains, by which Shukadev would go for his bath in the Ganga in Haridwar every day. When he returned to this place one day, after his dip, he squeezed out the water from his *dhoti*¹⁵, and that was how the Ganga originated at this spot. There are also the *samadhis*, tombs, of some *sadhus* here. We heard that one of these *sadhus* had gone by a path inside this cave for a distance of 6 or 7 miles after which he was unable to go further. Many snakes blocked his path. One can traverse part of this tunnel whilst standing and some part has to be negotiated lying down.

The Raja even made this spot habitable. The kingdom is full of fruits, flowers and vegetation, as though Goddess Lakshmi is herself there, bound to the spot.

Raja Sahib's sister-in-law conveyed a message from the Raja to Ma, specially requesting her to grace their home with the dust of her feet. Also they would like to take her to all parts of the kingdom, for the Raja believed that would be auspicious

¹⁵ *Dhoti*: a type of sarong that resembles loose trousers when wrapped

for the whole kingdom.

We went around for some time and then returned to the Raja's palace. The Raja and members of his family offered flowers at Ma's feet that they had plucked from their garden, and the Raja himself brought a chair for Ma to sit on. Ma would not enter the house; she sat outside, surrounded by a variety of trees bearing flowers and fruits. The Raja plucked a fruit and placed it in Ma's hands saying, "I brought the sapling of this fruit tree from Japan and planted it myself."

A Bengali friend of the Raja, who is currently visiting, had also come for Ma's *darshan*. He is a scholar of advanced years. The Raja introduced him to Ma saying, "Ma, he is a *pandit*. He is 75 years old." Panditji bowed before Ma, and began reciting *Bhagavati Stotra* with folded palms. We returned to the temple before the *arati*.

In the evening, Ma went walking to the temple. Observing the idol of Parvati next to the Shivaling, seated with folded palms, Hariram asked, "Ma, to whom is Devi praying?"

Ma replied, "Devi is joining her palms to offer prayers to herself. Sometimes people ask, 'why does Shiva take the name of Hari?' You people have the feeling of being separate, don't you? That is the reason you think along such lines. I say, he takes his own name."

At about 9 pm Ma returned to her room.

30th September, Saturday

This morning the Raja arrived and stayed till 11 am. During *Chaturmas*¹⁶, the Raja does not punish anybody. However, the people of his kingdom, knowing that the Raja will not punish anyone, indulge in all kinds of activities that break the laws. The Raja spoke to Ma in confidence, "Ma, I face a great conflict

16 The 4 months after Gurupoornima when *sannyasis* remain in one place

during that time. Ma, why have you put me in this quandary?” He expressed his sadness as he said this.

I heard from Ma that the Raja spends three or four hours a day worshipping God. The Rani, too, performs spiritual practices similarly. Both are very devoted and have great faith. We heard that this Raja follows all the rules laid down for a Hindu king assiduously. He also serves *sadhu* guests regularly. During *navaratri*, a big fair is organised. About 10,000 people gather at this temple from nearby places, each carrying their own idol of Devi, and a grand procession takes place.

Raja and Rani said, “Ma, you have come here. You have showered your limitless grace on us! We have been waiting for this for such a long time.”

Ma laughed and said, “Why do you consider me an outsider; just make me your own. Grace-trace¹⁷ are for those you consider not your own. This girl has come to her mother. Are my parents different from me? There is nothing but One. War itself exists only when there is duality. If there is a feeling of oneness then who is there to fight? Do we engage in fighting with our own body?” Raja Rani agreed with joined palms, “What you say is perfectly true, Ma.”

This afternoon we went to see Shukadeva Ashram again. This was because the Rani was with us yesterday and so no men could accompany us¹⁸. Today everybody went with Ma. After visiting Shukadev Ashram we also went to the land that has been given as an offering by the Raja to his Gurudev. That spot is also very charming. It feels like the Queen of Nature in her most enchanting form is present there every moment.

¹⁷ Ma often used rhyming words like *kripa-tripa* to signify this word and other such words

¹⁸ The women of the royal family did not move out in mixed company because of the *pardaa* system

Flowers and fruits are looking on smilingly in all directions. Nearby, is a small pond with tiny fish darting about playfully. The water is so clear that the sand at the bottom of the pond is visible. A *naga sadhu* lives here.

Ma went to him and sat down saying, “Pitaji, tell us something meaningful. I have come to hear you.”

The *sadhu* was getting ready to smoke marijuana. Hearing Ma’s request he stopped his preparations and started talking about the scriptures. Ma sat resting hand on cheek with childlike attention and listened to him. We were standing to one side.

After speaking for some time the *sadhu* said, “I do not know who you are. Who knows whether you are here to trick me? Be that as it may, tell me where have you come from? Where is your home?” Ma laughed and replied, “This house that is Baba’s, is my home!” After a few more such exchanges when Ma got up to leave, the *sadhu* said to the Raja’s employees, “I heard that a Mataji has come to the Maharaja’s Mahamaya temple. Is she that Mataji?” When he came to know that she was, the *sadhu* said, “Mataji, come again and instruct this child.” By then Ma had walked some distance away. Turning around she said, “Baba, you should not speak like this to your daughter. Whenever her father fetches her, the daughter will come.” The conversation had been carried out in Hindi.

This place was very far from the temple. As Ma’s car drove through the streets, shopkeepers and other residents on either side of the road stood with joined palms, offering their *pranams*.

Again, we returned after dusk. Ma walked in the grounds of the temple for quite some time. We walked with her and spoke on many issues. The Raja’s private secretary, who came to inquire if Ma needed anything, offered his *pranams*. He shared

many facts about the kingdom with Ma.

At 10 pm Ma returned to her room. Abhaya started singing *keertan*. About 11 pm we went to sleep.

1st October, Sunday

This morning the Raja and Rani arrived, accompanied by the Raja's brother's wife. The two ladies performed *pooja* for Ma. They brought all the items for the worship with them. They left at about 11 am.

In the afternoon, Ma was taken to the palace. She was brought to sit in the garden. Then she was taken to the gardens of the Rani where the queen's maids were standing dressed in colourful apparel. As Ma entered she was welcomed with fruits and flowers. As the *Bhagavati Stotra* was recited, they offered flowers at Ma's feet and did *pranam*. Ma sat down as the maids continued to stand and watch. There were 23 or 24 maids and Ma addressed them as 'Mataji'.

Ma said, "In the whole world I have only one Ma; my Ma is me; there is one world; I alone am." The Rani and her family were delighted to see Ma's wonderful *bhava*.

Ma spoke on different matters and engendered an atmosphere of great joy. The Rani and others repeatedly joined their palms and offered *pranams* to Ma. The scene all around was very beautiful. This whole kingdom, and particularly the palace gardens, are surrounded by a chain of mountains that seem like a fortress. The natural beauty of this kingdom has been enhanced by the Raja's effort to maintain it just as it is. From whatever I have been witnessing and hearing, it is difficult to refrain from praising the sincerity, the aesthetic sensitivity and knowledge of the Raja.

The policies for education and other portfolios seem to be very sound. There is a high school. Education is compulsory in

this kingdom and therefore everybody is literate. Every school has prayers in the timetable. The Raja's 8 year-old eldest son also has to perform *pooja*, and read scriptural texts. The parents themselves instruct their children in worship and chanting.

We returned after sunset. Every night, at 10 pm, someone comes from the Raja to enquire about Ma's wellbeing and brings milk and some sweetmeat for Ma. The Raja sleeps at 12 midnight. Till that hour, some envoy or the other keeps arriving and the Raja himself calls on the phone to ask about Ma's health and requests that she ask for anything she may require. This spirit of service is truly wonderful.

2nd October, Monday

Today is *ekadashi*, the eleventh day of the lunar calendar, and the Raja had to offer worship to his forefathers. Therefore he could not visit Ma. He had said he would visit her in the evening. At about 11 am, platters laden with food, incense and flower garlands, were sent from the palaces of the three Ranis. We heard that the Raja has placed a photo of Ma in his *pooja* room and he worships it every day. Since yesterday, after the evening's *arati*, they have been offering *arati* to Ma as well. Here, after the *arati*, an ensemble of different instruments is played. People come to Ma's room twice a day with all the items for worship and perform *arati*.

The Raja had seen Ma only twice before this (once in Haridwar and then in Dehradun). The surprising fact is that the Raja and all his people worship Ma as a form of *Bhagavati*.

The Ranis sent a message that they would take Ma out this evening at 4 pm.

We set out in the evening with the ladies. In another garden belonging to the Rani there is a Shiva temple. It is a scenic spot. Vegetables were harvested from the garden and placed at Ma's

feet. Here also there is a priest who performs *pooja* every day.

The Raja's name is Lakshman Sen. His older brother was Bhimsen, whose two wives are still alive. Bhimsen was the king when he died 10 years ago without any progeny. The three Ranis, Bhimsen's two wives and the present Rani, had accompanied Ma this evening.

Raja Lakshman Sen's Rani said, "When I shut my eyes I see Ma." Last night she had composed a song about Ma that she sang for her. Offering worship at Ma's feet, the Rani said, "Who knows when I shall get this good fortune again?"

Ma remonstrated, "There is no need for any more of this. You do not treat a daughter in this way." Everybody was delighted with these words from Ma. Today again we returned after dusk.

3rd October, Tuesday

Raja Sahib was making a special effort to keep Ma here during *Durga Pooja* with the intention of offering *pooja* to Ma; but Ma said, "Nothing is certain about me. When the *kheyal* arises I shall leave. You people must not organise anything requiring the presence of this body."

At the same time, the Swamiji in Baijnath will have the installation of the temple on the *ashtami tithi*, the eighth day of *Durga Pooja*. The ceremonies will commence on the *panchami*, the fifth day, and he has made a special request that Ma should be present in his *ashram* from that day. Ma never confirms anything, she always says, "whatever happens."

Worried that Ma may not be here for the three main days of *Pooja*, the Raja has made arrangements to worship Ma on the *tritiya*, the third day. He could not pluck up the courage to say this to Ma, but went about the preparations on his own, saying, "If I am fortunate enough Ma will surely shower her grace." Ma's health appears to be better today. This place is 3500 feet

above sea level and so it is not very cold here, and it is also quite sparsely populated.

4th October, Wednesday

This afternoon we went with Ma to the Shukadev *Ashram*. Raja *sahib* sent the car at 4 pm. Raja *sahib* and the Rani sat in the garden with Ma. Raja *sahib* took many photographs of Ma. He also recorded Ma on a movie film, as the Rani offered *pooja*, pressed her feet, even as Ma remonstrated. No one listened to her objections. Raja *sahib*, like a child, clicked one photo after the other, as if he was unable to contain his joy. Our Ma, sat unmoved, blissful in every situation. Again, for her there is neither joy nor sorrow.

The Raja's little children arrived and he instructed them to prostrate fully on the ground and offer their *pranam*. He asked the oldest Rajkumar, "Tell Ma about all that you do every morning." The boy recited *stotras*, and said he did *japa* of Shiva's name. Ma strikes up a friendship with all children and she did the same with these children as well. She said, "All the children in the world are my friends. And so the parents of my friends are my parents."

Saying this Ma made everybody joyful. The Rani stood up and with joined palms started reciting the poem she had composed on Ma, in a very sweet voice.

Ma remarked, "You have named your daughter *Bhavani*. Some call her Gauri. Parents fondly call their children by so many different names. In just that way this body was named "Anandamayi." I know nothing. I just eat, drink, wander and roam about."

Everybody was delighted with these words. Raja *sahib* declared, "Our Ma is like the water on the lotus leaf. She is in the midst of everything but nothing touches her."

After conversation on various topics, we returned to the temple after dusk.

5th October, Thursday

Today is *Mahalaya*.¹⁹ Ma had the *kheyal* to have a bath and it was a really leisurely one. *Bhog* was offered at about 1 pm. Ma usually rests in the afternoon till about 4 pm. Even before she got up, local residents had gathered and were waiting for her. As soon as she woke up they were ready with fruits and flowers to offer their *pranam*. Ma often tells the women, “Do not sit idle. Sing *bhajan*.” And they start singing.

Today some women had come from villages. They were veiled and we could not see their faces properly. As soon as they started singing *bhajan*, Ma covered her head and sat in their midst smiling and saying, “I have also come from a village.” Saying this, she started singing a few strains of the song along with them. Watching Ma’s antics, all present were delighted. Ma struck up a friendship with all the children who had come with their mothers. Speaking and conversing, Ma made everybody happy. In the midst of all this playful gaiety she assumed a serious demeanor, took on a steady attitude and said solemnly “Alright, who are you going around with? *Sadhus* sit seriously on their *aasan*, and speak wise and good words. While this (pointing towards herself) plays and has fun with everybody, eats, drinks and roams about. Neither is there *japa* nor is there *tapa*”²⁰. What kind of *sadhu* is this, Baba?” Saying this, Ma assumed an expression conveying so many different *rasas*.

Over the last two or three days, Ma had been composing a

19 *Mahalaya Amavasya* is the new moon night that heralds the start of Durga Puja that lasts for nine nights, *Navaratri*, ending with the tenth day otherwise called *Vijayadashami*, *Bijoya*, or *Dussehra*

20 *Japa*, repetition of the Name and *tapa*, penance, are often clubbed as indicators of *sadhana*, spiritual practice.

song - I had taken a paper and pencil and noted it down. This was the song:

*“Oré jeebér jeebon-dhon
Tumi buddho, tumi shuddho
Tumi nityo nironjono.
Tumi mukto tumi shanto,
Tumi Satyo Narayono.
(aabaar) Koroccho koto maya khela,
Dekhao joto bhobojvala,
Bhang ébar beda ghera,
Oré pagol pranodhon.”*

“Oh life’s treasure of all creatures
You are all-knowing, purity is thy nature,
You are constant, you are flawless.
You are free, you are peaceful,
You are the Truth, Narayan.
(And) You play such Maya games with us
Display such flashes in creation;
Break the bonds that shackle us
Oh crazy treasure of life force!”

After sunset, Ma was strolling in the temple courtyard accompanied by some of us. As she walked she started chanting the Name,

*“Hari Om, Hari Om, Hari Om
Hari bol, Hari bol, Hari bol.”*

This chant went on for half an hour. It was time for the *arati*. We went indoors. I have already mentioned that during *arati* here a number of instruments like the horn, the bells, are played. In the same way, *arati* is performed to Ma also, twice a day.

Arati was performed and then Hariram stood near Ma and

chanted *stotras*. Abhay sang *keertan*. We went to sleep at 11 or 12 o'clock.

6th October, Friday

This morning, again, Raja *sahib* visited Ma. I heard that yesterday he had narrated several anecdotes to Ma and Hariram. The anecdotes were very beautiful but he did not want to disclose them to everybody, and so Ma and Hariram did not discuss them with the rest of us. When Raja *sahib* arrived this morning I requested him to share the stories with us as well. Laughing amicably, he requested Hariram to tell us all that he had heard.

After sunset, when we all sat together, this is what Ma and Hariram told us:-

Once, during *Navaratri*, the Raja had fasted for 7 days and performed *pooja*. One night when he was performing *pooja* at a late hour, he suddenly had an extraordinary vision - his oldest daughter who had died, was standing with a plate of food. She started insisting on feeding her father. The Raja did not want to break his fast and repeatedly refused to eat but his daughter kept persisting.

Angered, the Raja exclaimed, "She who comes in this form to break her father's vow, is a witch!" Yet she refused to obey him. The Raja asked, "You died a long time ago. How have you appeared now?" She replied, "I have come to feed you. You have to eat." The Raja was compelled to eat something. When the Raja returned to himself he found that there was actually an almond in his mouth.

During the same *Navaratri*, he had an acutely upset stomach accompanied by a fever. Yet he did not discontinue the *pooja*. He had to go to the toilet every now and then, and return to the *aasan* for the *pooja*. Once when he went to the toilet, the

hot water had run out²¹. He did not call out to a servant to fetch hot water, he went straight to the feet of the Goddess and complained, “Ma, why are you putting obstacles like this in my way?” As he said this he found warm water coming out of the tap. He was astounded! How did this water appear suddenly in the middle of the night? He bathed with the warm water and returned to the *aasan*. A little later he fell asleep on the *aasan*. After a few minutes he woke up to find that the fever was gone. So was the diarrhoea, and he began to feel very well.

Listening to this story we were reminded of another incident which occurred a couple of days ago, when Ma was having a bath here. We had not observed hot water coming out of any of the taps in Ma’s bathroom. Just when Ma went to have a bath, hot water poured out of the tap and filled the container of bath water. Soon after, the hot water stopped and did not resume again.

Ma laughed and said, “How many people are there! The toilet in Vyas - someone would come and clean it.” I may have mentioned this incident earlier about the toilet in Vyas. For 3 or 4 days I had not noticed how that toilet had been kept so clean regularly. Finally, one day, Ma drew my attention to the fact and I was mystified by how the toilet seemed to be clean of its own accord. The moment I became aware of it the cleaning ceased!

We heard about yet another incident. After their first-born died, the Raja and Rani did not have a child for a long time. Then, when the Rani did conceive, the Raja took her to Delhi to have her delivery there. Three months later it was the time. The doctor, and a lady doctor, were all present and there were phone calls from various prominent people making enquiries.

²¹ A *poojari* who went to a toilet had to take a bath before resuming the *pooja*

The team of doctors, after examination, declared, "There will be no further delay, the delivery is due any time now."

Just then the Rani sent for the Raja and told him something. A little later she said, "My stomach is hurting. I need to go to the toilet." She went to the toilet and passed motions at least 50 times. She was passing stools continuously. Soon after it was observed that all signs of pregnancy had disappeared. She was in a perfectly normal state, with no sign of any foetus.

The Raja was receiving phone calls incessantly. What could he say? He replied, "The Rani is unwell." And the same night he told the Rani, "Some urgent work has cropped up in the State. I have to leave now. You return with my private secretary." Saying this, overcome with embarrassment, he left Delhi immediately and returned to his State.

Ma laughed and said, "After narrating this incident the Raja, very jokingly declared, "Mataji, people make fun of you in this way (here he enacted how one's nose is cut off) and my nose was cut off exactly that way (and he demonstrated the nose being cut off in the opposite direction)!"

The third incident- once, during *Navaratri*, the Raja performed *Kumari pooja*, worship of a young girl. Suddenly, the little girl died on the spot. Doctors examined her and declared death due to heart failure. The Raja sat numb with shock. The girl's parents wailed loudly and laid the blame squarely on the Raja. The news spread through the entire kingdom. The Raja, not knowing what to do, just sat there. Just then there was a knock on the door. He asked, "Who's there?"

"It is the Rani," came the reply, "open the door." On opening the door, the Raja saw it was the Rani dressed very strangely.

The Rani normally never entered the Raja's *pooja* room. The Raja's palace was a separate quarter where the Rani seldom

went because of *pardaa*. Seeing the Rani arrive all of a sudden in this way, the Raja asked in surprise, “You have come *here*?”

The Rani replied nervously, “Quick, place that *Kumari* in my lap.”

When the Rani repeated this several times, the Raja placed the girl in her lap. The Rani had not been keeping well at that time, but despite her weakened condition she sat with the child on her lap from 10 am to 4 pm, after which, the girl started moving her limbs and her breathing resumed.

The Raja asked the Rani, “who are you?”

The reply was, “Tarini Devi.”

For a few days, the Rani had been displaying some signs of being possessed. But the Raja did not believe in such phenomena. Now he began to accept such things.

The Rani, to the extent I have been able to understand her, is very peaceful, humble, pure, and imbued with religious feeling. So many songs and hymns in praise of Ma have emerged spontaneously from within her, which she has sung and recited standing before Ma. At those moments I have felt she can be called a personification of devotion.

7th October, Saturday

This afternoon the Raja came as always to offer *pooja* in the temple (during *Navaratri* he visits the temple every day to perform *pooja*). He came to offer *pranam* at Ma’s feet and then took Ma with him. There, those who were with us sang *keertan*. The Raja anointed Ma himself and then performed *arati*. To protect Ma from the cold, an enormous umbrella had been erected. The Ranis were holding the umbrella. After sunset, after seeing Ma return in a car to the temple, the Raja went for his meal. During the day he drinks only a cup of tea or milk

and some fruit, and has some *rotis* only after sunset.

Ma returned to the temple and lay down on her bed; we sat around her. In the course of conversation Ma said, “See, this Shiva *pooja* that is performed - what is this Shiva? *Param Shiva* alone is the goal. *Shakti pooja* is performed, but if *shakti sanchaar*, the infusion of power, does not happen, nothing can happen. Therefore *Shakti pooja*, that is *shakti sanchaar*, must be done. *Guru pooja*, without taking refuge in the *guru*, *guru aashray*, *shakti sanchaar* will not happen. We need the protection of the *guru*, only then will the above two happen. Everything is present at each level.”

The conversation then turned to the topic of this State being plagued by a *gana*²², (gods are not called *ganas*). At times some people have seen it and heard it speak. It molests women. Once it had killed a guard. The name of the *gana* is Narasimha. The *gana* takes on different forms. Sometimes it is in the form of a tiger, or a lion at other times. It even took the form of the Raja and went near the Rani, who recognised it immediately and started screaming. We heard about so many such incidents. There is a spot where the mountains rise up which little children go to in the afternoons, and become unconscious.

The Raja himself spoke about this to Ma today and asked, “What should we do Ma?” Everybody wished that this plague would be removed from the State. Ma said, “I met this creature the day I came here. It is there for sure.”

As this conversation was in progress, Ma saw Jatishda’s face and asked, “Did you see something?” He replied, “Yes Ma, I saw a form standing near the window. At first I thought my eyes were playing tricks, but then I repeatedly rubbed them and

²² *Gana* is a follower or attendant of Shiva, with some supernatural powers. Ganesha, the son of Shiva and Parvati, is the Lord of the *ganas*. *Gana + isha*= Ganesha.

found the form was still standing there. It was a huge form, standing beside the window next to Ma's feet."

Some people advised the Raja to offer *pooja* to the creature, but the Raja said, "I shall never offer *pooja* to it. I worship the mother of the universe, *Jaganmata*, why should I fear anyone? I shall offer *pooja* to none other than Her."

The Raja sent a letter that night asking for Ma's advice on this matter.

Ma dictated this reply to Hariram, "The first option is that you could take the view that I have to keep my goal in mind - this is an obstacle to reaching the goal, this is hampering me, keep that in mind. The second option is that while desiring it and when suspicion arises in the mind, you could adopt the attitude that whoever I offer *pooja* to She is also present in this form. *Pooja* can be offered with this attitude, there is no harm. When your ancestors performed *pooja* it was the same then too. The third attitude that you could adopt would be - I am going to offer *pooja* to my chosen Goddess, *ishta devi*; whatever good or harmful effects there may be, I will accept them all."

"You can adopt whichever of these three attitudes that you want. Then there is no necessity for a separate idol or temple. It is one of the *ganas* that are followers of Shakti and Shiva." She also added, "This is one *bhava*." We could not understand this statement fully. Ma said, "Since Shiva and Devi *pooja* are being performed in the temple, therefore their followers will be present too. There is no need for a separate *pooja* or temple for them."

The Raja chose the third option. Ma remarked, "I had understood that the Raja would take the last suggestion because his attitude is very good." Yet his question was that if this is a follower of Shakti or Shiva, then why does it indulge

in bad actions like molesting women? Ma replied, “There are differences in levels in everything. Bad and good, both are present.”

Ma explained further, “Sometimes these *jivas* work in conjunction with the aggrieved soul of a deceased person. Restless souls manifest in various ways.”

Ma’s devotees often write letters to her and she replies concisely; these words are indeed very precious. One person had asked, “Who is the *guru*? What is *deeksha*?” Ma’s reply was, “*Guru* is *gurutattva*, the essence, that is one who is united with God. A *guru* makes you understand Him. That one is a *guru*. The *guru* knows Him, does he not? *Deeksha* means that the *guru* or the *ishta*, the chosen deity, is manifesting in the form of *deeksha*. Because, the *ishta*, the *guru* and the *mantra* are all one.”

In reply to another person, she made us write, “Try to stay in the contemplation of the One. Time is passing by. If you don’t go to the root you will not obtain the fruit.”

8th October, Sunday

At 9 am Raja *sahib* sent a car and had Ma driven to his place. He took her to the temple where he does *pooja*. It had already been decided that as it was the *tritiya*, the third day of the lunar month, Raja *sahib* would perform Ma’s *pooja*. Ma’s stay was undecided, but assuming that Ma would be present, arrangements had been made for the *pooja*. Along with the Raja’s appeal, we also had requested that Ma stay on; Ma showered her grace and stayed till the *tritiya*.

We reached the border of the state and found that the Raja had reached there before us and was waiting for Ma’s arrival. As soon as Ma reached there, he began doing *pranam*, his eyes filled with tears. He said, “Ma, this is the border that marks the edge of this kingdom. Grant us your grace and kindness and

come again.”

Ma smiled and said as she always does, “Whenever you bring this girl here, she will come. Moreover, where will I go? I am always with you. I do not go anywhere.”

Hariram and others were in the bus behind us. When they saw the Raja, they halted the bus. The Raja wrote a poem and handed it to Hariram to be given to Ma. Harirambhai gave it later to Ma. The refrain was:

I have not the courage
Without you Ma
How will I live here Ma?

During our stay in Solan, we had visited the Shukadeva *ashram*, and spent a whole morning there. Jatishdada, Deviji, Hariram and some others had sat for some time in the cave. Today, when the topic of Shukadeva came up when we were travelling in the car, Abhay asked, “Ma, did you see Shukadeva there?” Ma replied, “Yes.”

Abhay asked, “Was Shukadeva already there or did he come from elsewhere?”

Ma answered, “No, he appeared right there.”

Then the conversation turned to the matter of whether it was true that there are humans with the heads of horses in the Himalayas. Ma said, “Yes. When *yoga-kriya* happened in this body, all such encounters also occurred. So much more was visible - just a lot of fun! It is play, is it not? All of this is just play!”

Before long we had crossed Mundi and Yogendranagar. Suket is much bigger than Mundi state. It feels as if ‘Queen Nature’ has appeared in her true form here; in places the regular landscape is dotted with farmlands growing different

crops, and right behind these is a row of hills. In some places snow capped peaks of mountains display a wondrous beauty.

In four or five hours we reached Baijnath. Swamiji was filled with delight and came forward to escort Ma. The installation of the deity of Tara was in progress in the temple. The main ceremony is scheduled for tomorrow. It was decided that we would visit Jvalamukhi by car tomorrow. But at night, Ma took ill. Ma did not say anything. She just lay still in bed. Jatishdada was alarmed to see her pulse rate. We sat up almost through the night. Ma did not utter a word. She was very quiet. On being asked she said, "There is no unease or discomfort, but the body is becoming very quiet."

10th October, Tuesday

Early in the morning Ma said softly, "Set everything up properly. Let us go. Do not worry about me, I am fine. I will sit in the car just as I would here too."

None of us wanted Ma to travel in this condition. Bowing down at Ma's feet, Jatishdada said, "Ma, there is no need to go right now. You are going only because of us. We do not want to go sightseeing. Later, whatever has to happen will happen. Today we need not travel."

Ma said, "Very well, whatever you all want."

We decided not to go.

Ma sat up a little later. At the start of the ceremonies, Swamiji took Ma to the temple and offered her a seat there. He wanted Ma to be present at the commencement of the installation. A group of *Brahmins* started chanting the Vedas. The *pooja* was started according to traditional rules. The Tara deity will be installed on the *ashtami tithi*, the eighth day of the lunar calendar.

In the afternoon many women arrived from the village.

Pointing out to a couple of them, Ma declared, “When I had stayed here for two months with Jyotish, this woman had made *roti* for me and fed me. And this woman had combed my hair.” The women, in turn, spoke with great familiarity with Ma, touching her as they chatted. I could not understand all of what they said, but they spoke of their innermost feelings. They all mentioned that Ma was visiting after such a long time. Ma, too, behaved exactly as the women, responding with the same types of hand gestures and facial expressions, touching them as she spoke, as if she was one of them. Seeing Ma behaving in this manner we all began laughing.

During this conversation Ma repeatedly urged them all, “Give as much time as you can to remembrance of the One, one goal. Do not waste a single day.”

11th October, Wednesday

Today Ma was taken to a couple of places. She was taken to the station master’s house. There she said, “Baba, where is your house? This is the house where breath resides. It has been said repeatedly, ‘take this house to be a *dharamshala*’. Just as you pack what you need when you travel, collect only what you need when you go to this house.”

12th October, Thursday

Today is the *saptami pooja*, the worship on the seventh day. Ma’s *pooja* was performed by Hamsabhai. We all offered *anjali*, flowers in our cupped palms, and *stotras*, hymns of praise, were chanted. Today we offered *bhiksha* to Taranand Swami. Ma sat next to him for *bhog*. She told everyone to offer water in their cupped hands to him with faith and devotion. Ma keeps an eye on all that is happening around her. Ma said, “You must involve your whole mind and being in whatever you do.”

This morning, as soon as she woke up Ma said, “I saw *keertan* being performed in a huge hall. Little divine girls were present.

Pooja was being performed for Kali and Durga. You were all there too. *Keertan* went on through the night.

I asked, “Didn’t everybody offer *pranam* to you at the end of the *keertan*?” Ma laughed and replied, “Just as Bhupenbabu and others did *pranam* after the *keertan* in Simla, they all did just that. Tell me, who does *pranam* to whom? Each one bows down to himself. This body is only a symbol.”

Further Ma continued, “In the morning they all took leave. Just as I am taken to different places, someone had come to take me to some place, while you had gone to fetch something and had fallen asleep right there. I was thinking, ‘where has Khukuni gone, for I have to leave and then who will call her and bring her. Deviji is with me but for her to go so far away and fetch you would take a long time.’ I was compelled to leave with Deviji and a small child who was present.” Replying to Abhay’s query, Ma said, “That child was Marani’s brother, Dasu.”

Continuing, Ma said, “I set out with Dasu and Deviji. Abhay was seated on a step doing something, I signalled to him and asked him to come along, and he replied, in his usual casual manner “No, where will I go?” Just that way he said, “Where will I go?” I did not wait any longer, and left. I got into the vehicle and saw that Abhay was coming unhurriedly. I did not wait for him but those who were with me saw Abhay coming and waited for him. That is what I saw.”

I said, “Vah! That is great, you left without waiting for us!”

Ma said, “Several times I thought, ‘how shall I inform Khukuni? Where has she gone? Who will go with me when I leave? But whom do I send?’ Did you understand the meaning of this? That you get drowsy while sitting is not good.”

I replied, “When I do not get enough sleep, I become drowsy-

how can I help that? I want to be with you all the time, that is the reason I don't sleep, then how can it be my fault?"

To pacify me Ma said, "That is true. Just as people take me to various places, this body was being taken somewhere. It was simply that you are always with me so I thought, 'where has Khukuni gone? I cannot delay any longer,' - that is all."

However, I was not mollified.

Today is the *parikrama*, perambulation of Tara Ma. Tomorrow is the installation, *pratishtha*. Many people have gathered. We set out for the *parikrama*. The Raja's car was at Ma's service. Ma took Tarananda Swamiji, and some of us in the car and we joined the *parikrama*. The car was halted at a spot and a *pandit* spoke about Tarananda Swamiji and Shri Shri Ma. We returned to the *ashram* some time before sunset.

A wealthy person of this place, Kanai Lalbabu, arrived for Ma's *darshan*. He had taken Ma to his house on an earlier occasion. He has constructed a hut for his Gurudev there. He pleaded that Ma should be taken there again today. We are supposed to leave tomorrow right after the installation. It was decided that Ma would go there for a short time on her way. He joined his palms and said, "I am troubling Ma." Ma responded at once, "How is it trouble for a daughter to go to her father? Why do you all feel so far away from this body? Even if you keep me at a distance I say everybody is one."

During conversation Ma said, "It is a worldly matter, is it not? Therefore it is a problem. If you are in the world problems are sure to be there. Do you know what it means to go into the world? It is like striking a wound which makes it worse. Whereas going towards God is like applying a soothing ointment. Worldly ties give pain. Just as when you eat something tasty you tell your father or son, or some close relative, 'try this food,

it is so sweet'. Just so am I saying, 'take the Name, there is no peace other than in the Name'."

Many people gathered in the night and sang *keertan*. Swamiji and the others were treating Ma as if she was Bhagavati. People were coming from different places for Ma's *darshan*.

13th October, Friday

Today was *Maha ashtami*, the eighth day of Durga *pooja*. Today the deity of Tara was installed. Swamiji did the installation. Groups of *Brahmins* chanted the Vedas. Swamiji made Ma sit in the temple and started the ceremonies in her presence. Abhay performed Ma's *pooja* and *yajna* and other rituals. At about 2 pm we set out.

We reached Kangra in the afternoon and proceeded by bus to Jvalamukhi²³. We reached Jvalamukhi after sunset and went for *darshan*. At several places in this temple there are flames constantly appearing amid the rocks. If a bowl of water is placed in the fire, then the flames appear to be in the water for some time. We observed that *keertan*, *pooja*, chanting from scriptures and other such activities were being carried on in the temple. We spent the night in a bus.

14th October, Saturday

This morning we set out for Kangra once again. From Kangra we proceeded to Pathankot where we boarded a train and on reaching Amritsar we decided to halt there. The station master made all the arrangements for Ma's stay in a *dharamshala*. It was decided that the next day we would visit a temple; this temple is very sacred for Sikhs.

After *bhog*, Ma was lying down and I was stroking her.

23 The word Jvalamukhi means 'face of fire'. It is likely that the name arose from the constant eruption of fires amid the rocks, as described in Didi's account.

Some people had fallen asleep. Buni was sitting up. Ma said “Khukuni, Abhay was saying the other day - Ma sees all this in a dream and then speaks about it, doesn't she?” The context of this comment was that in Baijnath when Ma had described an event when she got up in the morning, Abhay had said, “Ma must have dreamt of all this, otherwise how is it she saw us going to all those places? Is it feasible for us to go to such places?”

Ma continued, “I am speaking to you right now, and I am also seeing that in a place that looks like Uttarkashi, there is a stone in the middle of the Ganga. The stone is surrounded by water on all sides. On that stone some *sadhus* have performed *sadhana*, spiritual practice, so intensely, that they have become just like little children - like boys of seven or eight. This body is standing there too. Just as this body is near you, so is it manifesting there as well.”

I asked, “Ma, how many *sadhus* are there?”

Ma counted aloud, “One, two, three, four, five, six, seven eight, nine. Nine *sadhus*.” She continued further, “I can also see a *sadhu* on the path to Gangotri, who does not need external food at all. This body has manifested next to him- there is no difference between what is here and there. You think this body is near you, but there too it appears in exactly the same way. If this is a dream, then everything is a dream. You people being here is also a dream.”

15th October, Sunday

This morning, the topic of the *gana* called Narasimha of Suket came up. We came to know from Ma that differences exist between *ganas*. Just as there are good and bad people, so are there good and bad *ganas*. She explained to Sadhu Singh who is Punjabi, “Just as a Punjabi and a Bengali are both human, but because your *samskaras*, collective effects of past *karma*, are

of this particular region, your body has been born here.”

Today we went to see the Gurudwara, the golden temple of the Sikhs. It is very beautiful. *Keertan* is sung here continuously. It only closes from 12 midnight to 3 am. Their *prasad* of *halva*, a sweet made of wheat, ghee and sugar, and flower garlands as blessings, are always being distributed. We went upstairs and saw a huge volume of scriptural texts, *granth*. We heard that it is read out on special occasions, on different sacred days, and for the welfare of different individuals. Ma sat with us and listened to the reading for some time.

Ma smiled and said to us, “You people always complain that I am constantly going hither and thither. But has that done you any harm? Look, on the seventh day of this month you had Baijnath *darshan*, on the eighth day, Jvalamukhi *darshan*, on the ninth day, *darshan* of the Kangra temple (Kangra is a designated sacred place, *peetha*) and on the tenth day, you have the *darshan* of this Gurudwara, and yet you scold me!” Hearing Ma say this we all laughed and she joined us in the laughter.

This evening we reached Almora at 7 pm and Bareilly at 10 pm.

16th October, Monday

Mr. Dikshit arranged for Ma’s stay in a tent in his garden this time. There were no plans for us to stop at Bareilly but on the insistent pleas of Mrs. Dikshit and other devotees, we stopped here. Ma left for Almora the same day. I am writing about something that is to do with Ma’s power of attraction. The Punjabi devotee, a Sikh, Sadhu Singh, who had joined us at Baijnath, had this to say, “I have been observing this- Ma attracts you to herself and does not allow you to go anywhere else. For some time you seem to forget everything else. It is as if Ma has pulled you away from everything all around and is taking you towards herself. And another point - everybody’s

ishta, favourite deity, can be seen in Ma. I have experienced this myself.”

Mrs. Dikshit said to Ma, “Mataji, you told us that if a vessel is left unwashed for a long time it is difficult to get it clean. Therefore I say that if you do not give us *darshan* often enough how will the dirt be removed? We are scrubbed clean when you come, and neither will you lose your reputation because we were left without making progress.”

When all those present agreed heartily with this statement, Ma laughed and said, “Exactly. So keep scrubbing the vessels and do not bring discredit to me. Do not make me weep.”

Mrs. Dikshit responded to this, “Nor should you make us cry.” Ma burst into laughter.

I smiled and added, “Now Ma will probably say, ‘The one who teases is me, the one who is teased is also me, and the teasing too, is I.’” Everyone laughed at this.

A boy asked Ma, “Is there no hope for our upliftment?”

Ma replied, “Do not desire too much. Think of Him.”

The boy remarked, “Firstly, I have so much to do. Then I am thinking so much about you. Then where is the time to think of anyone else?”

Ma laughed and said, “You can think of yourself for sure. Everyone, think of yourself!”

Mrs. Ambar Prasad had come today. She engages in intensive spiritual practice and is greatly revered by many. She said to Ma, “I saw in my dream, that Ma was saying to me - ‘I shall cook my food for myself.’ And then Ma said, ‘Bring *thakur*, God, here and I will do *pooja*.’ And when I went to get an idol of *thakur* I could not find one. One person said, ‘I have (an idol of) a Goddess, *devi*; take that, Ma will perform *pooja* to that.’ I

took the Goddess to Ma and she said, 'I will not perform *devi pooja*, bring *thakur*. ' I returned with an idol of *thakur* and Ma dropped it into the flames of a fire. I instantly retrieved the idol from the flames and wiped it clean. Ma then took the idol and said, 'I shall do the *pooja* now.' Why did Ma burn the idol? What was the meaning of that?"

As this question was addressed to me, I replied, "Ma knows the answer to your question so ask her. I can only tell you what I make of it. Ma always says there is no duality, there is only One. At times Ma says, 'I eat with my own hand.' It is with this attitude she said, 'I cook my own food.'

"Then *devi* can stand for *prakriti*, Nature. I will not worship *prakriti*. What is *purusha*? That is, *param purusha*? That is *atma*, the soul. The *jnani*, the one who knows the truth, worships *purusha* alone. It was with that perspective she could have said, 'I will worship *thakur*.' Then what happened? She put that *thakur* into a fire, that is, she burnt everything to ashes in the fire of knowledge. Then again, you have a liking for worship so you retrieved it from the fire. You were not able to turn everything into ash in the fire of knowledge."

Ma was smiling and endorsing my explanation in between, and trying to help Mrs. Ambar Prasad understand her dream.

Another woman, Mrs. Dwaraka Prasad, said, "Ma gives me *darshan* and corrects the way I chant the *mantra*. At first she gave me a part of the *mantra*, and then she completed it." She has received all this in dreams.

Professor Dasgupta asked, "Ma, what is the solution for those who have not the slightest knowledge or understanding?"

Ma replied, "Ma focuses special attention on such people."

We set out for Almora. Many people gathered at the railway station. Ma said, pointing towards Mrs. Dikshit, "All of you

should go now, it is very late, nearly I am now.”

In a voice revealing her pain and hurt, Mrs. Dikshit remarked, “Ma, you are always saying goodbye to us. Therefore I have been hiding my face away.” Her eyes were filled with tears. She is an intellectually strong-minded person and not prone to tears. Hearing her remark Ma laughed and lay down in her lap. Then Ma got up and placed her head on the laps of the women present. They in turn, with great reverence, clasped her face to their hearts. How can I describe the joyous ecstasy that we experienced?

The train left at 1 am.

17th October, Tuesday

This morning we reached Kathgodam. From here we had to drive a distance of 70 miles: after 5 hours we reached Almora at 1 pm. Hariram Joshi's brother, Girija Babu and a few others had put up a tent in the Nanda Devi temple for Ma. We settled in there. At night, Ma's condition suddenly took a turn for the worst. Her hands and feet were cold and her pulse rate slowed down alarmingly. We were terrified. It is very cold here too.

18th October, Wednesday

Today also Ma's physical condition was bad. Deviji has founded an *ashram* on the way to Garbiang, from where she has joined Ma. Ma was supposed to visit that *ashram* today. However, seeing her so unwell, people were opposing the trip.

Ma declared, “For me it makes no difference whether I am seated in a *dundee* or seated here in this tent.” Yet no one agreed to the trip.

Ma said, “I do not have the *kheyal* yet. If the *kheyal* had arisen then nothing could stop it. You people can say whatever you like, finally what has to happen will happen.”

We were very anxious about what Ma would do in her present physical condition, because sometimes her body behaves so strangely it is difficult to say what the consequence could be. And then again, there can be a remarkable turnaround in one or two hours! She could sit up and start talking animatedly. Then who would imagine that she had been so unwell just some minutes earlier? Her state can be so bad that her speech slurs uncontrollably, and her head feels totally empty. Even in that state she continues to do what she has to and no one is able to stop her.

Groups of people were arriving for Ma's *darshan*. We tried to make Ma rest in the afternoon; she had eaten almost nothing. A group of women arrived and sat surrounding Ma. A couple of them were fun-loving. They got everyone to sing along with them. Ma also clapped and began singing with the group. She moved and swayed in exactly the way that they did. One woman rose and started dancing joyously as she sang. The song was about Sudama wearing torn clothes and standing at the door of the Lord (Krishna). The Lord ran towards him and embraced him. Rukmini asks Krishna, 'Who is this?' He replies, 'This is my friend.'

A mood of great bliss was created under the tent. No one could get any of the women to leave so Ma could get some rest. None of the women wanted to leave Ma. From the behaviour of these women of the mountains it would appear that Ma was one of them- very well known to them and very dear as well. I tried to prevent them from disturbing Ma so that she could rest a little, but then Ma started her different mischievous tactics for she had no intention of lying down. At 4.30 pm, after much persuasion and cajoling she became quiet and went to sleep.

She woke up before dusk. *Keertan* was performed in the temple. Ma returned to the tent. Some people accompanied

Ma to the tent. Hariram started introducing them to Ma. One was a lawyer, another a magistrate.

Ma laughed and said, “You need to become a magistrate of that side.” This conversation was all in Hindi. Ma continued, “Is there a pension on that side?”

One of the men replied, “I am surviving on that very pension, Ma.”

A few moments later Ma asked, “Alright, Baba, you said you were drawing a pension from that side. What is that side like?”

The man bowed his head and said, “That I do not know. I have come here to find out. I do not have that knowledge.”

Ma responded, “You must try to understand that. Just as you search for food if you don’t have enough to eat, so must you keep searching for it if you feel a need to obtain it.”

The man asked, “What kind of things do we need to put together? What materials? How do we arrange for them? You tell us.”

Ma laughed and countered, “Alright. So will you agree to do whatever I tell you to do?”

The man replied, “I can certainly agree, but I do not know whether I will be able to do it.”

Another person said, “Alright, Ma, you tell us what we have to do.”

Ma laughed and said, “Will you remember the whim of a child? Well, would you be able to spare some time out of the 24 hours?”

Someone answered, ‘an hour and a half’, yet another said ‘two hours’.

Ma said, “Good. Give that.”

The person who had started this discussion said, “My mind is unsteady when it comes to this practice.”

Ma said, “Just as you have to rake the embers of a fire to feel the warmth, so you have to shake up all these ingredients to get your work done. Just keep at it.”

One man declared, “Ma, if I am not hungry, will I get together the ingredients to cook a meal?”

Ma laughed and, “So finally you have arrived at the heart of the matter. Well, if you have no hunger then take the medicine and observe the rules.”

The man asked, “What is the medicine, Ma?”

Ma - “The medicine is His name. Sit very still for some time and take His name. And the rules are *samyam vrata*. If you take this medicine and observe these rules, gradually your hunger will grow.”

The man asked, “And what are the rules, Ma?”

Ma replied, “Do the *samyam vrata*.” Ma then explained in detail exactly what *samyam vrata* entailed, just as she had in other places earlier.

The same man said, “See Ma, on a day when I decide I will not tell a lie, I am forced to lie more often.”

Ma said, “Alright then, do this. On the day of *samyam vrata*, be alert, and note down how often you tell a lie; write it down in a diary. The next time, make the effort to lie less often. In this way you will develop the habit of lying less.”

There was *keertan*. After *keertan*, a man asked, “Actions are categorised as those performed with desire, *sakaama*, and desireless action, *nishkaama*. But desiring freedom is also a desire, wanting *darshan* is also a desire. Can this be called

nishkaama, desireless action?”

Ma replied, “Action which is done for God is always called *nishkaama karma*, desireless action. Action performed for material gain is prompted by desire, and action to attain God is love.”

Again, referring to *jnana yoga* and *bhakti yoga*, the paths of knowledge and devotion respectively, Ma said, “Essentially, there is no difference between these two - *jnana yoga* and *bhakti yoga*. *Karma*, action, *bhakti*, devotion, and *jnana*, knowledge. These are the same. For example, ‘I shall know the Self, *svaroop*.’ That would be *jnana*; the experiencing of the form itself, *svaroop*, would be *bhakti*. And then, applying the soap and washing it off in the *jnana-ganga*, the holy river of knowledge - all that would be *karma*. All exists in the One.”

Ma’s physical condition was deteriorating. Therefore we were considering going down from Almora. In the midst of this discussion many other matters arose, such as, would so and so pass an examination, would someone else be cured of an illness? Such questions were being asked, and sometimes whatever was said in reply did not eventually turn out to be the case. The reason for this is that sometimes, we have observed, a clear reply emerges (from Ma) along with her breath. For example, a question like, ‘will I pass or not?’ if prompted by the slightest desire (on the part of the questioner) could evoke the words, “you will.” The word, “not” would not emerge, it would get blocked. In this situation what is said is not complete. And if there is not the slightest desire, then words that emerge are not curtailed. The words uttered without any obstruction, those turn out to be true.”

20th October, Friday

Ma was lying down when she said, “I saw a dead body and a child giving it medicine. Those were his last moments as well.

When the medicine was being given, everybody was looking pained and saying, 'who should be given medicine next!' The implication being that those were the last moments."

Ma continued, "Last evening I saw a very beautiful deity with three eyes, a form of Devi. A little later I saw the dark form of a little child with a knot of hair, making a tinkling sound."

I asked, "Who were they?"

Ma replied, "I am unable to tell you that."

I said, "Did they converse with you? Why did they come?"

Ma replied, "Vah! Just as you all come to me, so did they." She did not say any more.

Ma was lying down at night and we were all seated around her. Ma said, "I see a *sadhak*, a spiritual practitioner, sitting under water and performing his spiritual practice. A little girl is with me. I want to keep this naked girl beside me, but the girl wants to get free and touch the *sadhak*. She was the cause of an obstacle. She would have gone to the *sadhak* and appeared as his chosen deity, *ishta moorti*. Before the girl could touch the *sadhak*, I felt impelled to pull her away and bring her back."

Abhay said, "It could be said the *sadhak* was fortunate."

Ma affirmed, "Yes, he was a good *sadhak*."

Ma spoke further, "Once, the *pooja* for Bholanath's family's Kali was performed in Vidyakoot. The *pooja* had been completed. At that time Makhan was about 6 or 7 years old. The mother of this body carried him and went into the *pooja* room to do something. On returning from there Makhan spoke like a little child, "Kali Ma had stuck her tongue out like this and then she made it small." Mother, not wanting Makhan to be afraid, did not speak about this but changed the topic and stroked his head. The human mind is so frail." Having said

this, Ma laughed.

I asked, “Did Makhan really see this?”

Ma answered, “He was a child. He could not have lied. He really did see that form.”

21st October, Saturday

There is discussion about leaving for Vindhyachal tomorrow. The very cold weather here is making Ma’s health worse. She is unable to digest any food. Her pulse rate is also dropping further.

22nd October, Sunday

This morning we left at 9 am by car and travelled 70 miles to Haldwani where we boarded a train. We reached Bareilly at 11.30 pm. Here devotees pleaded with us and made us halt. The tent was still pitched in Mrs. Dikshit’s yard. At her heartfelt request, Ma went there again.

Ma’s physical condition had deteriorated greatly. These people requested earnestly that Ma should stay here for a few days. When Ma has a *kheyal*, no one is able to go against it, that is true. But sometimes, when there is no *kheyal*, she leaves decisions to us. Here, as the devotees pleaded with her she made no comment. At 12 midnight, Ma went to sleep.

Mrs. Dikshit was very happy to have Ma with her again. As Ma was arriving here she had said, “Today Manasa Devi²⁴ came and spoke to me.”

23rd October, Monday

Many women arrived in the afternoon. One of them has given birth to children but they do not survive. Ma started addressing that woman as ‘Ma’. She then declared, “But I am your daughter.” But this idea was not accepted by the woman

24 Manasa Devi is a snake Goddess, daughter of Shiva

and she said, “You are Ma, ‘Devi’.”

A little later when she came to offer *pranam* as she was leaving, Ma said, “Take the name of God twice a day, so you can have a child.”

The woman sat down with great reverence and asked, “Which name shall I repeat and how many times?”

Ma asked her, “Which deity do you prefer?”

The woman replied, “I like all the gods.”

Ma persisted, “Name one that is special.”

She replied, “Krishna.”

Ma said, “Then repeat that name, two rounds of the *mala* (rosary) in the morning and one round in the evening, and keep that name in your mind all the time. Then beautiful, beautiful....” Saying this Ma started making gestures with her hands.

I went up to her and asked, “What is beautiful?”

Ma replied, “Vah! Balgopal, who else?”

The woman asked, “How many days should I do this for?”

Ma’s reply was, “Until He gives you *darshan* in the form of a little boy.”

Ma said all this very quickly and then went to the room which had a seat outside and sat down there. This kind of thing does not always happen.

In the midst of this I had asked Ma, “Ma, you had said that a *sadhu* named Atmananda had come to meet you in the form of a snake. Whenever you encounter a snake, is it that *sadhu*, or Manasa Devi or someone else?”

Ma replied, “Yes, Manasa Devi also comes in the form of a

snake.”

In the evening a girl from the mountains came to dance before Ma. Many other people also arrived for Ma's *darshan*. Someone declared, “Ma, there is something special in your eyes. When we remember your eyes, we are unable to stay at home any longer.” In this manner, many people expressed their feelings in different ways.

Ma laughed and said, “Why, do I not have a body made of flesh and blood just like all of you? And I understand you think my eyes are like sliced *potol*²⁵, the way you go on about them! Alright, bring me a mirror!”

I took a mirror and held it near Ma's face. Holding the mirror in her hand, she turned it this way and that like a little child, viewing her face in it and saying, “See here- there are no signs of your sliced-*potol*-like-eyes!” Watching this everybody burst out laughing. So much joy was experienced by all with such happenings.

At night a girl from Garbiyang danced for Ma. There were real butterflies on her as she danced. A couple of little girls danced, performing *arati* and *pooja* for Ma. Seeing this Ma said, “Look, I have never seen all this before, but what you all call knowledge of the arts, when *pooja* and *kriya* manifested in this body, this kind of art had also played out.”

I also observed the manner in which these girls did *pranam* in the dance closely; I had seen the same kind of *kriya* in Ma's body earlier.

Agreeing to our special request, Mrs. Dikshit started dancing the role of Meera, a devotee of Krishna. It felt as though Ma was the Lord of her life. She entered the *bhava* of Meera completely

²⁵ *Potol* (Bengali): is a vegetable called *parval* in Hindi - pointed gourd in English. Ma was obviously cracking a joke.

as she danced and sang at the same time. I loved this *bhava*. The dance was intensely beautiful. Mrs. Dikshit's countenance is very attractive and her presentation was charming.

Dancing inspired the mood of the moment. Abhay wore a *chandramala*²⁶ and *ghungroo*, dancing bells, on his ankles and started dancing spontaneously near Ma. He had never danced before this nor had he learnt to dance. Today, watching everyone dancing he was inspired to dance as well. I found his own form of dancing very sweet and it appealed to all those who were present. After the dance he offered *pranam* to Ma.

Ma has not been keeping well so she has not been speaking much; yet a crowd had gathered in the tent to hear her speak. Questions were asked. On being requested, Ma started narrating some events from her life and all the people listened spellbound. Ma has been unwell and so we hoped she would retire early for some rest, but it was past midnight and no one seemed to be aware of it. As she spoke, Ma's tired face lit up and shone.

Seeing this, I laughed and remarked to the people who were present, "You have all observed just how unwell Ma has been. She is suffering one moment and her condition changes dramatically in the next."

Hearing this, Ma laughed and said, "Oh Ma! Then my being unwell is a pretence, is it? And look here, all of you, Khukuni gives me only a little milk diluted with water," (Ma has been having only this nowadays) "and makes me speak till well past midnight. And then she says I am not unwell." Everyone laughed heartily.

Ma is not speaking in Bengali here because the people are all local residents. A spring of happiness and laughter seems

²⁶ *Chandramala*: is a long golden necklace with traditional designs

to be overflowing.

Ma said, “What kind of *sadhu* have you all come to! Seeing your craziness people will think you are all intoxicated, that you are taking drugs. If they do believe that they are not to be blamed.” Then pointing to all the instruments lying around the tent, she remarked, “Do *sadhus* have these sorts of things around them? *Tabla* and *Duggee*²⁷, not just one pair but two? Harmonium, not one but two. And she sits, relaxed, on the cot.” Saying this she laughed.

I said, “Perhaps such thoughts have arisen in some minds and therefore Ma is saying this.”

Ma spoke up immediately, “Vah! That was being uttered by my lips.” And with that, so that no one should be blamed, Ma stopped speaking.

One person asked, “Why would anyone think that way?”

Ma replied, “Vah! Whatever each one understands, that is what they will say, isn’t that so? Can they be blamed for that?”

After this conversation, the topic turned to Ma having eaten red chilli powder in Shahbag. Ma said, “Prangopal Babu heard about this and wrote asking, ‘where was this knowledge that destroys the *guru* (*gurumara vidya*) gained?’ The answer that was given was ‘*gurumara vidya* was learnt from the *guru*.’”

At night Ma said to everyone, “This afternoon when I was resting I saw these little boys, not very fair skinned but very radiant, wearing loin cloths, arriving in large numbers. You had all left the room and I was alone when I saw all of them arriving.” She described in detail, how many groups of boys there were and what they were doing.

²⁷ *Tabla* and *Duggee* are a pair of percussion instruments played with the right and left hands respectively

When Ma was saying all this there was not a trace of her previously frail condition. She was radiant and in great form, although for the last 9 or 10 days her health has been so bad. She is unable to digest any food. A little fruit juice results in a stomach ache. An Ayurvedic doctor, *kaviraj*, in Almora, checked her pulse and said, “there is practically no heat, fire, in her body. How does Ma manage when her body only has air in it?” In this condition, she is still full of joy.

Hearing these stories of *sadhus* in the form of little boys, Abhay requested, “Ma, in this context, tell us about the three *sadhus* who came to you in Dehradun.”

Ma replied, “Yes. That day also I had been left in a room with the door closed. I saw three *sadhus* (they appeared in their subtle bodies) with a reddish colour, very radiant forms. One was here (near the head), one here (near the middle part of the body) and one here, near the feet. One stood with joined palms, absorbed in his own *bhava*, and one was in the *asana* of doing *pranam*, but with no focus on that posture. And the third was neither joining his palms nor was he doing *pranam*. He was one-pointedly absorbed in his *bhava*. He had no knowledge of external postures like joining palms or *pranam*. I do not want to say he had no awareness at all, but he was far above normal states. He did not speak at all. All the three were of similar age.”

We slept at 1 am.

24th October, Tuesday

Quite a big crowd had gathered this morning. A little later, Ma was taken to ‘Ramesh *Bhavan*’. It was decided that *kumari* girls would, this afternoon, perform dance as worship of Ma. I have already mentioned that this is a specialty of the girls here. In the afternoon Ma was seated on her bed. The girls started dancing. The *kumaris* were wearing yellow *sarees*. The older women were accompanying the dance with a harmonium,

tabla and *duggee*.

One group of *kumaris* entered the tent dancing to the rhythm of the instruments. Some of them held the articles for *arati*, some had branches laden with flowers and others had flower garlands in their hands. They approached Ma and made offerings at her feet as they danced while some performed *arati* to that rhythm. Having offered *pooja* in this manner, they whirled and danced as they sang, a composition they had written for Ma. It was as if a festival of joy had been created in the tent. An unusually magical *bhava* had risen within each one. Ma was taken indoors to rest at about 2 pm.

In the evening a big crowd gathered again. Some schoolgirls accompanied by their headmistress were in the gathering. One woman declared, “Ma, you are Jagadamba, the mother of the universe.”

Hearing this Ma started laughing in a way that seemed to ask, ‘what are you all saying!’ She then said, “Ma, have you gone mad, that you are saying things like this However, yes, it is said, ‘where there is a woman (*naari*), there is Gauri (mother Goddess)’.” As she said this, Ma pointed towards all the women present. “If you consider all these women here to be Gauri, that is Jagadamba, then your statement is spot-on. We would have to accept that your eyes have opened.”

The woman asked, “How do our eyes open?”

Ma replied, “Look, sometimes you are asked, ‘where is your home?’ All this is the home of your breath - you are connected by breath. You will not attain peace until you reach your real home. This world (*duniya*) takes two²⁸ and is therefore a source

28 Ma is making a bilingual pun here. *Duniya* in Hindi means the world. Ma is breaking it up into *du* and *niya* which means take two in Bengali. Here she means a world of duality.

of sorrow. Duality, like coming and going, movement and speed, lead to sorrow. Therefore it is recommended that you go to a doctor to be cured of this disease. Just as when your eyes don't function very well you consult a doctor who prescribes spectacles. Then you start seeing properly."

Mrs. Dikshit said, "How do we get those spectacles?"

Ma replied, "*Sadguru, satsang*. You may not always have the company of genuinely saintly people. So the company of *sat*, truth, is *satsang*."

As we conversed, the evening drew on and *keertan* was started. Many people left. Abhay performed *pooja* and *arati* to Ma. Everyone was immersed in joy.

Mrs. Banerjee asked, "Ma, tell me what should I do. I always feel like talking nonsense and being light-hearted with you." All those present started laughing when they heard this. Actually, the fact is that many are in the same state, they are unable to leave Ma and get up to go for a meal. Mrs. Dikshit was repeatedly requesting people, one by one, to have their food. Getting people away so they could eat was proving to be quite a challenge.

Gangotri, a girl from the hills, sat near Ma silently, her gaze focused intently on Ma's face. She would not get up to eat either. Ma was observing all this and laughing; we are helpless, caught as we are in the radiance of Ma's attraction.

25th October, Wednesday

Today we set out for Vindhyachal. There was talk of going via Delhi because devotees there were repeatedly making impassioned requests.

26th October, Thursday

We reached Delhi today and went to the *ashram*. Having



Ma at Vindhyachal Ashram

fulfilled those requests Ma set out for Vindhyachal in the evening.

27th October, Friday

We reached Vindhyachal *ashram* today. Ma's health is very poor.

29th October, Sunday

The topic, that Ma had discussed in Amritsar while she was lying down at night, came up again. Much deliberation was given to it. This was the fact : Ma said, with her eyes closed, "Look Khukuni, that day Abhay was saying that I see dreams. What am I seeing right now? I see a place like Uttarkashi. At a rock in the Ganga surrounded by water, some *sadhus* who have been doing *sadhana* seated on that rock for a very long time, have become like children. Therefore they appear to be 7 or 8 years old." Pointing to her own body, "This body, too, has gone there. Exactly like it is next to you - just the same way it has manifested there."

Upen Babu said, "Ma, I have heard that there is a hill there with child-*sadhus*."

Immediately I asked Ma, "Ma, how many *sadhus* are there?"

Ma counted and answered, "Nine *sadhus*."

She continued, "And do you know what else I am seeing? I am seeing a *sadhu* on the path leading to the banks of the Ganga. There is no need for him to take food. This body is manifesting next to him in exactly the same way too. You people think I am only near you, but I am present similarly in these other places as well. If these are dreams, then call them dreams. Everything is a dream after all."

A person who was present asked, "Through the power of *sadhana* through *yoga*, knowledge and devotion, *atma*, *brahma*

and God are revealed. Are these three just one?”

Ma replied, “The three are one.”

5th November, Sunday

Ma is in Vindhyachal. Her health is slightly better than before. This morning the Vice Principal of Ashutosh college, Shri Kalidas Sen, arrived to meet Ma. He is in Vindhyachal for a change of air. He had come to see Ma twice or thrice earlier. We have come to know him here.

He came to me today and said, “When I first saw Ma, she was lying down in the room upstairs. I beheld her face shining with the radiance of a thousand moons. My father had once brought the picture of *dasha mahavidya*.²⁹ I remember now, I was seeing very clearly, the form of *shodashi bhuvaneshvari*.³⁰ How can I describe the intensity of my vision? At one point I felt that I had not had *darshan* of Ma’s feet. Earlier, too, when I had visited, I had not seen her feet. I did not say anything. I had not had not spoken much with Ma either. Yesterday Ma went for an outing in our direction. It was not simply that. I understood very well. She had come to give me *darshan* of her feet. I perceived a thousand lotuses at her feet. I was overwhelmed with gratitude.”

Ma responded immediately, “Baba, do not say such things about your daughter.”

He remarked with joined palms, “Ma, I have recognised you. If you insist on being playful what can be done?”

Ma burst into peals of laughter, “Baba, how will you not recognise your own daughter?”

29 A deity of the Goddess as an embodiment of ten great branches of knowledge.

30 Another form of the Goddess as the mother of the universe with 16 divine qualities.

He laughed and said, “You can say anything you like, but I have recognised you.”

Ma rejoined smiling, “The daughter has inherited her father’s nature after all.”

Today, in the course of conversation Ma said, “Abhay had once asked. ‘You had given *deeksha* to Bholanath. But you don’t give *deeksha* to anyone.’ Do you know how that happened? Just as certain *kriya* of *sadhana* occurred within this body, that also happened similarly.”

6th November, Monday

This afternoon, in conversation with Shankaranand Swamiji, Ma said, “Look, all this is *bhog*, enjoyment. When you look at a flower and appreciate it, that is *bhog*. You look at a tree and like it, you enjoy hugging a baby, all that is *bhog* too. I do not desire any of this. This was how it has been with this body. In childhood this body slept next to its mother, but never hugged or held on to her while sleeping. Nowadays people do what they like with this body, or so much happens to this body based on their *bhava*. Earlier this was not so.”

Again, in the course of conversation she said, “See Baba, what shall I say about all the *yoga - kriya* and the rest of the events that happened? Just as you all make different *mudras* with your fingers - like when you receive blessings, *ashirvad*, you do *sanghaar mudra* like this” (she demonstrated the hand movements) “the feet also assumed these positions spontaneously. First the fingers would stretch and then gradually all these *mudras* would occur in response to the *bhava*.”

7th November, Tuesday

This morning again conversation with Shankaranand Swamiji dealt with many topics. When reference was made

to music Ma said, “When it comes to music, this body was in such a state, that song of any kind would break the *bhava*. Completely steady, peaceful *bhava*. The notes and lyrics of a song would break that inner poise - that was the feeling. Therefore that (music) could not happen. On many occasions, while walking amongst mountains, brought on by the stillness of the mountains, speech would cease. And then again, anything is possible. Like stillness in the midst of restlessness, or experiencing restless *bhava* in stillness.”

8th November, Wednesday

This morning, in a conversation with Swami Paramanandaji, when Ma was asked to narrate the incident about the three *sadhus* in their subtle bodies in Dehradun, Ma said, “How do I describe it? Just as you people sit near this body, stroke its hands and feet, they do exactly the same. So many come. I recognise their presence through touch. Then suddenly, when you arrive, they are gone. Do you know why? It is not as if there is any difference between your being here and their coming and going. You people feed (this body) according to your time schedule and then food has to be eaten with them as well, and all this takes three hours. The measure of time there is not like yours. If that is all a dream, then my seeing you now and all the rest of the activity here, is also a dream.”

Laughing, Ma continued, “Yesterday I saw that just as you people sit near me, Mahavir (Hanuman ji) had come to sit next to me.”

I asked, “What did He do?”

Ma replied, “He was behaving just as you all do.”

Ma is unwell, but the play of bliss continues unabated. Crowds of devotees from Allahabad, Mirzapur, Kashi, Faizabad and other places, are arriving in a steady stream. Jatish Dada

and Buni have gone to Kolkata.

At night, when Ma was lying down she said, “That night, Jatish (Guha) was sleeping in this room, when I saw his greatly emaciated form, completely naked. As I had described myself in Haridwar, it was no different. A disembodied figure was inquiring where a place had to be reserved. Right then I had the *kheyal* that I would not keep him here from the next day. Earlier it had been decided that they would be staying longer, but the moment I saw him thus, I had the *kheyal* to send him to Kolkata. I could not let him spend even one more night here.”

And that is how it turned out. Jatish Dada had spoken to Ma that night about staying for a few more days. The next morning Ma had said, “No. Set out for Kolkata today. I have the *kheyal* and therefore I am telling you.” They left the same day as per Ma’s instructions.

Ma did not reveal this that day. She spoke about it today.

12th November, Sunday

Ma has come to Kashi for 2 or 3 days at the invitation of Bacchu’s mother. There is talk of *keertan* being performed.

13th November, Monday

Today someone raised the topic of the *guru*.

This person’s wife wanted to take a *mantra* from the *guru* of their family, the *kula guru*, but he did not want her to do that, though he did want to maintain his loyalty to the *kula guru*. He told Ma, “I will do whatever you tell me to do, Ma. I have said whatever I had to.”

Ma replied, “Look, when you are undecided, then it is better you first take *deeksha* from the *kula guru*. Later if it is necessary, you will surely find a *guru* of your choice. Moreover, what does *satguru* mean? All *gurus* are *sat*, the truth. And see, Baba, you

have faith in *mantra*, don't you? You also have faith in your *ishta*, your chosen deity. You only don't have a liking for the *guru*'s outward behaviour. These three are but one. When you have belief in two the third will also happen. You do that first. You should follow the *guru*'s instructions without arguing. What is the first step on the path of *sadhana*? It is like admission to a hospital. Therefore I say, when you have gained admission to a hospital, then why worry?"

"So long as you are a patient, a *rogi*, you are a *tyagi*, a renunciate. Then when the sickness gives way to health, *aarogya*, you still feel weak. At that stage you need nourishing food and it is necessary for you to become a *bhogi*, one who enjoys. People don't get admitted to hospital so long as they can put it off. When they can no longer cope, and the disease is unmanageable, only then do they get admitted to hospital. Some at this stage (when they have just started their *sadhana*) give up their bodies, and some become freed of this disease and return from hospital. Nourishing food, means *sadhana*."

Pointing towards me, Ma said, "See, as the condition improves a variety of foods, like the whey after extracting *paneer*, and fruit juice are given gradually, which the patient can then assimilate. As the patient gains strength little by little, he can be allowed to look after himself. He then recovers his former state of health."

Pointing towards herself she said, "This body was also admitted to hospital for a few days, when the *kriya* of *sadhana* were occurring." Saying this, Ma laughed.

14th November, Tuesday

Today *keertan* was performed in Bacchu's house till sunset followed by *bhog*. Ma also went and sat in the *keertan*. The women, too, performed *keertan* for some time. Much joy was experienced. Ma went to Mahesh Babu's *dharmashala* at

his request. On the way, in the car, I noticed Ma's condition deteriorating and made her drink some warm glucose that I had taken with me. There was some discussion at Mahesh Babu's place.

Then Ma was taken to a girls' school. The founder of the school had made a special request and escorted Ma herself. Ma was unwell but she can never disappoint anybody and so she agreed to these visits. Climbing and descending the stairs in the school was difficult, but our compassionate Ma did it all. We returned fairly late in the evening to our *dharmashala*.

15th November, Wednesday

Today we left for Vindhyachal by the 5 pm train.

16th November, Thursday

A man had asked Ma in Kashi, "Ma, how can I steady the mind? How do I attain Him?"

Ma had replied, "Clean one room thoroughly, and light incense and lamps so that it creates a pure atmosphere. Always keep that room decorated like that so that when you enter you remember Him." She raised her arms to indicate this. "In this *bhava*, try to sit for longer and longer. You will get results."

Today a person said, "Ma, I have not found a path. I do not know which road to take."

Ma responded, "Take one path and start moving ahead, you will find other travellers there! When you have the proper motive and you start on any path you will meet fellow travellers who will indicate the way ahead. Start moving ahead, don't just sit there."

19th November, Sunday

Yesterday Sri Gopinath Kaviraj Mahashay came here. I had finished cooking a meal for Ma and had sat down to give it to

her. Ma had been conversing all the while with everybody. She was saying, “*Samadhi* is also a state. Just as when you are walking along, you rest after some time, and later when you have finished your journey or gone up to the terrace, you do not need to rest anymore. Then the concept of rest or effort does not even arise.”

Having said this, Ma clicked her fingers lightly and remarked with a laugh, “I do not know your *shastra - tastra*³¹. I speak in a higgledy - piggedly way.”

24th November, Friday

A man had given up his householder life and come to stay at the *ashram* for a few days but had returned at the request of his wife and son. After spending some days at home he came to Ma at the Vindhyachal *ashram*, bringing his wife along. He wanted to stay for a few days and then go home again. He could not muster up the resolve to give up his worldly life.

His wife remarked, “Ma, if he stays at home he does more work (*sadhana*). At this age how can I let him go to live here?”

The man declared, “Ma, He is with us wherever we are. He is the One who lives in our hearts and makes us do whatever we are doing.”

For the first few days Ma gave no reply to these comments. Today when they spoke again in this strain, she said, “Look, Baba, these are all thoughts of fantasy. Wherever our minds turn, we speak accordingly. ‘God makes us do everything, He is with us everywhere’ - you do not have the right to say all this. Only when a certain level is reached, can a person understand that He does everything, He is with us everywhere. And when you say all this it is book knowledge or what you have heard.” .

³¹ This usage of rhyming a word for effect with a meaningless term has been explained earlier. *Shastra - Tastra* would translate as Scriptures - Triptures.

Hearing these frank and clear words from Ma, the man was silenced.

25th November, Saturday

This morning Ma went and sat under a big tree in the front yard. A Kashmiri woman asked, “Ma, which is better, worshipping the formless, *niraakaar*, or the One with form, *saakaar*?”

Ma replied, “Without the *saakaar* you will not be able to go to the *niraakaar*. You have to penetrate into the *saakaar* to get to the *niraakaar*. Just like, see, we go to the Ganga. We go by a path, that is *saakaar*, all the way, till we reach the banks of the Ganga. From the shore when we step into the river, at the centre of the river, there is no more *saakaar*, when our feet do not touch the ground. Again, when we emerge, we see that both *saakaar* and *niraakaar* are but He. “

26th November, Sunday

This morning Ma was lying down. Abhay, Shankaranand Swamiji and I were seated near her. Ma said, “What is Upanishad? Where *upa* (next) is *nishedh* (forbidden).

Then Swamiji raised the topic of love. In that discussion Ma said, “Where *param* (ultimate) is, there is love.”

30th November, Thursday

Dr. Upen Babu, Shankaranand Swamiji and 2 or 3 of us were seated near Ma this morning. Various topics came up for discussion. Ma said, “Look, this body” (indicating her own body) “remains now just as it was earlier. In between, for a few days *yoga kriya* occurred within this body. It appears that it happened for your sake. This is the proof that this body is the same then as now. When this body visited Kummila, Vidyakoot, Kheora, Sultanpur and other towns, in each village and town, those people who saw again this body that they had seen as a

child declared, 'Our Nirmala, that we see now, is exactly the same as she was earlier. We cannot understand why all these big people follow her.' From this you people can conclude that this is just as it was earlier. Only some *kriya* happened in between."

1st December, Friday

Today Ma left Vindhyachal and went to Allahabad for a day, at the pressing request of many. She stayed in the Kalibari for one night.

2nd December, Saturday

It was decided that we would travel to Navadweep via Allahabad today. Meanwhile, people here were gathering in Besant Hall for Ma's *darshan*. Yesterday also people like Pratima Devi and Bankebihari Babu had taken Ma to Besant Hall for a short while and *keertan* was performed there. This morning again, Ma was taken there, and *keertan* was performed. Many people had arrived. Ma reached at 10 am and was to leave by 11 am. Everybody was very eager to listen to Ma's advice.

One person requested, "Ma, say something to us."

Ma smiled endearingly and said, "What shall I say? I have nothing to say."

In the hall filled with people there was also a news reporter who had come with the desire to write about Ma's message to people. He was trying very hard to get Ma to say a couple of words but Ma spoke not a word.

We set out at dusk. On the train I spoke to Ma about the morning. I said, "So many people requested you to say something. So many were very eager to hear your words. But you said, "I have nothing to say."

Ma replied, "So tell me, what could I do? Sometimes it

happens that whether anyone is listening or not, this body keeps speaking and then again there was this hall full of people wanting to listen to advice and I had nothing to say and nothing emerged. I never go to give a lecture. Whatever you people elicit from me, that is what emerges.”

I have seen this aspect of Ma all along. So many people would have gathered eagerly, because a newspaper had announced that Ma would be there and would be staying for an hour. They would take Ma there to hear her speak and she would be absolutely quiet. She could at least say, “Take the name of God” but there would be nothing at all from her. Had she been an ordinary person, in such situations she would have spoken at least a couple of sentences. But she is beyond any law or rule. Therefore she did not speak at all. Looking at Ma I just said, “Everything you do is wonderful.”

3rd December, Sunday

This morning we reached Bandal. We had to wait for 4 or 5 hours to get the train to Navadweep at 2.30 pm. I went out to look for some milk for Ma, but in the station a railway officer called out to me and asked me what I needed and I told him I was trying to get some milk. A conversation with this person followed.

The officer was a young man. A little later he came to Ma and said, “I have this strong impression of you being my own. My *Gurudev* stays with Ranga Ma. My *Gurudev* is very fond of me. But I am very irresponsible by nature and I have made many mistakes in my behaviour towards him.

Ma asked him, “What were your mistakes?”

The young man replied, “For example, when I was living in a hostel, when *Gurudev* visited me, I made him eat there, with no thought of cleaning the place for him. Many such acts of

neglect. Today I had the opportunity of getting you some milk, but I never put shoes on to fetch the milk. I never paid attention to that. Today when I went to get milk for you I realised for the first time that my behaviour with my *Gurudev* was not correct.”

Ma heard all this and began to laugh. As he conversed with Ma he said, “I have taken off my sacred thread and I do not recite the *gayatri mantra*.”

Ma said, “You must wear the sacred thread and you must recite the *gayatri mantra*.”

The man replied, “That is a big burden.”

Ma rejoined, “So are the clothes you wear. That too is a burden.”

The man said, “Exactly!”

In the course of conversation the young man expressed feelings of great nearness to Ma. He narrated many incidents of his faith in his *guru*.

Ma said to me, “Look, you went to get *bhiksha* (alms) of milk and you got *bhava* as *bhiksha* too. How long would milk last? This *bhava* is much greater.”

We boarded the train at 2.30 pm and reached Navadweep in the evening. We had informed Jatish Dada earlier. Buni and he had reached Navadweep as soon as they received the telegram. Not finding Ma there, they were returning when they met her at Bental. They went back to Navadweep with us. We got into a boat and it was decided that we would stay in the boat. We cooked a meal for Ma on the boat, offered *bhog* and then all of us had *prasad*.

4th December, Monday

Early this morning Jatish Dada, Buni and Abhay left for Kolkata, while Ma and I stayed on. In the morning, the boat was untethered and then halted a little way off shore, where we

had a wash. Then the boat was anchored on the opposite bank where we cooked a meal.

Ma was lying down. Her body was experiencing weakness again. I was afraid that if Ma's health took a turn for the worse, what would I do on this boat? Meanwhile, somehow word had got around that Ma had arrived.

People arrived for Ma's *darshan* in groups, filling boat after boat. I realised that it was very difficult to keep Ma here in her present state of health. When I suggested that Ma go to Kolkata she said, "do what you think is best." I made arrangements to leave. We left by bus immediately and boarded a train at Krishna Nagar.

On the way a man asked, "Ma, are faith, devotion and love of God obtained by prayer or by action, *karma*?"

Ma replied, "Prayer is also action. That would work for sure."

At 7.30 pm we reached Kolkata. As no one had been informed, we went straight to the Birla Mandir. I made Ma lie down so she could rest.

5th December, Tuesday

As soon as we sent Jatish Dada the message that Ma had arrived, people started turning up. Ma's physical condition is slightly better. We can see that her weakness increases when she walks about and moves around. Although Ma's devotees were sorry to see her unwell, their joy in having her in their midst was unbounded.

Arrangements were made to take Ma to a newly constructed house, because we all felt we should keep Ma here for a few days and have her examined thoroughly by a doctor. Medicines cannot be given because they often have an adverse effect. Ma's body cannot be treated with medicine, yet it would be

good to get a diagnosis of what was ailing the body. Therefore we discussed whether we should stay here for a few days, if indeed, Ma did not have the *kheyal* to leave again. It would not be convenient to stay for a long time in the temple and so there was a search around for a new house.

Ma was chatting with her devotees and it was so joyful. She said, “See, in our younger days we kept a fast in the month of *shravan* (at monsoon time) when there was a rule that you had to drink flowing water. This body’s mother would say, that this body was very young and asked, ‘why drink flowing water? Would it not suffice to drink water from a pond?’ To which this body’s mother replied, ‘No, the rule is that you must drink flowing water.’ This body insisted, ‘Why, is there a link between the Ganga and this flowing water?’ “

“In those days, going to see the Ganga was not easy, but this body’s maternal uncle came from a family of great pundits, where rules and regulations had to be observed, and there this body had seen a pot, a *kamandalu*, kept in a corner at a height, with sacred water from the Ganga in it. Whenever anybody needed to be purified, he took off his clothes and sprinkled some of the Ganga water on himself and he was then considered to be pure. I had seen this and heard about this. Beyond this there was no other idea about the Ganga.

Hearing the question, this body’s mother said, ‘Stop this questioning. Go now and drink some flowing water.’

Remembering this, the thought came that nothing happens without a *guru*. Much can be achieved by reading a book, you can also understand the *beej*, the seed. But that is like drinking water from a pond. And hearing it from a *guru*, is like drinking flowing water. Though they are both water, and it is true you can understand from reading books, yet there is a difference.”

The door was shut in the afternoon, so that Ma could rest, but Ma was not in a mood to rest. Yet, at our request, she lay down inside the room. Devotees had somehow come to know of her arrival and started gathering slowly. People had not been told about her coming here as Ma was unwell and so many were unaware of the fact. Ma is very weak and she tires even after speaking for a little while, and her hands and feet become cold.

Ma says, "There is no discomfort, just that speech ceases and the body becomes quiet." We find that her condition has deteriorated considerably and her pulse rate varies alarmingly.

It is true that Ma's state changes suddenly. But the rapidity with which her pulse rate changes causes us all to become very concerned. Ma herself understands the condition of her body very well. She would extend her hand for her pulse to be examined, saying, "now it is fine", "now it is irregular." And that is exactly how it would be. And now again, she is unable to digest any food. But devotees seeing her would never know that she was indisposed. Because Ma's beauty and charm radiate even more strongly at times. Though she is so weak, her countenance shows no change. Her physical appearance is no less beautiful.

Pointing towards herself Ma would say, "You can see this body, can't you? This body is ill again, is it? It is always good!" And saying this she would keep laughing.

At 10 pm, after everybody had been made to leave, Ma started her *leela*. She opened the door carefully and stepped out and burst into laughter like a child. In that *bhava*, pretending she was frightened, she asked, "What do I do? Tell me. I have no *bhava* of lying down. How long do I have to shut my eyes and lie down? As if I am hiding. Alright, from tomorrow I shall try to sleep early as you all want me to do."

She sat for a long time on the verandah and spoke to us and finally went inside the room and lay down. Whoever was present experienced this bliss. Concerned with Ma's state of health, many people try to make her rest, although the thought of not being with her causes them much pain.

Wherever Ma is, her doors are always open and devotees are overjoyed to have her with them. Now, not finding that, some are angry, some sad, but all are focussed on the well-being of Ma's physical condition and so although it was painful, they were requesting that she rest. So we were trying to give her that rest.

In between, Ma herself would break the system we had set up. Some sincerely were not able to leave Ma, and would gaze at her with great longing - because Ma was in their midst. Making such people leave to enable Ma to rest, was a difficult task. After much pleading and requesting from us they would say, 'Yes, we are just leaving. It is necessary to allow Ma some rest. Our greatest desire is that Ma's health remains good.' But actually, not one of them was able to get up and leave. Hours would pass as they thought they would leave. In this situation it is hard to tell anyone to go. Again, for the sake of Ma's need to rest, we had to carry out this task. That was again something wonderful.

This evening Ma gave another performance. Referring to the faults of 2 or 3 devotees who were present, Ma jokingly made such profound comments that all were astonished. Everybody was enchanted with this play. Having spoken in that manner, she immediately followed it up with, "But do not be angry. If you get annoyed, where shall I go?" And having said this she smiled sweetly. The smile removed the feeling of shock that people had experienced, and they began immersing themselves in the ocean of bliss.

This remark from Ma, “Do not be angry. If you get annoyed, where shall I go?” touched everyone’s heart. When Ma pointed out a fault and spoke candidly, it was as if she had taken a different form! And when she spoke in that *bhava* no one could reply. Ma began to laugh.

Ma continued, “The head feels lighter, doesn’t it? That is why such frank words were spoken. You were a little wounded, weren’t you, Baba?”

They replied, “Would a child get angry with its mother’s words?” Such exchanges created a joyful atmosphere.

Addressing someone she said, “You are so involved in your home and family and do not pay any attention to this daughter, therefore perhaps she falls ill?”

6th December, Wednesday

Today we moved to a new house near the lake. Many wanted the doctor Kaviraj to examine Ma. Ma agreed laughingly, “That is good! I will get the *darshan* of Doctor Kaviraj Baba once again.”

7th December, Thursday

We are able to make Ma rest from 12 noon to 4 pm every day. I take her for a short walk by the lake twice a day. In the evening everybody gathers on the terrace and Ma also sits there and *keertan* is performed.

In between Ma said, “You keep sugar candy in your mouth, don’t you? One of the effects of keeping sugar candy is that the mouth salivates. What is this sugar candy? It is His name.”

One person, who did not understand what Ma was implying, took out his little box of sugar candy and popped a piece in his mouth.

Seeing this, Ma smiled and asked, “What is that Baba?”

He replied, “Ma, you told us to always keep sugar candy in our mouths, so I did that.” All burst out laughing.

Ma declared, “Very good, Baba! You did the right thing. As you put this sugar candy into your mouth, remember That sugar candy too. Baba has brought his little box of sugar candy so that everyone remembers this better. All is good.” Then 2 or 3 others reached out and popped the sugar candy into their mouths.

Often Ma makes references like “take sugar candy and put it in your mouth”, “get admitted to the hospital”, “make a dharmashala”, but in a serious sense, and many do not understand what is meant by these terms and reply literally. Ma accepts those replies joyfully and then makes them understand, using those responses.

12th December, Tuesday

In reply to a question from a devotee Ma said, “Remember that everything happens by the grace of the *guru*.”

18th December, Monday

A festival of bliss is being celebrated with Ma in Kolkata. This evening during *keertan* Avani Dada asked Ma, “Ma, what is the meaning of the sound that is made before *keertan* is started?”

Ma replied, “What other meaning does it have except that it takes your mind away from all other thoughts and directs it towards the *keertan*? It wipes out everything else, nothing less.”

21st December, Thursday

The wife and daughter of Shri C.R. Das and some other people with them, had come for Ma’s *darshan*. Ma was lying down, and so it was possible for them only to meet her. In reply to something that Basanti Devi asked, Ma said, “*Gurukripa* is everything. When the *guru mantra* vibrates within, the seed germinates and grows into a plant. Then it bears so many

flowers and fruits. Stay with any one of these five - *dhyān*, *japa*, *keertan*, *paath*, and *satsang* (meditation, repetition of the Name, singing, or reading about Him, and the company of Truth)." Saying this, Ma laughed and continued, "It is like eating five vegetables, is it not? You may not like one vegetable particularly." This statement made everyone laugh.

Another *kaviraj*, an ayurvedic doctor, came to see Ma. At first he said, "I have some knowledge of the pulse." Ma extended her hand to be examined. *Kaviraj mahashay* closed his eyes and felt Ma's pulse for a few moments and then declared, "What is this? Are you able to stop the pulse?" After some time he said, "I can find nothing here but some air and some energy. I am unable to fathom what this energy is. I cannot call it bile. You are not unwell in any way. And what is this? Suddenly the pulse stops and I cannot feel it at all!"

One person remarked, "At first you had announced that you knew about pulses. That claim has been shattered and the ego with it."

Ma was seated like an innocent child, smiling sweetly. *Kaviraj mahashay* now concluded, "There was no illness of any kind. It was just the opportunity for me to have *darshan*."

Ma laughed and replied, "Do not say that to your daughter, Baba. *Darshan* is being granted in the form of doctor *kaviraj*. You have come to give *darshan*."

22nd December, Friday

It was decided that we would visit the Radha Govind temple belonging to Giribala of Agarpada. Arrangements had been made there for Ma's stay. We reached Agarpada in the afternoon. The temple is huge and the idols of Radha and Govind are very beautiful. The temple is situated on the banks of the Ganga. Ma's mattress was spread out in a small room on

the bank of the Ganga. Devotees started gathering one by one. Ma was seated with them all in the small room.

Malaria was present in Agarpada and therefore many were strongly against Ma's staying there. Ma smiled and said, "What could be done? Radha Govind ji has brought us here."

Ma conversed with everyone joyfully till 10 pm. Then we shut the door of Ma's room so that she could rest."

23rd December, Saturday

This morning a person who had arrived from Kolkata for Ma's *darshan* said, "Come, I will take you out for a drive."

The roads here are bad, and moreover we have observed time and again that whenever Ma goes out in a car her body gets affected. The car has to be driven very slowly. Therefore some people objected to this person's offer.

But Ma said, "There is some place here associated with Mahaprabhu (Chaitanya). How far is that?"

The devotees replied "It is close by, in Panihati."

Addressing me, Ma said, "I shall go to look around that place. What do you say?"

I replied, "Very good. Let us go."

Ma got up and said, "Then come, let us leave."

Ma set out with her devotees. As I did not want to delay cooking a meal for Ma, I did not go along.

When she returned Ma said, "Look, last night when I was sleeping I saw that this body had gone to a spot where a thrilling experience occurred. Today when this body was taken to the courtyard of Raghav Pandit, a thrill was felt through the whole body. Recalling the feeling of last night, the thrill continues even now."

Hearing this from Ma, a devotee commented, “ Ma, there is a verse by Mahaprabhu, that his devotees chant:

“In the tears of Shachi, and in the
keertan of Nitai
In the courtyard of Shrivasa, and in the
palace of Raghav
He is always present!”

The devotees had also taken Ma to the spot under the banyan tree where the Dantotsav had been held.

25th December, Monday

Today again, Ma took us by boat to Raghav Pandit’s house in the evening. The devotees started singing *keertan* on the boat in the Ganga. There was great joy. The boat was tethered at the *ghat*, the riverbank. As Ma was unwell, she did not alight from the boat. We got down and went to the banyan tree under which there was writing carved on stone that said -

“ Shripat Panihati,

1. Shri Shri Gourang Dev
921, Kartik, Krishna Dwadashi
2. Shri Shri Nityananda Prabhu,
923, in this year he had come to the
base of this tree.
3. The incarnation of love, the ocean of
compassion, Shri Shri Nityanand
Prabhu in the Kartrak year 1438, on the
13th day of Shukla, had conducted the
Kripa Danta Mahotsava for Shri
Raghunath Das at this spot. “

Then we went to the Raghav *Bhavan*. We went around the *samadhi*. As Ma was seated in the boat, we returned very quickly. *Keertan* was resumed on the boat. As we rowed back

people were standing on either bank of the river, watching the scene. Perhaps the *leela* of Mahaprabhu was playing out in the minds of many.

27th December, Wednesday

Doctors advise that Ma is in great need of rest, without which it would be difficult to save her. A great fear has risen in the minds of her devotees. They all got together and discussed how the crowd of people that gathered around Ma could be controlled so that Ma would be allowed to rest. It was also observed that whenever Ma went for a drive in a car her body would become very weak, so it was decided to stop taking Ma out by car. There was also discussion on whether to keep Ma here for a few days.

Ma laughed and remarked, “Will the doctor’s advice stop travel by car and train? I witness that this body gets tired and behaves strangely when it gets into a car. Everything happens and continues to happen spontaneously in this body. Perhaps this body will stay in one place for some time and therefore the *bhava* to move about is going away. I have been saying for a long time to these people, ‘see my tongue is getting paralysed’. This body wishes to remain in its own *bhava*. It is not that this is happening because of any illness. I have been telling these people about this for a long time.”

It was true that Ma had been telling us this for quite some time. Her speech has been unclear and phrases seem uncoordinated. She has also been stuttering sometimes.

This afternoon, Ma was lying down and I was seated near her. She said, “Look, this body will remain in its own *bhava*. You people do not understand. You think it is because of illness, but it is not illness; the body will stay in its own *bhava*. I have been able to say this much so I am saying it. How it will or will not be, no more is being revealed.”

At night, Triguna Dada and many others were seated around Ma. Ma had been lying down almost throughout the day. In the evening she sat for a little while on the verandah facing the Ganga. Her hands and feet became cold, but she did not have the *kheyal* to sit or get up. Then when the condition became worse, she got up and went indoors and lay down.

I was cooking and she came and spoke to me very sweetly. Her pulse had become very faint and her body was cold. After we rubbed the soles of her feet for a long time, her body warmed up a little, and her condition seemed to have improved.

A person asked, “Ma, are you feeling better now?”

Ma smiled charmingly and said, “I am very well all the time. I am never unwell. But you can see that this body behaves strangely.”

Ma’s pulse rate becomes very worrying, but the smile on her face stays just the same. No one could discern by looking at her face that her body had gone so cold. Doctors who examined her pulse would be alarmed but Ma would remain smiling all along.

Almost the whole day was spent thus. Therefore we did not allow crowds to gather. With great effort we stopped people from entering her room.

In the evening, Ma told Triguna Dada, “See, this change that you observe, don’t assume it is an illness. I have been telling Khukuni this for quite some time that this body will remain in its own *bhava*. What that *bhava* is cannot be articulated. If worldly functions stop, then how are you going to set this body right with physical means like food and other things? In between, all outward functions cease, and the breath also becomes different. At that time external food does not get digested.”

28th December, Thursday

Today Gangacharan Babu arrived with Dr. Debendra Mukhopadhyay Mahashay. We learnt that he was the disciple of 108 Shri Shri Bholagiri Maharaj, and that he was an advanced spiritual practitioner. He had been to see Ma 3 or 4 days ago. That day he had stated, “there is a malfunction (*dosh*) of the liver.” Today he said there was no sign of that malfunction. Even before the doctor examined her, Ma said, “Baba, today there is no illness at all.”

The doctors and Kaviraj all said that it was very necessary for Ma to eat *ghee*, so today arrangements had been made for the preparation of *luchi* and a vegetable roasted in *ghee*. Ma had never eaten *ghee* like this. Usually she has vegetables boiled in water with a few drops of *ghee* in it. Ma saw these preparations for her meal and laughed, “Look, you people were following doctor’s orders all this time and cooking vegetables boiled in water without a drop of *ghee* or oil, and even serving milk with all the cream removed. And now with doctor’s orders you are making me eat *luchi*, vegetable and *kheer*³². If I had made all these changes in diet myself, you would have said, ‘Ma eats boiled food out of a feeling of renunciation.’ And if I were to prepare this diet of *ghee* and *kheer* you would say, ‘Having eaten boiled food for so long she now has the desire to eat *luchi*.’” Saying this she burst into laughter.

All those present heard Ma say this along with her imitating how people would speak and they started laughing heartily.

Ma said. “See, whatever is needed for this body is communicated through your words. For this body’s part, whether it is boiled vegetables or *dal* boiled in water, or *luchi* and vegetable and *kheer*, it makes no difference at all.”

³² *Luchi* is a deep fried bread made from wheat flour, *ghee* is clarified butter and *kheer* a rice pudding made with thickened milk

The doctor declared again, “Today there is no sign of illness in you at all.” Ma replied, “I have been saying last night to Khukuni that there is no illness whatsoever; even before this body had been turning cold and lying in its own *bhava* for a long time. Speech ceased as did all worldly functions and the same is happening now also. This is not because of any illness. You will not find any illness. Do you know what the matter is Baba? If worldly functions cease, how are you going to sustain the body with external food and nourishment? The rate of breathing changes. Therefore if a little extra food is eaten, it cannot be digested. And then you diagnose it as an upset liver or stomach. And if it goes well for some time, then the illness you diagnosed yesterday is not there today. So how is it that a little earlier you saw all the symptoms of some disease and then a few moments later there is nothing at all?”

The doctor observed that Ma’s pulse rate was erratic, and Ma responded with, “Look, this body understands very well that the pulse rate is changing unpredictably, that it is strange - all this is understood. Even now you can examine the pulse.” Saying this Ma smiled sweetly and extended her hand towards the doctor who felt her pulse and exclaimed, “Extraordinary! The rate of this pulse is changing alarmingly every few seconds. It is as if Ma is running around. Ma is playing out her *leela* for us.”

I said, “Earlier also Ma’s body would undergo such dramatic changes. Her pulse would cease altogether, but at that time we were not afraid. Now we are fearful.”

Ma remarked, “Whoever this body lives with would feel afraid; that is the only appropriate way in which the breeze flows. All this is just a game. It will finish even as it happens.” She laughed as she said this and clicked her fingers lightly. We were extremely alarmed by Ma’s remark.

The doctor exclaimed, “We will not allow that ‘appropriate kind of breeze’ to flow. It is necessary for everyone to have a different attitude. It is not right for everyone to be constantly afraid that Ma will give up her body.”

Smiling, Ma said, “Why does this attitude develop? He whose business this is, gives it, doesn’t He? The breeze blows in an appropriate way, what else? And see, all this time there have been no problems - this body has been going about without break. Whether it has travelled by train, or by car or walked a lot; and now if it gets into a car it behaves strangely. A little walking about also causes so much change. Everything ceases of its own accord.”

29th December, Friday

Today Devendra Babu and Baneshwar Kaviraj Mahashay came to see Ma. Baneshwar Kaviraj Mahashay was seeing Ma for the first time. He examined her pulse for some time. Noting the pulse rate he was also astonished, and declared, “Ma, you are playing games with us, are you not? It appears as if the pulse rate is fluctuating dramatically. And then suddenly it stops altogether! If I had found this in anyone else I would have concluded that it was indicating a serious outcome.” He went on to emphasize that it was all Ma’s play.

Ma replied, “Look now, it is better.” A little later she said, “See now, according to your opinion it is very bad.” The doctor examined the pulse and agreed with Ma each time. Listening to the doctor, everybody was greatly alarmed, but then when they heard Ma speaking with her sweet smile, they forgot all about it. This state of affairs continues.

At night the conversation turned to the topic of the heartbreak experienced by an old mother about her children. Didima, Jyotish Dada’s mother and Anu’s mother were all present when the reference to some event led to that discussion. Ma

laughed and remarked, “All this is *maataal*, befuddlement! Do you know what *maataal* is? It is the *taal*, the rhythmic cycle, of Ma. All mothers have this same *taal*!” Saying this she burst out laughing.

A widow, related to the founder of this temple, who lived here, came to see Ma every night. She was there today as well. In some context she declared, “I have no home or house. All this belongs to Govind.” Ma laughed and responded, “We ourselves belong to Govind. So Govind’s house and home is your home. What worries do we have? We are His and He is ours.” Saying this she again smiled charmingly.

I have already written that if you saw Ma’s countenance you would never realise most of the time that her body is so frail, but once in a way, even if some of the weakness showed, looking at the natural radiance of her face, you would conclude that she was keeping very well. Whenever she smiled, that natural radiance would acquire an even more extraordinary glow.

Ma repeated what she had said many times earlier, “This body is becoming very silent. It will not say much.”

30th December, Saturday

Ma’s condition continues in the same way. Even though there is no illness the pulse continues to be erratic. In the evening Haridas’ *keertan* was being performed in the *Nat Mandir*.

A mattress had been laid out for Ma because for the last 3 or 4 days Ma has been lying down most of the time. Even a little walking about is causing her physical condition to worsen. Today she was a little better so we took her to the *Nat Mandir*. When we had first come here, Ma would go and sit on the steps of the *ghat* on the bank of the Ganga every afternoon, and local people would arrive in groups for Ma’s *darshan*. Many people would arrive from Kolkata towards the afternoon. But for the

last 3 or 4 days Ma has been unable to go out.

Today Ma was lying down during *keertan*. I observed that there was a change in her *bhava*. Suddenly she sat up, her eyes were closed and her head was bent to one side. She was leaning against a wall, but now she straightened up. At 8 pm we brought Ma back to her room.

For the last 3 or 4 days since Ma had been in such a condition, we were worried about having made her sit outside for so long. However, I observed that her countenance now was not like it had been in the past few days. There was a discernible change in her face. She began speaking animatedly in her usual manner.

After making her drink a little water, we had been making her lie down and shutting the door of her room. Today Ma herself called Naresh Dada and started chatting with him. Listening to her speak, no one who was present wanted to leave. Nor did we have the courage to intervene. Ma was now speaking like she always did, in her own natural way.

In the course of conversation she said, “During the *keertan* I saw the head had got bent to one side, and simultaneously, there was a pull on the left side of the chest, like an electric shock. And after that the condition of the heart seems to be very good.”

Hearing Ma say this, we were all greatly delighted. Abhay remarked, “It was the effect of the *keertan*.”

Ma went on talking till 10 pm. This kind of talkative *bhava* has not been present for such a long time.

Many times she has also said, “I am not aware when I am speaking too much. You people can stop me then, can't you?”

None of us had said anything so far. Then because it was

getting late and Ma was speaking so much, we said something to that effect and Ma, like a little child, covered her mouth with her hands. She then stopped speaking. The people took leave of Ma one by one and went away.

A few of us were in the room. Ma indicated with signs that her heart was in good condition. Seeing her expressions as she said this, I teasingly said, “What a difficult situation. You are quite well. So what will you do now?”

Ma did not reply. She only smiled. Seeing this we were afraid once more. Was she going to become silent again? When we asked her this she indicated with signs that she would speak tomorrow. We were relieved.

In the course of conversation Ma told Naresh Dada, “ Use the word Ma when you address your daughter.”

Naresh Dada replied, “I always address her that way.”

Ma continued, “Good, call her ‘Ma’, and with the attitude of doing *pranam*, bow your head down before her. If you are unable to do that outwardly, then join your palms and offer a prayer in your mind.”

31st December, Sunday

This morning about 10 am, Ma was taken to the Nat Mandir and made to sit in a sunny spot. Devotees came and sat around her.

Naren Dada got enraged over some offensive comments made by Abhay, to the extent that he got up to hit Abhay. Abhay ran and hid behind Ma. Ma beckoned Abhay to sit next to her and said to Naren Dada, “What Naren? Let me see you hit Abhay!”

Naren Dada no longer had the desire to hit Abhay. Particularly when he heard Ma make the request so calmly, he

himself became calm. On Ma's instruction he beat Abhay very gently.

Keertan was started after this. When the *keertan* was over, Ma sat both of them down and spoke at length to them. She said, "Look, if anyone commits a blunder, discipline him with words, do not resort to hitting and physical action. And be certain of this, whoever attacks another violently, you are attacking this body. The offensive words uttered by Abhay were addressed to this body, and when you were ready to hit him, you were attacking this body. Staying here, many blows and thorns have to be endured. The biggest support on this path is the quality of endurance."

Extending her hand towards Naren Dada she said, "If you have a desire to hit, then hit this body."

Naren Dada held Ma's hand with both his hands, and obeying her instruction, he hit her gently. Then Ma spoke in the same vein for quite some time. The devotees watched and listened in stunned silence.

A little later Ma said, "See, is hitting and beating a good thing? Say that you will never hit anyone any more."

Naren Dada replied, "How can I make such a serious commitment before you?"

Ma then said, "Will you make a special effort?"

He agreed and said, "I will do that."

Ma smiled and rose. Naren Dada advanced and took Abhay in his lap. On Ma's instruction, Abhay did *pranam* to Naren Dada.

The devotees were enchanted by Ma's *leela*. Having witnessed the radiance of Ma's countenance while she was dealing with this matter, they said to each other, "Today again Ma performed

her *leela* while sorting out this business.”

1st January, Monday, 1940

This afternoon Ma was lying down with her eyes closed. I was seated near her and was stroking her feet. Ma said softly, ”I am seeing a form.” Then she said no more.

In the afternoon many devotees arrived. Ma was seated on the bed and all the devotees were crowded into the little room. Ma said, ”This afternoon I saw what you people call a pretend disguise. A woman was standing disguised as a widow, right here. As if this room had no walls or barriers. Her face was downcast and her eyes were a little tearful. Then just as would be said to any of you, ”Who are you?”, that was said to the form, ”Who are you?” The woman then gave a short laugh and moved towards that temple,” indicating the Radha Govind temple. ”She went to the spot where the image of Radha stands. At that time the image of Radha was not there. The woman went to that spot, got on to the pedestal and sat on it, swinging her legs to and fro. A little later she was transformed into the image of Radha.”

Having described this, Ma laughed. The devotees started speaking among themselves, ”Radha had come near Ma today!”

Ma continued, ”And then I saw, exactly like the images of Radha Krishna, the same kind of doll-like figures of exactly the same size; these two images of Radha and Krishna came to this body and then became one.”

On one day after we had come here, Ma was seated by the Ganga surrounded by many devotees. In the course of conversation when Ma had said. ”RadhaGovind has brought this body here,” Amulya Dada had exclaimed in surprise, ”RadhaGovind has brought you here - I do not

understand what you mean.” In reply Ma had given a detailed explanation, the gist of it being, “Exactly that. Just as you people bring me here, in the very same way! On the one hand, there is no coming and going, but if you speak of coming and going then RadhaGovind has brought this body here.”

2nd January, Tuesday

This morning after her face had been washed, Ma asked me, “When are you going to VindhyaChal?” For the last 2 or 3 days Ma has been asking me to leave. As she was not keeping well there was no further conversation about this. Now she said, “I have the *kheyal* that you go there and offer oblations in the sacrificial fire. Once earlier you were to be sent but then this body took you along with it and you did not go there. If you stay near this body your *sadhana-bhajan* does not happen.”

Hearing that I had to leave Ma, my eyes filled with tears. Then whatever faults of mine Ma mentioned, I started answering back as I wept. Some devotees were present. Ma was smiling and saying all kinds of things. I was very upset about having to go. I went and sat on the verandah.

Seeing that I was in tears, Ma’s tone of voice changed. She said, “It is good to shed tears, it washes away the negativity that lies within. And look at how it all happens, Khukuni knows so well that this body gets up to all sorts of things at times. If she had not answered back perhaps it would all have stopped there and then, and often that is what she does, she just leaves. But today she started answering back, and various kinds of words emerged from this body. Words that caused hurt were uttered.” She spoke a lot in this vein and then said, “What now, are you going to feed this body or not? Come on, get up and come quickly.”

In the afternoon Ma was lying down and she said with her eyes closed, “Some are *Shaktas*, followers of Shiva, some are

Vaishnavas, worshippers of Vishnu, they go where they are attracted. Some love Ma, and they are attracted by that *bhava*, so they long for that only. Thus people come with various *bhavas*. So look, whom did they serve? If you love yourself for yourself, then that is a different matter.”

Triguna Dada surmised, “It is the difference between Krishna’s love for his wives and for Brindavan.”

3rd January, Wednesday

Today, the Raja Sahib of Suket brought an English doctor with him. The Raja has been in Kolkata for a few days. He wanted the Doctor Sahib to see Ma. This doctor is the Raja’s personal physician. He has great faith in him. Each one does what he likes, and Ma does not object to any of it.

The doctor conducted a thorough examination and declared, “There is no illness of any kind.”

Ma spoke a few words of English in between and laughed like a child. Those present laughed at Ma’s words.

Ma said, “I spoke those words to make you all laugh and enjoy yourselves!”

The devotees said, “Ma you spoke English correctly and your pronunciation was good too.”

Ma laughed and said, “Yes, you better say it is good or else I may cry. Just as you placate small children, Baba and Ma are speaking similarly.”

The Doctor Sahib joined his palms together and did *pranam* and left. Ma remarked, “Why leave out an English doctor? Look, you people have achieved something by getting doctors-shoctors³³ to come here. Some may be saying we do not

33 This usage of rhyming words in several Indian languages has been explained earlier as well

know what disease Ma has. Some devotees say Ma is not ill but she lies down with the door shut; who knows what she is suffering from? Devotees may have kept the secret. But now reputed doctors have come and declared there is no illness. Now everybody will believe you, is that not so?" She said this imitating the way people say it and laughed aloud. The devotees present agreed with her and said, "That will happen for sure."

Ma smiled and said, "Such a thought could be uttered here only if it had come to someone's mind." Now we began to understand the essence of what Ma has been saying.

Ma continued, "Look, usually everybody falls ill first and then as the condition deteriorates the pulse goes 'dubu-dubu'. But what happens with this body is that the pulse rate gets erratic first, then outward functions cease, and then in that condition the intake of external food and symptoms of illness appear. First the pulse rate goes haywire and then the illness follows."

Today Ma's condition is unexpectedly good. For the last 2 days she was lying in bed. Today she went for a walk by the Ganga and sat down there. A little later she returned and lay down to sleep. Her body appeared to be unwell again. *Keertan* was performed.

Ma sat up and then started talking as if she was perfectly healthy. Laughing at herself she said, "Alright. Have you ever seen such occurrences? At one moment this body is unwell and soiling the bedclothes, next it gets up and walks by the Ganga. Do you know what the matter is? I can do nothing like you can by desiring it. Whatever happens, happens of its own accord. Further, I cannot pay attention and complete a task, therefore everything goes topsy turvy. Attention is not paid towards how the body is faring. There is no memory of when it was unwell

either. It is fine all the time.”

This morning there was an incident. At about 4 am Ma said, “Who is making a noise?”

For the past few days Ma has been sleeping alone in the room. We have been sleeping outside the door. As soon as we heard Ma, I went into her room and asked her what it was. She pointed to the verandah on the side facing the Ganga and said, “Someone was making sounds like -ha ha ha hee hee hee.”

I opened the door and saw that Paramananda Swami was seated there. He sleeps on this verandah. At first I thought perhaps Swamiji made these sounds in his sleep but then he said, “I have been sitting up for the last hour.” There was no further conversation.

When Ma woke up this morning the topic came up again and Abhay asked, “Who made that sound, Ma? Did someone come here?”

Ma replied, “Yes. Someone did come.”

Abhay persisted, “Was it someone good or bad?”

Ma answered, “That which you call ghost-post³⁴, it was of the same kind.”

Abhay then started telling everyone, “Ma has said there was a ghost here this morning.”

4th January, Thursday

This morning as I was giving Ma an oil massage, a widow who lives here came to see Ma. She visits Ma every now and then.

As soon as she arrived she said, “I was roasting puffed rice,

³⁴ ‘Ghost-post’ is another example of the rhyming words used often in Bengali and other Indian languages

but the thought of Ma made me restless and I was unable to stay at home. I packed some roasted puffed rice for Ma, and came to see her. Ever since the day I installed a photograph of Ma on an *aasan* in my house, I have been running here to her. I am unable to stay at home. I am compelled to come running here. I am in a quandary.” She fed Ma with some roasted puffed rice. Ma remarked, “A mother’s heart becomes attracted towards her daughter in this manner.”

After sitting near Ma for a long time, when the widow wanted to take leave of Ma and go home, she said, “Ma, this time I shall leave after taking your permission. How long shall I sit here, tell me? I also have a home, a house with sons, daughters and everyone else. Yet Ma, I come running here for your sake!”

Ma laughed and said, “Go Ma! Keep my home and house in perfect order. Look after everybody well. Keep inside and outside spic and span. This body is yours, and so your home is this body’s home too. Keep it clean in all aspects. And listen to this carefully- this body will not allow any companion to stay with her. Only One - all 16 annas³⁵ are required.” Saying this Ma began to laugh.

Another woman who had come, said as she was leaving, “I shall get up now, Ma. I am going home.”

Ma smiled and responded, “Get up Ma! You must always get up, don’t ever go down. And you must always go home. You get peace when you go home. When you are in a *dharamshala* you are restless. Search for your own home, Ma. This is the house of inhalation and exhalation and the connection is with the breath. If you have to maintain a household, make it a household of righteousness, of *dharma*. If you ignore *dharma*, it leads to restlessness, *ashanti*.”

³⁵ This is a reference to a phrase that indicates doing something wholeheartedly. There were 16 annas in a rupee in those times, and so all 16 annas implies taking everything or giving everything



Ma and Didima

I have been ordered to start offering oblations into the sacrificial fire in Vindhyachal from January 7th, which is Sankranti day. And so I have been asked to leave tomorrow.

I am referring to a letter from a devotee who is a *sannyasi*, a renunciate. He wrote, “Last night I had a dream. First I saw our Guru Ma - she was radiant as she spoke very clearly on the essence of knowledge. I was seated near her and was listening to her with rapt attention. As I focussed on her form and drew closer, I saw that Shri Shri Guru Ma’s body was no longer there but at exactly the same spot was Shri Shri Anandamayi Ma. I saw you very clearly. Then I woke up. I experienced bliss even in my waking state. It was about 2 am. I sat for a long time on my *aasan* and enjoyed the memory of this bliss.”

“After the *mahasamadhi* of Shri Shri Guru Ma I was acutely missing my mother and feeling I had no guide. Just then you appeared unexpectedly and bestowed your grace and love and gave me peace and refuge. Since then I experience your grace. After Guru Ma discarded her body, a *param guru* has manifested in your body and gives me grace and love. This belief has strongly taken root in my heart. That is the reason I had this vision in my dream last night. I experience the absolute truth of this when I see all the children of Shri Shri Guru Ma receiving your grace and love.”

Once, in reply to a letter from a *brahmachari*, Ma had dictated a reply that I am mentioning here. The boy had written, “It appears that there is some lessening in the feeling of devotion that I have towards you..... What is it that is called love?..... When can it happen without any doubt?”

In reply, Ma had written, “One pointed love of God is love. Although a reflection of that may be manifested as some special *bhava* between ordinary people, the true love is just one. But it is good that you desire the real *bhava*. Love manifests through

pure knowledge, pure devotion. And then again, love is self-manifesting. When can it happen without any doubt? Is that not something you need to reflect upon? Just like a leech lets go once it has latched on elsewhere..... when the attraction decreases it means there is attraction in some other direction. If that attraction does not result in the elimination of doubts then it can lead to a downfall. There can be no loss of attraction when you are going towards the truth.”

“You were living in a householder’s home, were you not? If you can, find a separate room in somebody’s house. Have you been able to find such a place? Where do you go? Where do you live? Where do you spend most of your time? What do you do? What do you talk about? To take delight in topics other than those pertaining to the Self and indulge in gaiety is not compatible with a *brahmachari’s* calling. It is necessary to immediately let go of any company that seems to be detrimental. Even the one who is drawn away does not realise when, how and by which connection and by whose influence a person can be made to change direction. At every moment, keep right *satsang*, and arrange to perform all your spiritual practice in that company. Without that it will become your habit to steal and feed yourself. Gradually, if that attitude results in turning towards Self enquiry, then you will be the wisest person.”

“Therefore you need to understand, ‘What is it that I want? Where do I go and for what?’ Keep this thought in your mind all the time. Just as when boys go to a teacher to study and he corrects them as soon as they make a mistake, it is just as natural for boys to make errors. When a boy does not stay with the teacher but studies on his own, then he may believe his own incorrect understanding is true. This is being said so that you make a special effort to progress, by directing yourself to that which assists you to maintain a pure *bhava*.”

Ma never writes letters to anyone. When people write to Ma, the letters are read out to Ma. Sometimes, Ma says one or two sentences in reply to each person. These contain extremely valuable comments.

5th January, Friday

Obeying Ma's orders, I took leave of Ma with my eyes filled with tears, and boarded the night train to Vindhyachal. Didima accompanied me. As we were leaving, Didima went and stood next to Ma. Ma laughed and said, "What is it? It appears you want a *pranam*, don't you?"

Didima replied, "Let it be."

Ma laughed and declared, "The desire is there!"

The devotees who were present burst into laughter.

Ma got down from the bed, bowed down before her mother, and placing her head at her feet said, "Narayan, Narayan", and then rose with her palms joined.

6th January, Saturday

I reached Vindhyachal this evening. Keshav was present, having taken on the responsibility of the *yajna*, the sacrificial fire.

7th January, Sunday

As it is the Pousha Sankranti³⁶ today, the *yajna* commenced.

12th January, Friday

Today I received a letter from Akhandananda Swamiji. There has been specific discussion on reducing the crowds around Ma. People from Kolkata will come for Ma's *darshan*

³⁶ Pousha Sankranti is a festival day in the Hindu calendar dedicated to *Surya*, the Sun god. It is observed on the day when the sun enters the Capricorn zodiac which corresponds with the month of January in the Gregorian calendar.

only on Saturdays and Sundays. Local people who wished to have *darshan* in the evenings for a little while, could do so. Not so many people would be staying with Ma. Ma's physical weakness continues. She is lying down most of the time.

24th January, Wednesday

I received news about Ma. Her condition is the same. She now walks around the temple for a little while. Swamiji, Sadhan, Baby Didi, Kamalakant and others who are with her, are all thinking of going elsewhere. I am leaving for Delhi for some work today.

25th January, Thursday

Today I reached Delhi. Naren Dada's letter from Kolkata has news about Ma. Ma was to go to Puri but she did not do so. I came to know that someone presented Ma with a Neelambari *saree* that she wore, with one end going over her head. She sat in that for some time, playing (performing *leela*) with the devotees, giving them much joy.

31st January, Wednesday

A letter from Kolkata carried detailed news about Ma. Ma had come to Kolkata from Agarpara on Thursday, January 25th, and from there she left for Puri on Saturday, January 27th. Before she left Agarpara, that is on January 24th, her rate of breathing had changed. The regular characteristics of *kriya* had manifested in Ma's body. That evening, till 9 pm, these forms of *kriya* were appearing continuously. The manifestations of *kriya* appeared very naturally from January 25th, Thursday evening till 10.30 pm and then again till 2 am. On the 26th of January, Friday, Ma had said, "Till now all this was going on internally in the same way." On the 24th and 25th of January Ma's hands and feet had turned cold. Many people have gone with Ma to Puri. In the evening I set out for Vindhyachal.

4th February, Sunday

I came to know from Paramanand Swamiji's letter that after the appearance of *kriyas* in Ma's body, her health has improved considerably. Ma is staying in a house on the seaside built by Turiyanand Swamiji. A new *ashram* for Ma is being built next to it. A few days ago, the Narmada *ashram* was completed and is ready. Ma has sent Vishu *brahmachari* there. Ma has sent me some instructions for my spiritual practice through Paramanand Swamiji including a line saying, "Keep in mind that you have been made to stay like this for your own welfare."

10th February, Saturday

Yesterday Maharatan arrived from Allahabad to have Didima's *darshan*. She can speak of nothing else, she seems to be crazy about Ma. From her I heard many details about Ma including many incidents, some of which are worth writing about.

Maharatan said, "Didi, it is astonishing that for the past two days I have been dreaming about Ma in the form of our Sikh Guru Gobind Singh standing near the door. Guru Nanak did not have long hair but Guru Gobind Singh did. Ma was standing in a Punjabi dress, just like him, adorned with flowers."

Narrating another incident Maharatan said, "Many years ago my brother had come to my house in Dehradun. Some other relatives had also come. I took them all to Raipur to see Ma. I wanted them all to see Ma's places, and it would also be a picnic for us all. When we got there I narrated all the stories I knew about Ma. That is my main occupation. I talk about Ma with whoever I meet, and so I did that with them too."

"Listening to these stories about Ma, my brother remarked, "Whatever you may say Didiji, there can be no one greater than Guru Nanak, however wonderful Ma may be." I responded to his remark saying, "That is right. From your perspective what you say is true. But for me, now, Ma is everything." A few days

after this, my brother fell ill and came to the house where I was living in Bareilly. I gave my brother a copy of Sad Vani and some other books to read. He read out Ma's words from that book to me. I saw that his eyes were filling with tears as he did this. As he read this book, devotion for Ma was roused within him."

"His heart was very pure. When he was leaving he asked me for a picture of Ma and I told him, "Look, I will give you a picture, but you must respect it; you should place this picture next to the Granth Sahib in the room where you worship it and offer *puja* to it." He agreed and took the picture with him. He was in great mental stress over his job. Astonishingly, after he took the picture, his health was restored and the problems at work were resolved. He even got a promotion in his post. A few days later he wrote to me, "I am paying special respect to Ma's picture, and the wonderful thing is that I can now see the form of Akal Purusha in that picture." It is our belief, that which is not bound by time, *kaal*, meaning that which has no death, is called Akal Purusha. When my husband read that letter he said, "I am not able to see Ma in the forms that your brother and you are able to."

"I will tell you about another incident. I once went to my brother-in-law's house taking a picture with me, of Ma with both her hands raised. My sister had passed away and her husband had remarried. This lady was very humble by nature. One night I was sleeping in a room with her, my brother-in-law and my younger sister, when she suddenly sat up as if she had seen a vision. She exclaimed, "Didiji, that very same Ma, with her hands raised in that picture that you have brought with you, came to me and spoke at length. Having seen her, my body is feeling very strange." The next day when she was sitting in the kitchen she declared that Ma was standing in front of her

and speaking to her. She could see her very clearly.”

“For many days her manner was very different from usual. She behaved as if she was drugged. When I was leaving she wanted to keep a copy of Ma’s picture so she sent her son to a photographer’s studio to get it made. That boy’s Kashmiri friend saw the picture in his pocket and took it joyfully to his house. The Kashmiri friend’s mother was a devotee of Ma. She saw the picture, recognised Ma, and expressed her happiness in many ways.”

“Look Didi, we cannot fathom in how many ways, where and when and on whom Ma bestows her grace. I heard from my brother-in-law’s second wife that she had seen Ma in her dreams soon after she got married. So when she saw the picture she recognised Ma at once. See Didi, both my brother and my brother-in-law’s second wife have never met Ma in person. Yet they have received her grace in plenty. I can barely keep track of how many such incidents have happened.”

Maharatan described all these anecdotes that day.

12th February, Monday

Another incident occurred in the midst of all this. On 3rd February, Baba sent a telegram from Puri saying, “How are you? Send a telegram. Letter follows.”

On February 1st, Thursday, while I was washing my face, I suddenly felt a pain in my back and chest. Baba did not know of this. When I received this telegram today I was astonished, wondering what all this was about.

In a couple of days I received Baba’s letter dated 3rd February which said, “The reason I sent you the telegram was that yesterday Ma called me and said that she had seen you applying some ointment on me which had a bad effect. The pain and burning sensations had increased and so had the heart rate.

Ma saw the form of a disease looking like a monkey with no hair on its head or body. That form leapt towards Ma but she sent it away and then it carried you away. When I appeared Ma described the whole incident to me. I ran immediately to get you back. Ma saw that in my *bhava* I had the strength to release you and bring you back, but she could not see if I had been able to succeed. Today when I asked her, Ma gave me permission to write a letter to you. But since it would take a long time to write a letter and get your reply she instructed me to send you a telegram.”

Today I received letters from Paramanand Swamiji and Abhay. Ma had gone to the Nimbark Ashram in Bhuvaneshwar on February 10th at 11 am. She was accompanied by Abhay, Paramanand Swamiji, Deviji, Yogesh Dada and Keshav. The rest are still in Puri. Ma's health was good in Puri. One day, after some incident, her health deteriorated slightly. After that she was neither in the *bhava* to sleep nor stay in Puri. It is not known how long she will stay in Bhuvaneshwar.

Abhay has written, “Strange things happen In the midst of Ma's subtle and imperceptible ways, one of which was your illness.”

24th February, Saturday

I received a letter from Paramanandji. Ma returned to Puri on February 21st.

27th February, Tuesday

I received a telegram from Baba - he has written that I should go to Mughalsarai tomorrow, Wednesday, to meet Ma.

28th February, Wednesday

Today Ma arrived in Vindhyachal.

3rd March, Sunday

Today, very early in the morning, Ma boarded the train

to Dehradun from Mirzapur station. In the last 2 or 3 days Vindhyachal seemed like a *bazaar* full of happiness. Now darkness descended again and every heart was grieving.

Ma said to me, “I have had the *kheyal* that you need to stay alone for some time and engage in spiritual practice. Therefore you stay on here and remain immersed in His *bhava* and work with regularity and consistency.”

Mez Didi and Shachi Dada have come. They will stay here for 2 or 3 days and then join Ma. I came to know from Mez Didi that while Ma had gone to Bhuvaneshwar those who were in Puri were longing for her. During that time, Mez Didi went for *darshan* of Jagannath (in the temple) and saw very clearly that Ma was standing in the place of Jagannath. To check that it was not her eyes playing tricks on her, she closed her eyes and opened them, and saw exactly the same vision. All those who were with her started exclaiming, “Oh what is this? This is Ma’s form!”

As she watched, the form turned into Ma dressed like royalty, then into an image of Kali and then the idol of Jagannath. Mez Didi revealed further that whenever she did *japa* or remembered her *guru* and did *pranam*, Ma’s form would appear in place of her *guru*. I have written earlier that many people have seen Ma in place of their *guru* and *ishta*, the chosen deity.

4th March, Monday

Shachi Dada wants to take me to Delhi for some work in the women’s *ashram*. Ma also sent instructions that I had to go, so today we set out for Delhi.

This time I heard from Ma about the incident of my illness because of which a telegram was sent to me. The gist of what Ma said was that when Baba was treating Ma and I was trying to administer medication to her according to his prescription,

there was an adverse reaction to that. Later Ma saw that the form of the disease caught hold of me and took me to Ma. So that whether it was because of the illness or because of something else, I forgot Ma. That was when Ma called Baba and sent him to rescue me. Ma said, “I sent Baba to rescue you.”

6th March, Wednesday

When we reached Delhi and went to Amal Dada’s house we found that he had gone to Dehradun on some work. He had written a letter that he was bringing Ma back to Delhi in his car.

7th March, Thursday

This evening Ma reached Delhi. How the hearts of the devotees were filled with happiness! They sang *keertan* and listened to Ma’s divine words. Ma’s body again appeared to be unwell so despite the desire of the devotees to stay on, they left and Ma was taken to rest.

8th March, Friday

Today again many devotees arrived for Ma’s *darshan*. Ma’s body is unwell because she caught a chill in Dehradun where it was so much cooler. Doctor Babu was asking Ma to inhale a medicine but also feared it may result in adverse effects. Ma laughed and said, “Baba, just leave me to ‘nature’ - what do you say? Whatever has to happen will happen.” Everybody heard Ma use the English word ‘nature’ and burst out laughing. Ma occasionally uses a couple of English words to amuse those around her.

She asked Charu Dada, “Baba, will you not read out to us from a scripture?” He agreed to do so with delight. He started reading out, *path*, in the afternoon. Tomorrow is Dol Poornima (Holi) and everyone is hoping to celebrate it with *keertan* in Ma’s presence.

9th March, Saturday

Today devotees arrived in Ma's *ashram* for Dol Poornima. *Keertan* was started by 9 am. Ma was garlanded and anointed with sandal paste and coloured powders by the devotees. They raised both arms and danced in circles as they sang with great joy. Ma also joined them for some time in between. When she stood on the verandah and started marking the beat with her left hand to encourage the devotees, they responded by singing the Name with twice as much vigour.

Today Ma was to go to Brindavan but she did not leave. Her trip to Dehradun and the chill she caught there had resulted in a severe cold and cough with fever. She had already travelled by car for 150 miles in that state. She has recovered a little by coming to a warmer place. She has considerable chest congestion.

In the evening, Dr. J. K. Sen examined her and said, "She has a fever and has developed bronchitis." Everybody started advising Ma against travelling. Ma replied, "If the body becomes immobile then travelling will cease. Apart from that, it will go on incessantly."

After much discussion, although all the luggage was packed and ready for departure, Ma's travel was postponed. Everybody was very happy to know that Ma was staying on and would not travel in her present state of ill health.

Keertan continued till 6 pm. Then Charu Dada read aloud for some time. At 9 pm the doors were closed so Ma could rest.

10th March, Sunday

Today a group of girls were to sing *keertan* from 12 noon to 2 pm. Ma will leave today. In the morning she declared, "Today the doctor will not find any symptoms of illness." As soon as Doctor Babu arrived, Ma said to him, "Baba, do take a

look now. Today you will not find any significant symptoms.” Doctor Babu replied, “Ma all this is your sport!”

Truly, when the doctor examined Ma he declared, “You seem to be fine today. There is hardly any problem that I can see.” When Ma spoke about leaving today, the doctor said, “Ma, I do not want you to travel today, but I believe that you do not act according to our wishes and therefore it is not within our power to obstruct your movements.”

Ma told me in confidence that we were to prepare for departure today.

In the afternoon the late Haran Babu’s wife came to Ma and said, “Ma, yesterday my father said, while he was sitting in his house, ‘If Ma is truly my Ma, then whatever happens she will not leave today. I shall remain seated at home all day and call out to her - let us see what happens.’ You did not leave yesterday and my father was astonished to hear that.”

Hearing this, Ma laughed and called me and said, “Khukuni, listen, why did I suddenly fall ill and have to cancel my departure? I do nothing because of desire like you all do. You people do all sorts of things and the coming and going of this body is stopped. This body is like a leaf that has fallen from a tree and dried up, it drifts wherever the breeze takes it.” Saying this she began to laugh.

The boys said to the girls who were present, “Yesterday Ma stayed on for our *keertan*. Let us see if the girls are able to hold Ma back today or not.”

Ma responded immediately, “O Baba, please understand - women are very soft-hearted. My mothers will not come in the way of their daughter. You performed *keertan* for 12 hours and the women for 4 hours. This time you perform *keertan* for 9 hours and the mothers for 3 hours. After you sing *keertan* till 3

pm, then whatever this girl wants to do, the mothers will agree to it. What do you say?” Saying this, Ma looked at the women.

She continued, “And this girl has inherited the nature of her mothers, hasn’t she? She is crazy and the moment she says she is leaving she sets out. Baba and Ma are all compassionate and give her so much affection. Therefore they are unable to stop her. They all know that their daughter does not do anything by her own desire like they do. After *keertan* is performed till 3 pm, they will offer no more resistance to their daughter. What do you say?”

Saying this, Ma looked at the women in such a manner and spoke so sweetly that they were completely taken up with her and gave in to her request immediately. Ma laughed and declared, “Just see how understanding my mothers are. They will never come in the way of anything I do. They understand that this body does not act according to its desires like others do. Whatever happens just happens - what do you say?”

After much discussion, even though they did not want to let Ma go, they all finally agreed to her departure. Ma’s charming persuasion compelled everyone to let her have her way.

It was decided that we would leave at 5 pm. The women started their *keertan*. Some devotees approached the women quietly and asked them to stop singing *keertan*, with the hope that perhaps Ma would stay on. But the women replied, “What can we do? We have agreed to let Ma leave.”

Ma arrived at the exact hour and encouraged the women by joining them in the *keertan* and walking around with them as they sang. The women sang with great enthusiasm. Noting that it was time, Ma sang “Hari Haraay Namaha” to conclude the singing and asked the others to follow suit. They did and the *keertan* was brought to a close on time. Nobody was able to

do any more. Ma set out.

Biren had said he would narrate the story of Nimai Sannyas. Ma beckoned him and stroked his back saying, “Shall I say something? Will you listen? I feel hesitant to say this to you, but you must not resist. Do not be angry with me. If I am unable to listen to your recital of Nimai Sannyas, then consider it to be what you people call a ‘rehearsal’. Keep doing it, and when the time comes it will be heard. Dear boy, if I have to go to Brindavan today and am unable to stop here on the way back, do not hold back stubbornly. Whatever has to happen will happen. Why, is that not alright?”

Ma was speaking and cajoling in such a way that it is difficult to describe it unless you actually witnessed it. Biren is a young boy and sings *Nama keertan* very beautifully. He derives great joy from *keertan*. He was very keen to perform Nimai Sannyas for Ma and had repeatedly requested Ma to stay on to hear it. That is why Ma spoke to him in this way and eventually he also agreed to let Ma leave. Ma was very happy to hear that. She said, “Alright! Biren has also agreed.” In this manner she pleased each one in the way that was needed for him or her.

Further she continued, “This body does not act prompted by desire like all of you do. You people see all this and probably think ‘she must be doing all this with some ulterior purpose in mind, otherwise how does she say all this?’ But it is not that way at all. You all remain within the concepts of ‘*buddhi - shuddhi*’ (intellect- perception) don’t you, so there is nothing wrong in your making such assumptions, but it is difficult for you to understand how this body works. You understand at times, and at other times you start thinking in your usual manner and you misunderstand. Whatever has to happen, happens in the best possible way - this is not easy for ordinary minds to perceive.”

Before Ma set out, in reply to a devotee’s question she said,

“Work with whatever strength you have. His *kripa*, grace, is always there. Make a channel with whatever strength you possess for this grace to flow, and His grace will come through this channel and fill your being. Why do you worry? You engage in your work with all the power that you have.”

In the afternoon, Pankaj Dada drove Ma in his car to Brindavan. On the way, Ma was made to halt for some time in the Hari Sabha where *keertan* was in progress.

We always stay in the temple of the Vardhaman Raja, but this time someone had sent a letter with the address of some other *dharmashala*. We reached there and found that it was difficult to get a room. We went to another temple and found that it was also fully occupied. Finally we got accommodation in the Poona *dharmashala*.

At 9 pm the manager of the Vardhaman Raja temple, Shri Yogendranath Kavyateerth, was informed and he came as soon as he received the news. He wanted Ma to be taken to his temple immediately but as it was late we did not go. Ma pointed towards Shachi Dada, Paramanand Swamiji and others and said, “Baba, this time these people are in charge. They can decide about whatever arrangements are to be made.” Kavyateerth Mahashay was told that further arrangements would be made the next day and he left at midnight.

I have already mentioned that Santdas Babaji Mahashay’s disciple, Shishir Raha, has come with Ma this time. He said, “I was so surprised to see this - the devotees in Delhi were longing so much for Ma’s company that they were very sad to let her go. But before she left, Ma charmed them with sweet words to such an extent that they were unable to experience the pain of separation from her at that time. They seemed to have forgotten that Ma was leaving in a short while, so immersed were they in joy. Later they will understand what happened.”

Ma smiled and said, “Truly, they are immersed in joy - all those who love this body.”

11th March, Monday

Ma woke up this morning and went downstairs. Kavyateerth Mahashay and others went out in search of accommodation. Many travellers have arrived here from other towns and there is no suitable place available. Finally, Kavyateerth Mahashay’s desire was fulfilled. Everybody preferred to go to his place and we immediately set out to make arrangements to take Ma there.

Meanwhile, Ma was walking about and she reached a temple on the other side of this *dharmashala*. She went in and declared, “Vah! This is a beautiful spot. There is a verandah here. How would it be if we were to stay here?” Saying this she started walking up and down. We followed her there and found that a white calf was leaping around in the courtyard in front of the temple. The calf was extremely beautiful. It is rare to find such a creature. We started discussing this with Ma.

Ma sat down on the verandah facing this courtyard. Sachi Dada and Paramanand Swamiji were with us. Ma told us that when none of us were with her, this calf had come running to her. Ma had stroked its back and head and it had displayed great happiness. This calf’s face was indeed extraordinary.

A little later when we went to the Vardhaman Raja’s temple we found that Kavyateerth Mahashay had had the entire place thoroughly cleaned, and all arrangements had been made for our stay. He had a great desire in his heart that Ma stay here and so we did not get accommodation anywhere else.

Shishir Raha sent word to his *ashram* and many *brahmacharis* arrived from there for Ma’s *darshan*. They were very keen to take Ma to stay in their *ashram*. But Ma had already said, “Take me wherever you like but once I go to one place, if you make

a move again we will have to leave Brindavan altogether.” Having heard this, there was no more talk of moving here and there. Ma said to the *brahmacharis*, “Why did Shishir not take me first to stay at your place?”

The *brahmacharis* started scolding Shishir Dada. The poor man found himself in a delicate situation. Worrying about various factors, he had decided not to take Ma to that *ashram*. He did not know whether they had enough space to accommodate us there. Ma was enjoying all this. Finally, it was decided that before leaving Brindavan, Ma would surely visit their *ashram*.

Ma had a conversation with some *sadhus*. We were all very happy to see so many *sannyasis* all together, with the same kind of *bhava*. Ma also expressed her joy. The *sadhus* began to talk about how happy they were to see Ma.

Ma smiled and said, “We all received the soothing breeze from the *sadhus* - they have all arrived to give *darshan* to this girl.”

The *sadhus* declared, “Ma, we have received your *darshan* and have carried away the breeze.”

Ma said, “That is right. It is all true. Give and take, receiving and offering go on all the time.”

One of the *sadhus* said, “Ma, please give us your grace.”

Ma smiled sweetly, and raising her hands upwards she said, “Your grace makes it all happen. There is no other than the One.”

After reaching Brindavan we came to know of an incident. Kavyateerth Mahashay’s wife came to Ma and told her that she had been very sick a few days earlier. She was unconscious for 7 days. On the seventh day she saw that Ma was sitting near her with her hand held up in *abhay*, a gesture indicating

fearlessness. After that she regained consciousness and felt as if she had woken up after a very long sleep. Following this experience, she had a very intense desire to see Ma. Although Ma had gone to Brindavan several times, she had never had Ma's *darshan* earlier. She had expressed her regret about this. Just then an acquaintance arrived from Agra. Hearing this story from her, she said, "Ma is *antaryami*, and knows what goes on in our minds. She surely knows your desire. It is possible she will suddenly arrive one day and give you *darshan*."

None of them knew where Ma was. If Ma appeared suddenly then they would meet and speak to her for 2 or 4 days. However, the very next day, right after they had this conversation Ma arrived in Brindavan. Kavyateerth's wife told us all this and expressed her deep gratitude. Ma smiled and responded to her. Finally, Ma said, "We were speaking about you all yesterday. It was just yesterday that our luggage was packed."

Hearing all this Sachi Dada and all of us started saying to each other that we now understood why we came here. We did not yet know why we spent one night in the Poona *dharamshala*. Why did we go there suddenly? As we spoke about this, Ma said, as if in reply to our questions, "That calf was endowed with several auspicious signs. When there was no one else near me it would come running to me, and when I stroked its back it was very happy."

We exclaimed, "Oh! It was for that calf that Ma went there." Ma did not say anything more. Who knows who that calf was!

The disciples of Sant Babaji Mahashay had come. Conversation continued on many topics. Shishir Raha declared, "Nothing has happened. I only encounter jealousy. I have lived with so many *sadhus*." He spoke in this vein. Ma laughed and said. "You may be the son of a king, but unless you are of age you will not gain the kingdom. You have to wait for

the moment.” Laughing, she asked all those present, “At what age can you be considered an adult?”

Sachi Dada and others replied, “There are two rules defining adulthood - one says you are an adult at 18 years and the other at 21. Alright, Ma, you tell us, when will we be 21 years old?”

Ma smiled charmingly and said, “You people speak of 11 sense organs, don’t you? It is when you get control of these 11 sense organs.”

One person completed the metaphor and asked, “Then will we be 21 years old?” Ma laughed and said, “It may be considered after that.”

Again, in the course of conversation, she remarked, “Do you know what it is? You people do as much as you can to the limit of your strength, He is there, is He not? He will do whatever needs to be done.”

12th March, Tuesday

Pratima Devi and others have arrived. A Memsahab, a foreigner we know from Almora, has come along with them. Memsahab wants to take on a *Mahapurush*, a spiritually evolved person, as her *guru*. She said, “I desire to make Ma my *guru*, but it is not possible as Ma does not give *deeksha*. So if Ma gives permission, I will take *deeksha* from this *mahatma*.”

Ma replied, “Look, you have to think very carefully before you take on a *guru*. The reason being that once you accept someone as a *guru* it becomes a serious problem if one then loses faith in him. It is a different matter if your heart has decided on a particular *guru* and then your mind does not want to think of anyone else. And if you had that kind of *bhava* you would have gone ahead and done it, there would be no question in your mind. When a question has arisen then you need to think over it very carefully.”

Memsahab said, “I am deeply attracted to the Goddess. But if my mind has a desire for the Krishna *mantra* then what should I do? And if I do *japa* with the Krishna *mantra* and Devi appears, then should I start repeating the Devi *mantra*?”

We came to know that Memsahab has not received *deeksha* formally. She considered a *sadhu* in Spain to be her *guru* and his *guru* was an Indian *tantrik sadhu*. That is the reason Memsahab reads the Chandi, a scriptural text about Devi, every day. She chanted some *stotras* about the Goddess and recited some verses from the Chandi. We also got to know that she had gone to the Kamakhya mountain to do *sadhana*.

In answer to her questions, Ma said, “Look, you will take whatever *mantra* your *guru* gives you, then whatever deity appears is alright. The vision may be good or it could be bad too. Just as you sometimes visit wearing pants and sometimes a *sari*. Also, you are called by different names but you are just one person. Observe therefore, that He is but One. It is said that Katyayani was worshipped and Krishna was realised. Therefore even if you repeat the name of Krishna and Devi appears before you or if you do the *japa* of Devi *mantra* and Krishna appears, you stay with your *ishta mantra*. You may also experience that some *rishi* comes and says something to you. Another time some evil spirit may appear before you with a bottle of alcohol. This could arouse negative feelings in you. Even at that moment you must believe that this is your *ishta*, your chosen deity. When you hold on strongly to your *mantra*, you will observe everything.”

Further Ma said, “That is why I am telling you that when you have two kinds of *bhava*, then think very deeply and see which of these two is the stronger one. You will certainly observe that one is stronger. Just as when you step out of your house and see two or three paths, but you take one of those.

Do you know what this is about? You have one *samskar*, an accumulated tendency, which seizes your very being. And then you have other desires, when you see others or when you hear about a great person and wish to worship him. Those have not taken root in your mind. If you just pay careful attention to this in your mind, you will understand all this fully.”

13th March, Wednesday

This morning Ma woke up and started strolling about. Mezdi and I were cooking in the kitchen. Ma came to the door of the kitchen and sang:

“*Haath se kaam karna
Man se Naam chalaana
Mukh se Naam chalaana.*”

“Work with your hands
Repeat the Name in your mind
Chant the Name with your lips.”

She sang this verse over and over again. Then looking at us, she began to smile very sweetly.

Today Ma was to leave for Dehradun. She was to take the train to Mathura in the afternoon. All of a sudden Ma’s health took a turn for the worse in the afternoon and the travel had to be postponed. The luggage had all been packed ready for departure.

Ma commented, “All the luggage is packed and now again this is the second day on which travel is obstructed. I have said that if there is a *kheyal* then nothing can be stopped. But if that is not the case, then when the body does not go, the desire to leave also ceases. In this manner if the body ceases to function where will it go and rest?” As Ma said this to herself, Sachi Dada asked, “Will that ever happen Ma?” Ma again seemed to be addressing herself as she said sweetly, “For a very long

time.”

The departure was cancelled. Yesterday the mother of Dr. Shome of Dehradun had arrived in Brindavan on a pilgrimage. Hearing that Ma was here she came for her *darshan* in the evening. She said, “Ma, I am the reason for your ill health, because from last evening I have been saying over and over again in my mind: Ma, I have come here and you are going away. Just stay for one more day. Let me see if Ma can hear my plea or not.”

Ma smiled and said, “You people do whatever you want wherever you are and halt my coming and going. You know that until this body ceases to function the coming and going will not cease.” Saying this Ma began to laugh.

The condition of Ma’s heart is not good. We have been requesting her again and again not to speak too much. In response, she keeps silent for some time. Sometimes she tells people, “These people have forbidden me from speaking.” Soon enough, forgetting everything like a child, she begins to laugh and chat. At that time it does not appear that her pulse is uneven. Playfully, she pinches the hands of those seated in front of her and then declares, “See, this excessive chatter and this pinching are all signs of weakness. You must have seen that when a patient’s condition deteriorates there are signs of restlessness. When such disorders begin, the patient starts to pinch others. These are not good signs. But you people are unable to understand the condition of this body. If the breathing and other functions of this body were to be considered normal then the state of the heart and other serious disorders, that have been occurring and are still happening, would have resulted in it ceasing to function. Yet I keep laughing and talking in this condition and so people do not understand what is happening.”

We listened to Ma say this in shocked silence. Every doctor who has examined Ma has felt the pulse and the condition of her heart and expressed exactly this opinion. However, devotees who see Ma's radiance and her joyous speech are unable to understand this most of the time.

In the evening some *sadhus* arrived from Sant Babaji's *ashram*. From yesterday Ma has been taking everybody to the terrace and saying, "Come, for some time let us all sit in silence. Each one can repeat His Name or meditate in whichever way he or she wants." Today also everybody sat around her. Ma asked the *sadhus*, "If you are delayed a little, would it come in the way of your work in the *ashram*?" Replying that there would be no problem, they sat for an hour and then offered *pranam* to Ma and left. They have been taking Shishir Raha with them to their *ashram* for the last 2 or 3 days. In this context someone amongst us commented, "Shishir Dada has abandoned us." Immediately Ma responded, "Why do you people think in this way? Is that not our place too? Why do you bring in a feeling of separateness? All *ashrams* belong to the One. Some live in this house and some in that. What does that matter?"

All were filled with joy to hear Ma say this and the manner in which she said it. And this statement from Ma gives us joy for it is not just what she says - everything Ma does in her life, every word she utters, expresses this *bhava*. That is the reason that when Ma says something like this everybody is enchanted.

14th March, Thursday

From this morning Ma has had the *kheyal* to depart from here. She asked Sachi Dada, "Say, what is your opinion? Shall we set out today?" And that is what happened. Kavyateerth Mahashay got busy getting ready for our departure. He was doing his best to help each one, going out of his way to ensure that everyone was served and was happy with the

arrangements. He was waiting in readiness for orders from any of Ma's company, not only from Ma. One does not often come across this kind of readiness to serve. He, along with another boy called Vinod, accompanied Ma till Mathura and helped her board the train. Enroute we visited Shri Shri Sant Babaji's *ashram*.

Two hours later our train reached Delhi. A large number of devotees were waiting at the station. They were all making special requests to Ma to break her journey in Delhi, but Ma did not want to stop there. She said, "If all goes well, you people can stop me here on my way back from Dehradun." Hearing this, Manoj Dada said, "Ma, do we have the authority to stop you? What power do we have to make you stop off?" Ma laughed and replied, "Vah! What are you saying, Baba! Do you not offload your own belongings? The owner of a thing, takes it down, doesn't he?"

Someone asked, "Ma, do you belong to me?"

Ma replied, "I belong to everyone."

Everyone had one hour in Delhi station to see Ma and their faces showed they were enthralled, watching Ma. Jiten was greatly overwhelmed and he began to weep and call out to Ma loudly. Ma appeased him with many words. It was time for the train to leave. Dr. J. K. Sen said with joined palms, "Please give it proper thought."

Ma smiled and replied, "Baba, what can I do? You know I am your daughter. I have inherited your nature. Say, who is to be blamed?"

Hearing this, everybody burst out laughing. The train set off for Dehradun. All gazed as long as they could at Ma, with forlorn expressions. Ma leaned out of the window and looked at them. I have to go to Vindhyachal after spending 2 to 4 days

in Delhi.

26th March, Tuesday

Today Ma returned from Dehradun. I came to know from Paramanandaji's letter that Ma was unable to bear the cold weather. She has again developed a slight fever. 17 or 18 devotees had gone to Dehradun from Delhi. March 24th, Sunday, (25th day of Chaitra) was *amavasya*, new moon night, and so *nama yajna*, an offering with the repetition of the Name, had been started. After this Ma was to move to a warmer place.

29th March, Friday

A letter from Dehradun informed us that on March 24th, Sunday (25th day of Chaitra) a *nama yajna* was held there. On 25th March, Monday, women sang *keertan* from 4 pm to 8 pm. They had draped an ochre coloured *dhoti* on Ma and placed a crown on her head. Ma evinced great joy as the women sang *keertan*.

On March 26th, Tuesday morning, at 7 am, Ma went in a car to the Dehradun station followed by 30 to 35 devotees. The devotees sang *keertan* as they walked. Ma then went to Raipur. After spending 2 hours there she returned to the Kishenpur *ashram* around 11 am. It is less cool there and so perhaps Ma will spend a few days there. For the last few days Ma has been unable to rest because of *keertan* and other activities, and her body is weak again and she has a fever.

Ma hardly pays any attention to the condition of her body. She engages in all kinds of activities without a regular routine irrespective of weakness and illness. As a result her health is deteriorating day by day. At times it appears as if she is in perfect health with no sign of these things. But then this condition completely reverses. She has often declared, "The kind of coming and going taking place in this body in its condition, if it happened to anyone else they would not be able

to remain alive.”

At times, observing how her heart is, people are fearful and feel that perhaps her body will not continue to function. But, a few hours later, there is again a change, and Ma is laughing and conversing joyfully. Who would venture to say that just a few hours earlier they were afraid to see her physical condition? However that may be, there is no doubt that Ma's health is deteriorating day by day. It is just our feeling, there is nothing we are able to do about it.

Glossary

<i>Ananda</i>	bliss.
<i>Arati</i>	devotional ceremony in Hindu worship with the waving of lights, incense etc before the object of adoration.
<i>Asana</i>	(i) Yogic posture or physical pose. Every posture corresponds to a particular state of mind. (ii) Small mat or carpet used as a seat by each person individually.
<i>Ashtami</i>	The eighth day in a lunar half month. The main day of Durga Puja, which is performed on Saptami, Ashtami and Navami of the bright half of the month of Ashwin (September/October).
<i>Bhava</i>	(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.
<i>Bhog</i>	food offering to the object of worship.
<i>Brahmachari</i>	religious student who devotes himself to studies, to spiritual practices and to service, and observes strict celibacy.
<i>Chowki</i>	low wooden seat or stool.

- Darshan** sight, vision. One speaks of having *darshan* of a saint, sage or deity, which means to be blessed by his sight and presence.
- Devi** Goddess.
- Dharmashala** a rest-house for pilgrims. An Inn.
- Deeksha** Initiation into the spiritual life, effected through the grace of the *Guru* who represents the Divine. During deeksha a mantra or one of the potent names of God is usually communicated to the disciple, who is asked to repeat it regularly and in a specific manner.
- Drishhti** sight or seeing.
- Dundee** a carrying chair of canvas and wood carried by 4 porters, used in mountainous areas.
- Ghat** the bathing places on the bank of a river.
- Gunas** the three gunas (sattva, goodness; rajas, passion; tamas, darkness) are the three modes or qualities of prakriti (the primary substance), whose varied combination produces the diversity of beings.
- Gunateet** beyond the gunas.
- Ishta** literally 'Beloved.' The chosen deity one worships. It is the particular aspect of the Divine with which the disciple will have to be in perfect communion before the Supreme Divine Gnosis becomes possible.
- Ishta mantra** the mantra received from one's *Guru* for the invocation of the chosen deity.
- Japa** repetition of a mantra or a name of God, imparted by the *Guru* at the time of deeksha (see deeksha). The repetition, as one of the daily disciplinary exercises may be for a fixed or indefinite number

of times. There are three kinds of japa namely vocal (vacika), semivocal (upamshu) 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.

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 supervention of jnana (see jnana).

Jnana

literally, knowledge. True Knowledge is immediate and represents the unity of Reality. Every other knowledge belongs to the category of ajnana.

Kala

time.

Kali

a name of the Divine Mother. Kali is the destroyer of evil. In Bengal Kali Puja is celebrated during the dark night of the Diwali festival in the month of Karttika (October/November.)

Kamandalu

a special water pot made of copper carried by ascetics.

Kambli

blanket.

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.

Kaviraj

ayurvedic doctor (in Bengali).

Keertan

devotional song.

Kheyal

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 Kheyal 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 Kheyal with reference to Her own person, it must be understood to denote a spontaneous upsurge of Will, which is divine and therefore free.

Kripa

grace.

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

Goddess as a little girl.

Laya

destruction.

Leela

literally 'play'. Movements and activities of the Supreme Being that are free by nature and not subject to laws. Vaishnavas explain Creation as the *leela* of God.

Mahatma

one who is a 'great soul.'

Mandir

temple.

Mantra

a series of sounds of great potency. It is the sound representation of the Ishta 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.

- Mahapurusha*** a saintly person, an elevated soul.
- Maun*** the practice of silence. It may either mean to abstain, from speech; or to abstain from signs, gestures and writing as well as from speech; or the complete stilling of the activities of the mind as well.
- Maya*** the Supreme Divine Power by which the One conceals Itself and appears as the many.
- Mela*** congregation of people to celebrate an occasion.
- Mudra*** particular pose of the body as a whole or of its parts; representing the expression of a particular deva shakti (higher natural force). Without that pose the particular shakti cannot function. The performance of these mudras produces necessary changes in the mind or character. In Ma's case these mudras came spontaneously.
- Muni*** one who keeps silence; an ascetic.
- Nama*** name. Singly, it generally means a Name of God.
- Navaratri*** nine day festival.
- Pandas*** pilgrimage priests.
- Pardaa*** custom in which women either remain in a special part of the house or cover their faces and bodies to avoid being seen by men who are not related to them.
- Path/Patha*** recitation (mainly of scriptures).
- Patra*** character.

<i>Pranam</i>	obeisance. An act of surrender, indicating the sense of one's own smallness in the presence of the One to whom obeisance is offered. There are various ways of doing <i>pranam</i> ; the most common is to kneel down and touch the ground with one's head.
<i>Prasad</i>	food offered to a deity or saint becomes <i>prasad</i> when it has been accepted and blessed. It is then partaken of by the devotees.
<i>Puja/Pooja</i>	ceremonial worship of the Hindus. Offering to the object of adoration various articles representing all aspects of oneself.
<i>Rajas</i>	active quality.
<i>Rishi</i>	seer. The Rishis are said to form a class of beings by themselves, distinct from gods, common men, asuras (demons) etc. They are those to whom mantras are revealed.
<i>Roti</i>	flat, handmade bread.
<i>Rudri</i>	vedic hymn in praise of Lord Siva.
<i>Sadhak</i>	a committed pilgrim, a wayfarer on the religious path in life.
<i>Sadhana</i>	spiritual practice performed for the purpose of preparing oneself for Self realisation.
<i>Sadhu</i>	one who has dedicated his life to spiritual endeavour and is free from family and business entanglements.
<i>Samskara</i>	impressions, mental dispositions, psychic traces left in the mind after any experience. They act like seeds and have a tendency to germinate into action. These <i>samskaras</i> 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.

Sankranti the passage of the Sun from one zodiacal sign into another. Celebrated as a festival by Hindus.

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

Satsang 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 a religious meeting. In its widest sense the practice of the presence of God.

Sattva pure quality.

Shakti power that in its spiritual sense is eternal and supreme and of the nature of consciousness. It is the moving power of Nature and Super Nature. In Hindu mythology Shakti is often symbolised by a divine woman or a female deity.

Shiksha teaching.

Shiva literally “Good.” A form of the Supreme Deity. The aspect of the Divine Personality that is associated with the dissolution of the universe. The destroyer of that which is unreal. Shiva also stands for the Supreme Being Itself.

Shoonya the void.

Siddha realised soul.

Purush

Siddhi (1) success; achievement of perfection.
(2) bhang, an intoxicant offered with milk to Lord

	Shiva .
<i>Sindur</i>	vermillion.
<i>Sthan</i>	place.
<i>Svabhav</i>	true nature.
<i>Tamas</i>	inert, dull.
<i>Tithi</i>	a lunar day.
<i>Vasana</i>	latent desire stored in the subconscious.
<i>Vritti</i>	thoughts, mental modifications.
<i>Yagna</i>	fire sacrifice, also called havan or homa.
<i>Yoga</i>	literally 'union'. Various methods for realizing the union of the individual Atma with the universal Atma.
<i>Yogi</i>	one who practices yoga or has mastered it.

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