

MY CHILDHOOD FEW GLIMPSES

MY early childhood was, full of laughter, carefree sport, innocent ways, The seeds of asceticism and spiritualism had not entered my innerself, I was like an any other ordinary child. I could never distinguish between a home and a temple. My games with 'Baba' who was invariably present within the premises of my huge rambling house, were purely innocent, not born out of any design. A 'Baba' who frequented my house, used to play with me whenever I went closer to him. The 'Banyan Tree' was his favourite spot. and he always sat under it's shade. The 'Baba' was a total stranger to me, but he loved me and my friends, so we went to him freely. He amused us by drinking buckets of water, and then bringing the entire quantity out, in sporadic showers. These small tricks filled us with glee. and we went to him freely. He never entered the massive gate of my house, always stood at a respectable distance. Everyone used to revere him. He paid special attention to me. It was evident to everyone that I was his favourite.

My mother felt quite uneasy whenever she spotted me playing with the 'yogi', She was a devout person, and spent most of her time in the worship of the 'divine'. She was disinterested in the wealth of the family due to some disillusionments, and thus sought solace in the worship of the 'divine'.

Her motherly instincts always warned her whenever she saw me in the company of the 'Baba'. Even a casual reference to my growing fondness for the 'Baba', used to upset her greatly. She nursed secret fears that 'Baba' would one day take me away from her. Despite her caution, all the events happened according to the 'Baba's wishes.

I was introduced to the books at an early stage. Teachers came to my house to teach me. Sometimes even the 'Baba' taught me. It was a different world altogether, and I acutely missed the by gone days of fun and merriment. My formal education began in a school in 'Badayun'. The regular recitation of the religious scriptures - Geeta and Ramayan and ritualistic worship of the 'Divine mother', made an impact on my young mind. As time sped by, I began to understand the definition of society, family and the norms which governed the life of every individual I was disinterested in the school and its rigorous schedule, so I often played truant with my classes. One day, I hid in a 'Palarquin' in order to avoid the school, and created a great panic. Frantically, the members of my family began to look for me all over the place. Finally it was Baba who located my hiding place and severely reprimanded me. There after I got reconciled to the school and the studies, and did not try any other tricks to evade them

The feeling of animosity was evident in the village. The keen disparity between the rich and the poor, was the chief cause of this enmity. Sometimes I played with the children of the poor villagers, and even had a dip in the village pond. The young faces in dirty rags, pained me greatly, so often gave away my clothes to them. This gesture of charity, however, irked my elders and they severely chastised me. My saviour, the kind 'Baba' always rescued me from such unsavoury conditions. I always preferred to eat vegetarian food, though we had free choice, as far as our food habits were concerned.

I went to Darjeeling to pursue higher education, and left behind a trail of sweet childhood memories. My stories and plays, which were enacted on the stage, were remembered with great fondness by peers and friends. At an early stage of my childhood, I had come forth with the writhing flair, and had become the darling of the school. A couple of my early plays like - Prithviraj chowhan, Satya Harish and 'Ma' created a stir in the school.

While I was studying in Darjeeling the same 'Yogi' often visited me. He taught me to develop a close 'Kinship' with nature and revel in its prolific beauty. We chased each other from one mountain to another and enjoyed the exuberance and the freedom, of the natural surroundings. Totally exhausted, I always fell in the extended loving arms. After taking 'rupees two' from me, he would always go away.

During my 'adolescence' I too experienced the sweet fragrance of 'spring', and its varied moods. All my classmates came from wealthy families. Lakshmi also came from an affluent family. There were many English students in our institution They were scared of us, and we always dominated them. Their mere

sight infuriated me to such an extent, that I invariably came to blows with them. But 'Baba' as usual came to rescue me from such scenes.

Once we went to the Himalayan valley for an outing. While we were carousing in a near by stream, the booming voice of 'Baba' rang out in the air. I left my friends behind, and began to follow the figure of Baba which was moving at a swift pace. He led me to a cave in 'Kanchan Ganga' which was aglow with the soft light of a lamp. Some snakes with gem studded hoods, could be seen slithering on the floor of the cave. When we moved a little further, we came across a huge quantity of wealth which lay in a heap. Some Mitbutian monks sat quietly in the deep corner of the cave.

A dense population of Langpong tribe inhabited the cave. Many pitchers carved from stones were filled with glittering precious gems or food stuff. They were kept in a conspicuous order. Baba introduced me to the member of the tribe. The women were partially covered with ornaments. We came out of the cave from a different route which took us to an open area. The grassy expansion offered the spectacular sight of the lofty "Kanchan ganga". It was almost mid day when we returned to the site of the picnic. My friends, surprisingly, were blissfully unaware of my absence. They did not even comment on my sudden disappearance. 'Baba' in his characteristic way took two rupees from me, and left the place.

During the holidays we went to Nepal. We undertook the entire journey on foot, and managed to reach Kathmandu without any difficulty. We enjoyed the hospitality of the royal family of Nepal. The 'yogi' even visited me in Nepal, and always gave me the right counsel. Whenever I showed some interest in worldly temptations, the 'yogi' restrained me and said, 'Do not ever indulge in these things, for, you will be entangled for life. He took rupees two as a compensation for the help from me and walked away from us.

After the short trip to Nepal, I decided to visit my parental home. The atmosphere of my house seemed strange, and even my home coming could not change the depression. The liveliness the charm, of the village was no longer there. May be the change had occurred within me which was compelling me to lose interest in the emotional ties. I bade a hasty good bye to my tearful mother, sympathetic sisters, and returned to my hostel.

My friend, Laksmi gave me the emotional support and helped me to reconcile to my lot. Together, we began to weave the dream of a rosy future. The hills and dales of Darjeeling deepened the colours of our romantic dreams. But Baba always interrupted our dreams, and illuminated the true objectives of human of life. I was caught between the two worlds - that beckoned me with its enticing promises of the future, and a deep rooted desire, which often nudged me to flee to the solitude of the distant mountains

I wanted to paint my life with vivid colours. But some hidden fear forced me to recoil from all worldly attachments. Many a times I would go into a trance. The sight of dead body always frightened me. The mere thought of death was my undoing. I often meditated on this 'fear of death' which would nip all my desires, aspiration in the bud Laksmi, was a comely maiden and hailed from an affluent Nepalese back ground. Her father was a Major General in the Nepalese army. She had come to India for her education. Like wise many members of the royal family of Bhutan and Nepal, were my school mates.

One day, in the early hours of the morning, we went to 'Tiger Top' to enjoy the beauty of the rising sun. Perched on a rock, I began to muse philosophically on 'life and death'. Baba too, joined the pensive gathering. I could not contain the tumult which raged within me, and spoke to Baba candidly I said, "Baba : can one escape from the spectre of death and live fearlessly? I feel as though I am continuously hounded by death. I want to run away from myself and seek refuge in the distant hills, which seem to be devoid of any sign of life". My out burst stunned all my friends. Baba looked at my face with a penetrating gaze, smiled and said- "Penance in the Himalayan caves is an answer to your query. These caves are untouched by the 'fear' which is constantly pursuing you.

Man's, 'Karma' only instill these fears. 'Karmas' give birth to such a sequence of incidents which finally culminate in man's destruction. But man, if he seriously wills, can keep death at bay. First of all he

must learn to destroy his sanskaras, and should also escape from the birth of new sanskaras. 'Tapasya' (Penance) is the only medium which can offer total deliverance from the worldly fetters". But the roots of this 'Fear' were so deep that even Baba's illuminating words were not enough 'Baba' read my mind like an open book. His next move was totally unexpected. He gave me a big push and I went hurtling down into the depths of the ravine Laksmi went hysterical and when she saw me she began to shout at Baba. Baba on the other hand appeared cool, almost unconcerned with the accident. My friends infuriated with Baba's nonchalance began to chase him, but were unable to catch the racing figure of Baba. While I was hurtling downwards, two invisible mysterious hands gave me the support. And Baba, took off in the air and began to fly like a winged person right over my falling figure. He finally swooped down and prevented me from banging against the rocky ground. My clothes were in tatters, but suprisingly, I did not have any scratch on my body. 'Baba' brought me back safe and sound to my friends. Choked with emotions Laksmi clung to me. Despite the ordeal that I had gone through, I was laughing and was in high spirits, Baba was also laughing with me. Laksmi continued to cling to me and wept bitterly. Baba tried to console her and said - "Daughter: Why do you love this mortal frame so much? Human body cannot last forever. You must learn to love the immortal soul. No one knows, what future has in store for you two. Wordly attachments often lead a man astray. Your emotional involvement will swerve this 'man' from the chosen path of 'truth'. Divine romance is an eternal romance. After this short sermon 'Baba' gave us some fruits, took customary fee of rupees two from me. and departed from the scene.

This seemingly miraculous escape left a deep imprint on every one's mind, I was in a dream like state, and secretly toyed with the idea of 'Tapasya' (Penance) and asceticism.

After completing my school education from 'Don Bosco' Darjeeling and 'Shillong', I went abroad to seek higher education. My friends too went to different foreign countries, like 'America', Germany and Russia. 'Throughout' my stay in the foreign land, Laksmi was my constant companion. The glamour of the foreign country soon wore off, and I began to have nostalgic longings for my native land. Walking on the roads of Paris, we often spoke of our future lives. But, 'Baba', whenever I spoke about my romantic involvement with Laksmi, appeared on the scene, and almost chided me for the digression. The unexpected arrival of 'Baba', even in the foreign country, plunged Laksmi in pools of deep despair. 'Baba' instantly sensed her despondency, and in order to console her spoke the following soothing words - "My daughter", he said "Don't turn your life into a mournful grave. Why have you made your life a dry desert ? Flowers should continue to bloom in your life. Do not feel dejected. Dejection will dry the river of your life. And the sand will be swept away by unpredictable flood waters.

During the course of your life's journey. I am sure, you two will reach your respective destinations. Of course the destinations will be governed by your distinct, independent, 'sanskara'. It has never been my intention to inflict emotional torture on you. So, don't look so sad. I am merely doing my duty. I do not want this young man to get lost in the maze of worldliness. Your sanskars which contain the 'truth', will always follow you. 'Meeting' and 'Parting' in this journey of life, are the sum result of sanskaras". We stayed in Paris for a couple of days more, and then moved over to Munich. In Baden, we were simply stupefied to see expensively dressed 'Baba' engaged in gambling in a casino. He went on winning all the stakes with a confident ease. His total disinterest in money was apparent, when he shove all the tokens worth Lakhs to Laksmi, took rupees two from me and sauntered out of the casino.

After a short tour of Arab countries, we finally returned to our homeland. Laksmi went to Calcutta to join her father and I stayed back in Banaras to pursue my university education. I joined Indian Airforce after the completion of my post graduate education.

The day I became the 'Official guard of the sky' a long lost incident which was buried in the storehouse of my memories, flashed before my inward eye - "Once, while I was in Patna, Nehruji came to our college. At that time I played a leading role in the affairs of the students.

I represented the entire community of the students. Nehruji placed his hands on my shoulders and spoke in a prophetic tone. He said, "The nation is awaiting the emergence of future scientists, doctors and astronauts, I hope all of you will show your potential in this direction ?" The address was exclusively for me, and I could understand the equivocal statement. What surprised me most was, that he seemed to

recognize me. This meeting dramatically changed the course of my life. Despite strong objections from my family, I went ahead with my plans, and joined the airforce. My heart was full of patriotic feelings, and I brushed aside the obstacles which came on my way. I flew over different parts of the country, zealously. But the 'yogi' never lost track of me, and faithfully followed me every where. Probably he could foresee the future chain of events. whenever any incident was about to happen, the magic appearance of the 'yogi' averted the perilous course. All such incidents revealed the 'exalted' status of the 'Mahatama'. One day I went to "Elephant's fall" in Shillong, to enjoy the scenic beauty of the cascading waterfall. I settled myself comfortably on a rock that faced the waterfall. The instant my body touched the rocky seat, I went into a dream like state. Even the gentle droplets of the waterfall, could not disturb my trance. When I tried to get out of the dream like state, my body simply refused to move. My words, froze on my lips, and the visible natural surrounding like plants and trees etc began to spin. A vision began to unfold in which I could see myself moving in the narrow pathways of a mountaneous region. The familiarity of the place, the warm hospitality of the people and their reverence for me, altogether portrayed my different image. The minute I returned to Elephant's wall, there was a big explosion from a small plane which went into flames and fell on the nearby trees.

I came out of my trance with the earsplitting sound. When I tried to locate the burnt remains of the plane, I could not see anything. Every thing which had occurred a couple of minutes ago belonged to the world of 'Dream' it was an experience of a unique nature, which cannot be comprehended by individuals who dwell on the physical - sensory plane. Following the mystical experience, a new urge forced me to walk to the forests. All the pathways of the forests appeared familiar to me and emboldened by the feeling of familiarity I continued to tread ahead. The roads took me to a 'habitation' which again wore the look of familiarity and I felt as though I have often trudged on these lanes.

I went to a cluster of shops and unhesitantly inquired about some 'Khasi' people in the befitting khasi dialect. I was amazed at my fluency in the alien tongue. The people I had inquired about were long dead, only a couple of very old men could throw some light on my queries. One of them spoke to me thus - "The nature of your vision is purely mystical. You must immediately forewarn the authorities that no plane should fly over this area, for it will meet a fiery end. Your vision has fore told the future incident". We started walking back together. After a short silence, the old man spoke in his typical way. He said, "can you give me Rs. two"? I could immediately discern his identity - he was my old acquaintance - the 'Baba'.

Sobered by this divine phenomenon, I returned to my camp and warned the concerned authorities about the 'future' accident. People laughed at me openly and declared me the unfortunate victim of hallucinations I tried my best to avert the disaster but no one paid even the scantiest attention to my pre - cognition. The disaster did occur as per my vision, and the unfortunate pilot died a tragic death.

One day, overcome with nostalgia I applied for leave. The rejection of my leave application thwarted all my plans, and made me very unhappy. I began to brood over my plight. One morning, on an impulse, I took out my Jeep and began to drive through the thick fog towards the town. Due to the poor visibility and bad driving, my Jeep banged against the tiger bridge, and consequently began to roll backwards. It fell into the deep gorge. I could feel myself falling into the dangerous depth of the ravine. Before I could meet a ghastly death, a miracle occurred. A pair of invisible hands caught my burden and gently brought me back to the bridge. I was too stunned to react, so I could not even thank my unknown rescuer. The incident had created a stir amidst the onlookers, who happened to be present at the time of the accident. Everyone began to congratulate me at my good fortune which had helped me at the grave moment. Some talked about an unknown sadhu who had rescued me. His identity could not be ascertained by anyone. Thus his appearance remained a mystery. Outwardly I remained quiet, but inwardly I knew the answer to this riddle.

Finally, I managed to get the much desired leave, and left for my native village Sasaram. Everyone was overjoyed to see me. My re-union with my childhood friends, was an emotional one. We revived the old memories by wandering in the familiar lanes and by lanes of the village. The loving mother, the caring sisters and brothers, poured fresh life into me. My wilted life blossomed all over again.

In the south of Sasaram, one can see the chain of kaymoor mountains Nestling amidst these mountains is 'Dargaon estate' a popular tourist spot. It is like a tonic to a harassed traveller. During my hey days, I often went to these areas for hunting. These forests had become an inseparable part of our lives. One day, I went with my friends - (Barrister Singh and his son Saroj) to these forest for a hunting spree. The purpose of my visit to these forests, was also to identify some areas which could be given to the poor villagers. We went in an open Jeep. The ride till 'Gadihia Ghat' was smooth. So we got out of the Jeep at this point, I took my rifle and began to walk towards the gushing waters, where as, my friends, got busy with the assessment of the land. While I was walking in the lonely forest a small leopard came and blocked my way. His penetrating gaze sent a shiver down my spine. My eyes were locked into a set of familiar eyes. Some past memories began to surface from the ocean of my consciousness. I was virtually reduced to a state of immobility by those hypnotic eyes. This encounter lasted for few minutes. When the animal quietly went back from where it had come, the recognition dawned upon me like a flash or lightning. He was 'Bagh Baba' and had come in this guise merely to warn me. This encounter left me little unnerved. And I could not easily erase the image of Bagh Baba from my mind.

Hunting, and leading an adventurous life, were two important traits of my earlier life. I had a high sense of ego and in order to prove myself I was often caught in dangerous situation. Hunting had become a passion for it fed my ego and increased my importance. Most of my friends kept away from me because of this 'great flaw'.

My entry into the forests, was like a challenge to all the ferocious animals. I never returned empty handed - my prey always dangled in my hand. I was a very different person. Religion and spiritualism, never interested me. Of course my mother's devout nature and the fear of death had inspired me to bow to Lord Shiva and seek his blessings. But I never visited temples and paid obeisance to different dieties. My former self was a contradiction of my present self. The fear of death on the one hand, and a passion for hunting on the other hand, placed me in an ambivalent situation. I ran away from the tense atmosphere of my house and found peace in the solitude of the forests. My mother bestowed all her love upon me, but my father always spoke in a contemptuous manner. Unable to cope with the domestic strifes, I became a loner. My friends, were more dear to me than my own kith and kin. In my house there was no dearth of money and money begotten luxuries. But I had developed an apathy to the overflowing wealth. And moreover, my loneliness always forced me to seek the company of the friendly forests. This is a short sketch of my young days.

The seed of spiritualism which was dormant within me, began to sprout in the conducive atmosphere of the Kaymoor valley. My inner self under went a sea - change after my encounter with this super human in the guise of a leopard. As I browse through my past, my mind lingers on the regal image of the leopard and the extraordinary change which later on influenced my out look to life. Since then, I have been doggedly pursuing the path of spiritualism. At this stage of my life, free from the fetters of karma, I find myself absorbed in the tranquil waves of spiritualism, where each and every molecule is clothed in a divine light.

My passion for hunting, again took me to 'Bagh Baba'. And this episode is a sequel to my earlier encounter with Bagh Baba. One day during my hunting expedition, I got a brief glimpse of a leopard. My hunter's instincts came alive and I began to pursue the fleeing animal. I was the pursuer and the Leopard was the pursued. But the strange behaviour pattern of the animal generated queer feelings within me. It would from time to time, turn around and look at me. This game of chase, almost like hide and seek continued for couple of hours. Finally, I lost my patience, and shot the animal on his hind leg. The limping animal began to flee towards a particular direction. I wanted to collect my hunt, so, I began to follow the injured animal. Even though the animal was badly hurt, it did not give up its peculiar behaviour of turning around and looking at me in a meaningful way. A final leap, and it was inside the shelter of cave. A strange bright light emanated from the opening of the cave. When I went inside the cave, an incredible scene greeted me. Instead of the injured animal, a Mahatama sat in the cave. Blood oozed out of the left foot of the Mahatama. He had long locks, and fiery eyes. From time to time, he threw at me a hypnotic glance. I stood rooted to the ground for the entire scenario simply took my breath away. Moreover the striking similarity between the leopard's and the sadhu's eyes, made me extremely uncomfortable.

The Baba made an apt remark at my evident surprise. In a mocking tone he said, "Why don't you go ahead with your shooting ? What is the difference between me and the unfortunate animal? I am a 'Jiva' and the leopard is also a 'Jiva'. Therefore there is no difference between the two of us. Since you have the insatiable hunger for hunting it is natural for the beasts to flee for their lives. Today the animals are your preys. And tomorrow, probably you will make human beings the target of your shooting. 'Man' is also a dangerous animal. These animals are harmless. They do not even make any demands on man. Do you gain anything by killing these innocent helpless creatures. Instead of hunting these animals. You divert your energies towards the destruction of anarchy and corruption. Eliminate the reign of terror and exploitation. Usher in a new era of peace and harmony. But if you refuse to change your attitudes, you are free to unleash your anger".

His outburst left me speechless. A strange brilliance irradiated his countenance The hypnotic quality of voice had a tremendous attraction Something thawed within me. I threw my rifle on the ground and fell on the feet of the grand Mahatma. I was over come with profound feelings of repentance and cried unashamedly on his lotus feet. For the first time in my life I found my self weeping uncontrollably. 'Baba' began to caress my head. His touch had a magical effect, my entire being seemed to be immersed in an ocean of love. I lost consciousness of the physical world and began to drift in eternity. The past episode which had played the role of a catalyst in causing the significant change within me, began to unfold itself in a vision. I could see 'Baba' moving in the forest. I was quite close to him; but was unaware of his presence. My friends were also in the vision. Our presence threatened the peace of the forest and its inmates. 'Baba' then changed himself into a leopard. As the vision progressed, I saw 'Baba' metamorphised as leopard, distracting the attention of the hunting team. The leopard cleverly lured the team to their camp. As soon as the team reached the camp, the leopard was forgotten and food occupied the attention of everyone. The same animal then crossed my way and succeeded in luring me to the cave. Leopard then cast its disguise and revealed his true identity. From the flash back, I found myself witnessing the vision which clearly predicted my future. In this vision I saw myself dressed up as a yogi, who after a period of penitence found sanctuary in the snow clad surroundings of the 'Himalya' The river banks, and the multitude of followers - all comprised my future life. A series of unforgettable situations in which I was involved appeared in the vision. The moment 'Baba' removed his hand the vision dissolved into nothingness. When I got up from his feet. I was totally transformd. A new peace permeated ,my entire being. The feelings of remorse were washed. A new peace permeated my entire being. The feelings of remorse were washed away by the cosmic awareness. Baba smiled and said," - Son : This can happen only by 'chance' and sanskar beget the 'chance' . Though man is the 'doer' of 'karmas', Yet 'chance' which is related to 'sanskaras' is responsible for the creation of the sequence of all events. Nothing can occur without change. Infact 'change' denotes the speed of 'Kaal' or 'Time'. Divinty is every where. We are mere instruments in this 'drama' which has been designed by 'Nature'. The glimpse of your future corroborates the theory that all human acts, events circumstances, are preplanned. Everything occurs as per the pattern has been pre - designed. Whether one wants it or not, things will happen as per the inexorable divine law'. Man's incessant struggle for liberation from these bond explains this concept quite clearly'. Baba helped me to rise and then accompanied me to camp. Next day, in early hours of the morning, we left for Sasaram. At home, people were surprised to see my pensiveness. Even a proposal of hunting failed to stir me. I wanted to invoke the memories of my past so I decided to take a trip to 'Banaras', The lanes of 'Banaras' where I had spent some memorable time, helped me in the recollection of my past. After spending some time in the familiar environment, I felt revitalized and quite eager to resume my office in Guwahati. The news that Laksmi was already in shillong soared my spirits. Laksmi was an important part of my life. To me she represented the inspiration as well the 'Impediment'. Despite the contradicory nature of her presence in my life, I had vowed to give reality to our dreams.

The arrival of Laksmi and her father in our camp in Guwahati, created a stir. My friends and colleagues welcomed them warmly. An under current of jealousy ran in the praises which were lavished on Laksmi by my friends. Laksmi had come with definite plans about our future lives. Outwardly I was also ready to cement our relationship, but inwardly, something was forcing me to pull away. In the evening, while we were driving down to the 'Digboi club'. Our car, for no obvious fault, came to a halt. Suddenly 'Baba' came and stood before us. I recognised the 'Baba' instantly and so did Laksmi. But, rest of the occupants did not recognize him. We two got out of the car and reverently touched his feet. The major general, showed his

disapproval by making a stern face. But, I immediately restrained him, for unknowingly he was showing disrespect to an exalted being.

He took his usual quota of two rupees from me, and gave us a parting advice - He said, The time is not ripe for you two to take decisions about the future. Let future events happen naturally, Laksmi : do not force him to take any decision now, lest he regrets it later. 'Procreation' and 'luxuries' are not the only aims of a human being. He is endowed with certain duties which are pushed into oblivion by the diverse activities of the material world. Time will reveal to you the real purpose of your life". The minute 'Baba' departed from the scene, our car roared back to life and we reached, the club without any further problems.

We bought a small tea garden in Chakua. Since Laksmi had a flair for writing, She started a small press. Her friend - 'Pali Sinha', became her partner in this enterprise I was only an onlooker, things were happening on their own. My mental state 'during' that period was quite nebulous. I found myself gradually with drawing from the emotional ties and uniting with spiritual awareness. Our tree of love had matured, but it had not blossomed. Laksmi was like a carefully nurtured flower, and keen to become my garland. We were going through a period of indefinite 'waiting' 'Baba' stood between us like a screen, dividing us, and creating new lanes for us. We had all the luxuries, we wanted to tie the knot but an unknown force kept us apart. A tragic incident in the camp occurred which simply shattered me. Squadron leader 'Martin' that fateful day, ignored my forewarning, and flew the air craft. Everyone laughed at me, and even his wife paid no attention to my frantic pleas. Martin, died a tragic death in the air crash. My precognition in the form of an intuitive insight into the future, could not prevent the tragedy.

Laksmi was devastated by the untimely death of the young officer. The thought that similar fate might befall me, began to haunt her. In a state of extreme anxiety, she began to persuade me to quit my job. I was quite fond of her and appreciated her concern, but found myself unwilling to give up my career. Life, full of adventures and 'challenges', had always fascinated me. It not only gave me the thrill but also satisfied my ego, enhanced my self esteem. In order to preserve the dignity of manliness, many a times I had willingly courted dangerous situations. Deep down Laksmi was aware, of my innate tendencies, so she gradually began to reconcile to this aspect of my personality.

Once, while I was flying over the 'Nera' valley in Norhat, my plane began to lose height. Despite my best efforts, I could not control the plane. I could have ejected from the plane, but decided to do otherwise. The mountains like angry giants began to come closer. And air crash seemed imminent. I made a final effort to take the plane towards the distant river, but could not succeed. All the controls had stopped functioning ,so even a last attempt to avert the disaster seemed impossible. I did not want to fly from the approaching 'death'. On the contrary, I braced myself for the confrontation. The yawning mountains echoed one word only and that was death, death and death.

At that instant a miracle occurred, and the falling plane began to gain height. I was mystified by this phenomenon. All the contacts began to function normally. The only significant difference was this, though it may sound unbelievable instead of me, a mysterious 'yogi' was holding the plane with incredible ease he landed the plane, and before, it could come to a halt, the 'yogi' vanished without a word. I took the plane near the hanger and safely grounded it. The officials at the control room had given up all hopes of my survival when they could not trace my plane on the radar. They had even informed my family about the probability of an air crash. But my plane appeared on the screen and left everyone gaping in amazement. It's appearance and disappearance till today has remained a mystery. I am the sole witness to the circumstances which had the finality of death and the saviour, who brought me back from the door of death. Why should this 'yogi' help me at the critical juncture of my life? I was weighed down by this thought. I pondered the question but came to no logical conclusion.

The distraught Laksmi came out of the gloom when she heard of my miraculous return. The father and the daughter rushed to the flying site to welcome my safe return. Ironically enough, none of my family members came to see me. In the moist, eyes of Laksmi I could read an unfathomable ocean of 'love'. I found myself caught between two loves - 'Laksmi' who gazed at me with the eyes of a beloved, and the 'yogi' who always came to me as a saviour. The former one offered promises of a beautiful life and the latter maintained an enigmatic silence. Hence onwards I becamee totally preoccupied with the thought of

'yogi'. But my preoccupation was interrupted by the timely arrival of 'Baba'. I clung to him with an overwhelming sense of relief. He embraced me lovingly and said, "Son: I have come for my routine remuneration. Can you give me two rupees? He then spoke to Laksmi in a solicitous tone. He said, "As long as I am there, no harm will come to him. 'Death', merely wroughts changes. He will not perish in any air crash, for, he has to fulfill many tasks. Many unknown travellers are waiting for him in the distant galaxies. His 'life' is of supreme importance to me. You must have waited for him for many life times. and even I have made great efforts to identify him. Wealth can not hold him for long and'time' will reveal his true identity. Love between a man and woman is undeniably beautiful. But, my daughter once you must try to go beyond the physical and love the 'soul'. The spiritual, will be more intense than the love that exists on the physical plane. Allow him to pursue his destined path. And here in lies your salvation".

I started my car, and threw a meaningful glance towards Laksmi. She understood the underlying message and enthusiastically occupied the front seat. Baba nodded in approval and our car took off in great speed. After a long drive I parked the car on the banks of the mighty 'Bramhaputra' We hired a boat and set sail on the turbulent waters of the river. The giant waves made the boat unsteady, and the boat man had a difficult time managing it. We sat like two lost passengers. The silence between us was ominous. As our boat reached the middle of Brahmaputra, the boat man enquired as to which side he should take the boat. When I looked at Laksmi inquiringly. She made an apt philosophical statement She said, "Like the boat we are also caught in the whirlpool of life. I wanted the boat to be left to the mercy of the raging waters but Laksmi wanted to return to the shore from whence we had begun our journey. Again, we were wrapt in our silence. Before the boat could touch the shore Laksmi voiced her emotional conflict. In a moving voice she began - "Kapil", will we ever reach the shore of our lives? Our boat is caught in the vortex of different forces - the shore is within the reach yet it is beyond our reach. The river has its shore and it's destinaion is the ocean. But we seemed to be lost forever, no shore is within our reach. "I did not have any words of consolation to offer, so I opted the silence. We were travellers of the same path, but were on its opposite sides. Major General Singh (Laksmi father) wanted to take his daughter back. Despite the odds which our relationship was facing, I was quite reluctant to give my permission. Laksmi could fathom my dilemma very well. She sobbed brokenly throughout the night. I tried to console her, but my efforts were in vain. In the morning, Laksmi bade me a tearful farewell and departed from my lodgings.

A strange desolation descended on my orchard. I did not want to brood in the lonely surroundings, so without losing much time. I went to the head quarters. Heavy rains had disrupted all the flights. And bad weather had increased the plight of the soldiers who were stranded on the border area. No one was willing to take ration to the hungry soldiers. The total scenario was very dismal. I was quite unhappy. When I tried to visualize the predicament of the soldiers, an acute restlessness siezed me and sleep simply refused to give relief to my over wrought nerves. Baba's arrival at the tense moment brought life to the dwindling hopes. He offered to help me in carrying the food to the soldiers. But, before noon the operation should be over - this was the strict condition. I immediately contacted the station officer and expressed my willingness to carry the food load - (the dropings) to the soldiers. Two flowers which lay on my bed reminded me of Baba's arrival.

The sky was still heavily over cast in the morning but an occassional glimpse of the fair weather gave fillip to my determination. When the 'Kairiba' was fully loaded, I lit some incense sticks and did its Parikrama (went round the craft). I did not want to take any crew with me, but some volunTERS insisted on coming along with me. The mission was dangerous, but we felt committed to our brethren who were trapped, in the dangerous surrounding. Finally, the plane took off and began to fly in the partially cast sky. Each and every moment the invisible form of Baba was with me. Easing the various perils,we dropped the food and returned to the base by twelve 'O clock.

Another group of volunteers under the command of Lieutenant Singh and Bharati, was ready with the cargo. It only awaited our return. I had accomplished the dangerous mission with Baba's invisible help. So their readiness greatly alarmed me. I tried my best to dissuade them from going on the mission which was fated but failed to convince them. They argued that If I could do the job they could also do the same. The ill fated plane took off and after a little while disintegrated against the mountains of 'Nefa'. We were awe struck by the gory end of occupants. My forewarning had gone once again unheeded. The rescue team immediately took off, in a helicopter. We tried to comb the entire areas to trace the survivors.

But all that was found were mangled limbs. We paid homage to the dead soldiers and returned with the bag which carried their mortal remains.

It is often seen that one man is a slave of another human being. But without the co-operation of 'chance' no situation can ever materialize. The 'Karmas' of human beings are stored carefully by 'Nature'. On the basis of the 'Karmas' the characters of human being are eventually fashioned by the master craftsman the 'Nature'. The sequence of events is the out come of Human 'Karmas' or actions. Earth and other planets have an equal role in the formation of the chain of events. In this way an event takes place. The progenitor of the events can either be man's thought vibration or 'Nature' The inevitable chain of events always sends a forewarning. If science can decipher such warning the inevitable can also be checked. What ever we think or talk leaves an indelible impression on earth, sun and different planets and space assumes the ultimate responsibility.

'Motion' is generated by the collision of thoughts. And thereby a sequence of events emerges. Our eyes are an infinite source of energy whenever we look at some one or desire to look at some one energy is released which fuses with the thought vibrations of other men and gives birth to the cycle of events. All the cycles of events are eventually stored in space. The latent energy of the eyes can even ignite flames in the space. The solar system can also be exploited by man. However, all these activities rest solely on the co-operation of 'Nature'. If the thought vibration of human beings can 'create', the impending danger too can be prevented by them. The recent tragic incident illustrates this statement clearly. When I was successfully carrying out the dropping mission the control tower, at that time was busy communicating the daring job to the concerned officers. This news motivated some of my colleagues and they volunteered their services for the same job. The subtle thought vibrations whether positive or negative fused with 'nature' and the sequence of events was born. My clairvoyance enabled me to fore see the impending disaster and I frantically tried to dissuade them. But the feeling of rivalry was so powerful that my fore warning was brutally ignored with the result with in a short time the ill fated plane went into flames and fell in the mountaneous region of NEFA.

With a heavy heart, I returned to my lonely house. An eerie silence greeted me when I entered the premises of my rambling Bungalow. The loneliness of the place tore me apart, and I desperately yearned for a human company, So, I gave a ring to Lord Sinha. Fortunately, Pali was at home, so she answered the phone. Since the news of the plane crash had already reached her, she felt genuinely concerned about me and invited me to her place. Till late night, we discussed the tragic mishap. Pali was visibly upset by the details which were responsible for the accident. And Mr. Sinha could not help asking me about my mysterious pre-cognition. Whatever was happening with me was beyond ordinary human cognition. It was almost unbelievable hence I remained quiet.

Deluded by the achievements of the physical world, man has never found time to peep into the mystic zone. When I told Lord Sinha about super human qualities of Baba, he simply jumped out of his skins. Overcome with amazement he blurted, 'Oh God if this is true then this godman is surely endowed with super human qualities. He can undoubtedly carry out incredible action', Pali's initial reaction was disbelief which was gradually replaced by a feeling of astonishment. She picked up the telephone and booked a call for Laksmi. After finishing our meals we reassembled in the drawing room for further discussions. At that moment, when everyone was in an excited mood, Baba, quietly came and stood before me. A magical mystery surrounded his entry. I forgot the people, the surroundings, and ran towards him. When he made his old request of rupees two to me, in a flash, I understood the underlying message. The meagre amount represented the compensation for all the timely help he had given me in the past, Lord Sinha and Pali stood in silence and watched the extraordinary scene. Baba broke the silence and said "Lord Shiva" this is the only truth. Rest is the borrowed story Life itself is like a 'guest', His parting words rang in the air. We were totally immobilized as though an impregnable silence had arrested us.

The ringing of the telephone released us from the trance like position. Pali narrated the entire episode to Laksmi on the phone. Overwrought Laksmi called me on the line and said, "L.P. : Please help me : These days Baba is behaving in an abnormal manner. He wants to arrange my marriage with someone else. But, I assure you, that no one can ever force me to go against my will. Despite the odds I will try to come over to your place. For months, we awaited Laksmi's arrival, but she did not show up. During the

period of waiting I was decorated with a gallantry award. The reward, the appreciation of my services left me unmoved. There was no one who could share my glory. Laksmi had locked herself in silence and Baba had just vanished from my life. So I handed the medal to Pali, for, during my lonely months the Sinha family had been good friends. Pali's parents had showered their affection upon me and treated me as their own son. This medal was a token of my gratitude.

I had lost all contacts with 'Baba'. I began to search him in all the distant regions of Kashmir. But my intense searching operation did not yield any result. Though I was tired and frustrated, yet the desire within me to discover him remained undiminished.

The time for asceticism to blossom into life finally arrived. I gradually began to withdraw myself from the day to day affairs of the world. Every molecule of my being began to respond to the divine music.

In our society, a woman has to invariably surrender to the norms of the society. If she dares to deviate from the prescribed limitations, she is severely castigated. Laksmi had to undergo the similar social repercussions. Despite the emotional embargo, Laksmi remained faithful to the promises which we had made in the past. My gradual indifference to all attachments, had turned me into a different individual. I had become immune to all kinds of emotional fluctuations. But Laksmi's sudden revolt jolted me from my equilibrium. She threw all caution to the winds and came to see me in 'Bombay'. Her unexpected arrival threw me in a fix. My past struggles, which had helped me to obtain this stage, were threatened by Laksmi's reappearance. Oh! why should I be always plagued by such strifes, and conflicts-I thought, when I saw Laksmi at my doorstep. May be I was destined to go through these emotional trials. Within couple of days her wilted beauty blossomed. Her face radiated with an inner joy. The memories of the past togetherness gave her joy, and hope for the future. I found myself entangled in a difficult position. My long relationship with Laksmi had resulted into a controversy. Her honour was at stake, but I was unable to take a positive step. The two families were aware of my dilemma, but were unable to bail me out of the tight corner. Finally, I took a decision, but kept it a secret.

Patiently, I awaited the sequence of events which would unravel my secret resolution. After few days, my friends and acquaintances began to arrive. Laksmi shuddered with apprehensive feelings. A kind of suspense hung in the air. My friend, with down cast eyes, also arrived on the scene. He looked embarrassed, because he had never anticipated that our friendship would take this unexpected dramatic turn. Major General Singh came all alone. The atmosphere of the house was tense, and full of apprehension and the silence of my guests, confirmed their uneasiness. Laksmi, presented the image of a volcano which was about to erupt. But I knew, that no one can ever struggle with truth it is indomitable and invincible. Laksmi wanted to say something but the silent gathering restrained her from doing so. I sat with my guests for a short while, and then went inside the house. Laksmi, seething with rage, followed me. Unable to control her tumult she broke down-"Why don't you send them away?" Happiness is the greatest wealth. Whatever share I have received up till now, is everything to me. I don't want to return to the place from whence I have escaped. My dead body dressed as a bride can be carried, but not my living self. Oh: L.P. : Why do you want to perpetrate such injustice on me? Perhaps, you have also developed hatred for me. If you will continue to force me to go against my will, I will destroy my beauty. Why don't you say something. I steeled my self against the emotional onslaught and returned to the silent gathering. I was the target of unfriendly glances. Even my very close friends looked at me with disapproval. 'Social limitations' was the chief issue. They thought that it was a disgrace to arrange such a wedding. Moreover, my friend, who was forced by me to become the bridegroom, found himself in a humiliating situation. Everyone strove to visualize a solution which could dissipate the pall of gloom. I could not stand the accusing glare any more. So, I went inside, collected my revolver, and re-entered the room with a determined air. I also forced Laksmi to come out and face the eager guests. I was dark with rage and in a threatening voice I said, "I wish I could shoot all these people who have gathered here only for the sake of false esteem. The ring of sincerity is totally missing. But unfortunately I cannot carry out this threat. Therefore, I have decided to destroy myself. This is the only solution. Laksmi, can get married to my corpse. I do not want to tarnish the reputation of my friends and guests, who look upon me as a social disgrace and a betrayer. And so, here I go, "With this last sentence I pressed the revolver against my car lobe. But the bullet instead of piercing my temple, hit the ceiling of the room. A resounding slap from 'Baba' drove away the madness which had momentarily paralysed my 'reason'. He dragged me to a lonely

corner and spoke the following words. "It is very unfortunate that you were about to destroy all my efforts. Oh you fool : A woman is not everything in this life. I had earlier forewarned you two not to temper with the design of 'time' whatever has been predestined cannot be altered. The union of your and Laksmi's sanskaras, has given the indication that this relationship has come to an end. Your chosen path lies ahead. Laksmi you can not deny the 'truth' which is beckoning 'Kapil'. I know, you love him, but his destiny is else where. He is a lonely traveller on this path. He is destined to become a 'yogi'. Do not dishearten the guests. Surrender to the design of time.

Laksmi refused to accept the final separation. She continued to rave and sent for quite some time, But in the end gave in to the dice that had been cast for her. Laksmi and my friend were joined in holy matrimony. And I blessed the newly weds. At the time of her departure, Laksmi's eyes were full of tears. I could not comprehend the message which those tears wanted to convey.

The farewell did not move me. A new stoicism surged through my entire being. The cynical attitude of people could not swerve me from my path. I found myself in the midst of conflicting emotions- an ache for asceticism on the one hand and the worldly temptations on the other hand. the tug-of-war between the opposite forces continued for quite some time, for the transition from one style of life to another was an extremely slow process. But the voice of the 'yogi' always stabilized my wavering mind. Who was he? Why was he helping me? All these queries often made me restless. He could foresee the tomorrow, and could freely move everywhere. He was endowed with super human powers which transcended all the obstacles. I saw him in variety of guises, in India, and abroad.

I wanted to free myself from all the worldly distractions and breathe fresh air. I tried a number of times to break the human bondage, but weakened, when confronted with the picture of future life.

One day in Nasik, we met a young man clad in expensive clothes. At that time I was chewing pan with some of my friends. He came to me and said, "Can you lend me two rupees? I quietly handed the money to him. The young man was not a stranger to me, he was the 'yogi' in a worldly attire. His dramatic appearance presaged a series of future events. My friends were rather puzzled at the stranger's unexpected behaviour. Before I could give a satisfactory answer to my friends query, Baba re-appeared but this time he had donned ochre coloured garments. He patted my shoulders consolingly and said". The time is ripe. Now, you must take a trip to 'Assam'. I wanted to ask him so many questions but he just waved the two rupees at me and hurried away. I analysed the two distinctly opposite attires of the 'yogi' and came to a startling conclusion that the time had come for me to forsake the worldly dress and don myself in an attire which befitted a yogi.

I went to Guwahati to settle the affairs of my property. An accidental meeting with 'Laksmi' had an unsettling effect upon me. I did not stay long, and sought refuge in the tranquility of Natural surroundings. I gradually began to lose interest in the worldly affairs and even flying could not woo me. Ultimately, the feeling of detachment overpowered me, and I renounced the world willingly. There upon, I began to roam around as an renunciant. My only aim was to look for 'Baba' who had awakened my spiritual self. Tired and bedraggled, I continued my search for many years. But 'Baba' seemed to have vanished from the very surface of this 'earth'. His elusiveness increased my longing for him and almost pushed me on the brink of madness.

When I was unable to cope up with my desperation, I returned to the familiar surroundings of my orchard. Though my body was tired yet the spirit was unwilling to give up the mysterious "yogi". A little diversion would act as an elixir, I thought and flew to Britain in my small air craft. The glamour and glitter of the western society diverted me for a short while from my magnificent obsession- the 'yogi'.

After the short sojourn, I went to Nepal and resumed my 'search' I had many friends in Nepal, but none of them was aware of my presence but this enforced anonymity did not last long, and gradually my friends began to trickle in. Once again I found myself surrounded by my friends and acquaintances. A fleeting glimpse of 'Baba' in the 'Shiv ratri Mela' which was held in the premises of 'Pashupatinath' Temple left me dishevelled. Frantically I combed the thick crowd, but of no avail. The yearning and the anxiety for 'Baba' returned with a renewed vehemence.

One day, I once again gave up my worldly belongings, my friends, and stopped on the path which was my sole destination. I began to walk on the bank of Narayani with one aim-to find my 'Baba'. Thick forests, and rough paths could not break my determination. When I found a suitable rock in the solitude of a dense forests, I took off all my clothes, and sat on it in the posture of Penance. Perhaps, my austere penance will yield the desired fruit, this thought had motivated me to take this extreme step. Since I was tired and wornout, the cold breeze wanted to put me to sleep. But before I could fall asleep, I sighted 'Baba'. He was carrying a small bundle of twigs and an axe. When he came closer, he dropped his load and looked at me smilingly. There was not even a single piece of cloth on his tall and gaint body. His unruly looks gave him an entirely new look. He caught hold of my arm and said, Rise: the time has come to move onwards. You must be mentally tired. It is good to be tired this way. Physical tiredness is not a good sign. His touch made my body quiver. Electric currents began to course through my body. I felt hypnotised by his presence. He began to drag me towards a certain direction. The speed of his walk was akin to flying. Within no time I found myself, face to face with a celestial looking 'yogi'. His ears were adorned with 'Kundals' (round rings) and he carried 'Kappars' in his hand. A bag hung loosely on his shoulders, and he wore a 'Baghamber' (tiger skin) around his waist. His wild golden locks, added grandeur to his personality. And of course, his face radiated with a divine glow.

The grand yogi addressed us thus-Hari Baba ; so, you have finally accomplished your mission: You are welcome travellers. We have been waiting for you since milleniums. It is very difficult to break the traditional bondage of the physical world. Hari has been pursuing you since many incarnatiouns. Today his tenacious labour has borne fruit. You were busy searching us, with the result, our meeting was delayed. The day you gave up this obsessive search, and began the process of realizing your self, 'Baba' appeared before you. 'Chitta' can find peace only after the cessation of worldly attractions. As long as we have emotional attachments, everyone is so dear to us. But the moment there is a slight friction, the emotions change. 'Man' is a selfish being. 'Love' shows sacrifice and surrender whenever it is placed on the pedestal of idealisim. But if it shows detachment, an inclination towards renunciation, it is brutally denounced. The seed of renunciation is sown only after the emotional break up. When the consciousness of the 'soul' dawns upon a man, his mind begins to court 'Bairagya' (renunciation). This path is strewn with many obstacles. After undergoing many asterities, he beholds the inner light. There after, the 'Jeeva' becomes alone and surrenders himself totally to this 'inner light'. The state of self cognition follows soon, which finally culminates nito divine cognition. Thousands of flowers blossom, but every flower does not adorn the dieties. It is very difficult to resurrect the 'sanskaras and mitigate the 'Prarabdh'. This world is like a market. And 'Jeeva' is born in this world again and again. Like an innocent boy, he always picks up thbe wrong thing, and is sent again and again by the mother to fetch the right thing. This analogy explains man's situation amply well. You have arrived at this stage after facing severe difficulties. Hari Baba's relationship with you is many incarnations old. Even, I have awaited your coming. He gave us some sweets and summed up his discoure. With sweets in our hands. we entered the cave which stood in front of us.

A beautiful 'Shivalingam' was situated in the middle of the 'cave'. Three 'Aasanas' (seats) were ready on the three sides of the shivalingam. A small 'sarvovar' gave a cooling effect to the cave. Red, white, and blue lotuses grew in profusion in the adjacent 'sarvovar;. As we moved downwards, we saw a cave which was surrounded by a thick growth of Banana and 'Bail' (a fruit) trees. I was surprised to see the bounly of 'Nature' in the forms of luscious fruits. The setting sun from this point, presented a colourful spectacle. A flock of swans swimming with a distinct elegance,enhanced the beauty of the heavenly spot.

Baba made an apt comment on the plethora of natural beauty. In a poetic language he said, "Freedom is the striking feature of this abode. Everyone can move around in an uninhibited way. Himalaya gives total freedom to all the living entities. The rivers which emerge from the himalayas surrender to the mighty ocean. In this way they spread the message of sacrifice and surrender. The tofty Himalayas also inspire the rivers to flow ceaselessly. But the submission of the rivers does not convey their termination. Despite this, they continue to live and flow in the musical manner. Lord also talks in this language. Kapil: Immerse yourself totally in the infinite ocean of spiritualism and enjoy the divine bliss. A man who is caught in the web of life and death, does not have time to delve in the spiritual ecstasy.