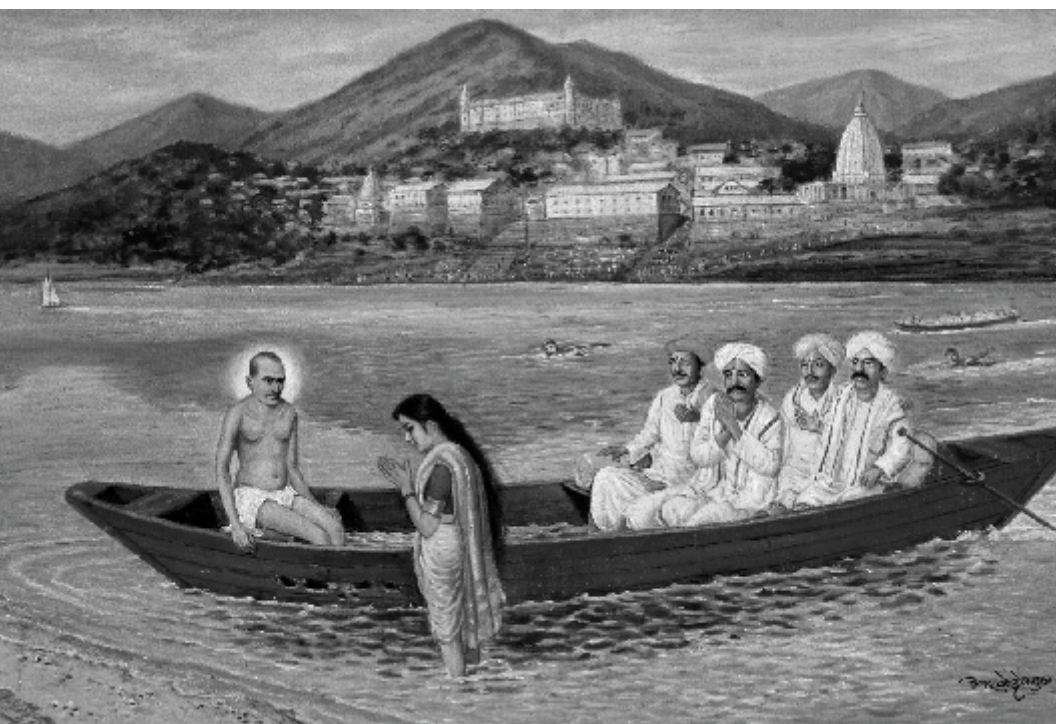


Chapter Fourteen



'O kind lady,' they said, 'tell us who you are.

You have saved us from disaster bizarre.

Now change your clothes, they are wet.

For you here we have a dry set.

Narmada said, 'I am daughter of Omkar the fisherman.

My name is Narmada. For wet clothes I don't care.

I will always remain wet

My form is water. I like it best.'

Chapter 14

Shree Ganeshay namah

Shree Ram, Son of Kausalya
Crown of the Raghu dynasty,
Seetapati, have compassion on me.
I am just a child
You liberated Tratika, also rescued Ahalya
Trapped as stone
And made Shabari happy by visiting her home ... 1

Son of Dashrath, you renounced the crown
To protect your devotees from being mowed down.
Monkeys got strength from your blessings
To assist you in your righteous battle.
O killer of Ravan the demon
Your name made stones float in the ocean.
You installed on the throne devotee Bibhishan.
Those who submit to you get rid of all tribulations ...2

Please remember to protect this writer.
How can a child escape away from the mother?
Your divinity encompasses all the three-
Father, Mother and Guru
You are Kalpataru,
the tree fulfilling all desires.
You are the Almighty so protect me in this strife
And guide me through this ocean of life ... 3

A Brahmin named Bandutatya lived in Mehekar
He was a pious man of generous nature.
In this business called existence
There are ups and downs every instance.
Even then one trades with persistence
And gets completely entangled in affection ... 4

Bandutatya hosted many a guest
And looked personally to their comforts
This went on and on until all his money was gone.
He borrowed some from money lenders
By mortgaging his house and gardens.
With his debts towering tall
He felt ashamed and avoided all ... 5

He even sold his utensils
Until he was left with nothing.
Even as he suffered penury
The creditors chased him for money.
He couldn't afford even two square meals.
His wife and offsprings insulted him a great deal.
Because of such a poor credit rating
No one would anymore lend him money ... 6

He became frustrated with his life
And started thinking of committing suicide.
No one respects penniless men.
Sweet home turns into a sorrowful den.
This is the way of this world insane.
Bandutatya thought of jumping in a well
But if someone saw and pulled him out,
He thought he may be charged for attempted suicide ...7

So he decided to go to Himalayan heights
To kill himself and avoid charge of suicide.
He left with a loin cloth and ash smeared all over his body
To hide his identity.
People of high society are afraid of public condemnation.
Bandu Tatyta said in his mind, ... 8

'O God why are you so much displeased with me?
I lived a life of full faith in thee.
Scriptures say that even a beggar becomes wealthy
With your grace O Almighty.
My present experience is something else.
It makes me think of the poets as insane
Who have described you as full of grace
And benefactor of the oppressed ... 9

O Divinity, I owe this life to thee.
If I die the blame will be all on you, Almighty.
Please save yourself from this indignity.'
Saying thus Bandutatya went
To the railway counter to purchase a ticket.
A Brahmin approached him with a suggestion,
'Don't buy a ticket to Haridwar station ... 10

First go and bow down to one,
A saint called Shree Gajanan.
Before you proceed to Haridwar
Go and meet him at Shegaon.
Don't take such hasty steps
Because of momentary frustration.
Know that a glimpse of the Saint
Will positively bring you a solution.' ... 11

Bandutatya was confused
Fearing he would be recognized.
He was shy of asking the person's name and identity
Nor did he know this personality.
However he decided to go to Shegaon
And pay respects to Gajanan Maharaj.
He went and bowed down to the saint
Where upon the saint laughed and said, ... 12

'Why do you go to Himalaya to end your life?
No one should kill himself nor lose hope.
None should stop trying to get desired things.
If you commit suicide due to problems in life

You will be born again to undergo sufferings
Avoided by you in this span of living.
So don't rush to Himalaya to drown in the Ganges.
Instead go home immediately to end your stress ... 13

Have you recognized the Brahmin
Who met you at the railway station?
Go back and don't stay a moment further.
There is a shrine of God Mhasoba in your garden.
Go there alone at midnight.
And dig three feet deep under the acacia tree.
The tree is to the east of the Deity.
There you will find money in plenty ... 14

Square off your creditors and keep the rest for yourself.
Don't leave your wife and children.
Forget this false idea of renunciation.'
Hearing this Bandu returned to Kherda, his town.
At midnight he went on his own
The acacia tree as advised
He found a copper pot covered with a lid ... 15

When he opened the lid
He found four hundred gold coins in it.
He lifted it and danced again and again
Chanting Jai Gajanan! Jai Gajanan!
He paid off the creditors
And repaid the mortgage on his house
By the grace of Shree Gajanan he set right his affairs
And was very happy once again ... 16

It was like nectar to a patient on death bed
Or a life saving boat to a drowning mate.
Bandutatya was in a similar state.
All adversity was erased from his fate.
He came to Shegaon and spent on charity.
He bowed down to the saint, who said with authority,
'Why do you bow down to me?
Why not to God who got you all this? ... 17

Now wake up and be clever.
Be judicious in spending money hereafter.
It is better not to be over liberal.
People come to you in your good days
But God is with you always.
Pray to him. He will never neglect you.'
Hearing this Bandutatya bowed down to the saint
And returned to his village ... 18

New Moon on a Monday
Called Somavati Amavasya, is an auspicious day.
Much has been said about this in the holy texts.
Bathing in the river Narmada brings devotees all bliss.
It brings good luck and affluence
Everyone knows of this influence.
People of Shegaon were too aware
And planned a visit to the Narmada river ... 19

Among them were Martand Patil, Bankatlal,
Maruti Chandrabhan and Bajaranglal.
They all decided to go to Omkareshwar.
They thought if Maharaj comes it would be better.
They approached him and requested him for his company
Saying that his presence would avert any calamity.
They pleaded with Maharaj to concede to their request.
Where upon the Maharaj said, ... 20

'Holy Narmada is always with me here.
There is no need to go to Onkareshwar.
I will have my Narmada bath here in Shegaon.
You may all proceed to the river.
A famous king Mandhata had ruled Omkareshwar.
Shree Shankaracharya took his vow of renunciation
Before starting his religious mission there
Of liberating people from mundane affairs ... 21

So you proceed and meet the river,
Don't force me to go there.
I need not undergo such rituals.'

They did not listen to him and bowing down
Pressed their request again and again.
Maharaj said, 'You are hypocrites.
The well water here contains Narmada's might.
If I go there Narmada will feel it a slight ... 22

So in your interest leave me alone.
Please go on your own.
Believe me it is in your own interest.'
To which Maruti and Chandrabhan said
That without him they would abandon the trip.
Maharaj then warned them they should not blame him
If something bad happens
By his accompanying them ... 23

Thus they all came to Omkareshwar.
For Somavati, it was a big gathering there.
Men and women were thronged on the banks of the river.
Some were taking a holy dip,
Some others chanting hymns from the scripts
Some carried flowers to the temple
To offer them to the idol.
Many others were eating sweets ... 24

Groups of religious singers came in scores.
Some offered to God abhishek, a religious shower.
At that pleasant place, Omkareshwar
Maharaj sat in a Padmasan pose by the river.
The four devotees accompanying him
Went to the Temple for the darshan.
On their way back they suggested
That road journey was unsafe as it was congested ... 25

They thought the bullocks of their cart were undependable
And suggested that they go back by a boat on the river.
Maharaj said, 'Do what you like.'
They hired a small boat of choice.
They all boarded the boat in action
On their journey back to Khedighat station.

The boat dashed on a rock on the way
And a plank at the bottom was washed away ... 26

Recognizing the risk the boatmen jumped in to the river,
To save their lives. The pilgrims were scared.
Maharaj sat nonchalantly chanting his favorite hymn.
Others were perturbed, their hearts throbbed with fright.
With folded hands they prayed to Maharaj,
'We are guilty of disobedience from the start.
As a result Goddess Narmada is angry
And is punishing by trying to drown us ... 27

O Saint, hereafter we will obey each word of yours.
As if it is directed by the Vedas revered.
Please save us from this danger
And take us back to Shegaon unhurt.'
By this time half the boat was under water.
While they were engaged in the prayer
Onlookers who gauged the situation said,
'For these five the end is near.' ... 28

'Don't get scared.' Said the saint,
'River Narmada will not harm you in vain.'
Thus saying the saint sang praise
To the River Goddess Narmada which goes like this,
'O sacred Narmada Devi,
Destroyer of all things inauspicious and evil,
Pardon our faults with your benevolence.'
Water receded the boat that very instance ... 29

The hole at the bottom of the boat was sealed
By the hand of Goddess Narmada indeed.
She came dressed as a fisherwoman,
Was wet up to her waist and had curly hair.
When the boat reached the bank
Everyone looked at the broken plank.
It was completely sealed and intact.
They all were surprised at that ... 30

'O kind lady,' they said, 'tell us who you are.
You have saved us from disaster bizarre.
Now change your clothes, they are wet.
For you here we have a dry set.
Narmada said, 'I am daughter of Omkar the fisherman.
My name is Narmada. For wet clothes I don't care.
I will always remain wet
My form is water. I like it best.' ... 31

Saying thus she bowed down to the saint
Disappearing like lightening in a moment.
Looking at that all the four persons were delighted.
They were spellbound to see the Saint's authority
Where Narmada came for the glimpse of the Saint.
Even then Bankat asked Maharaj as to who she was.
'She has already told you her name
The fisherman is this Omkareshwar of fame ... 32

She said her form is water,
She is actually the Narmada River.
Do not harbor any doubts about her.
She helps her devotees in times of danger.
Say 'Jai' to her in her honor.'
Hearing this Bankat and the other three
Prostrated before Maharaj.
And narrated the incident at Shegaon.' ... 33

Once Sadashiv Ranganath Wanawale
Along with his friend came to Shegaon
For the darshan of Shree Gajanan Maharaj.
He was called Taty and was a disciple
Of Chitrakut's Shree Madhavnath Maharaj,
Who had mastered the art of Yoga
And had a large following at Malwa.
Sadashiv entered the room of the Maharaj ... 34

Maharaj was taking his meals.
When he saw Sadashiv he remembered
Shree Madhavnath Maharaj.

Saints know each other without meeting.
'Bring those disciples of Shree Nath to me.
Their guru just went away after taking meals with me.'
Being children of his brother
He gave them a traditional reception.' ... 35

He gave Sadashiv two leaves of betel for ShreeNath
And asked to say a message without altering the form.
'We had a meal together but you forgot your paan here.'
Say,' we have now brought it to you.'
Wanawale returned with the two leaves of betel.
He narrated to ShreeMadhavnath his conversation in details
And asked him whether he had really gone
For a meal to Shegaon ... 36

Shree Madhavnath said, 'What Shree Gajanan said is true.
His remembering me at the time of meals is our meeting.
We meet each other like that quite frequently.
Do not have any doubt about it.
Remembering each other is our meeting.
Though we have different bodies
Our life breath is the same ... 37

This subject is very deep.
You may require time to understand it.
It is good you brought the pan I forgot there.'
Shree Nath crushed and ate the pan.
He gave a part to Wanawale as prasad.
Shree Dnyaneshwar Maharaj in his 'Changadeo Pasashti'
Has described in detail how saints meet.
One should understand this manner of meeting ... 38

It is interesting that yogis meet each other
From any place though they are not near.
Shaikh Mohammad was at Shri Gonda
And Saint Tukaram at Dehu
When the pendal of kirtan caught fire.
Shaikh extinguished it from a distance
Though Gonda was far from there ... 39

This coincidence of events is narrated by Mahipati
In 'Bhakti Vijay' about saints over all.
Shree Manik Prabhu saved Patil's son
From drowning in a well reaching Holi village.
Only yogis can perform such miracles.
Yoga is more powerful than anything else.
Learn yoga to serve the nation sincerely ... 40

May affectionate devotees with all faith
Listen to this treatise for prosperity, wealth and health.