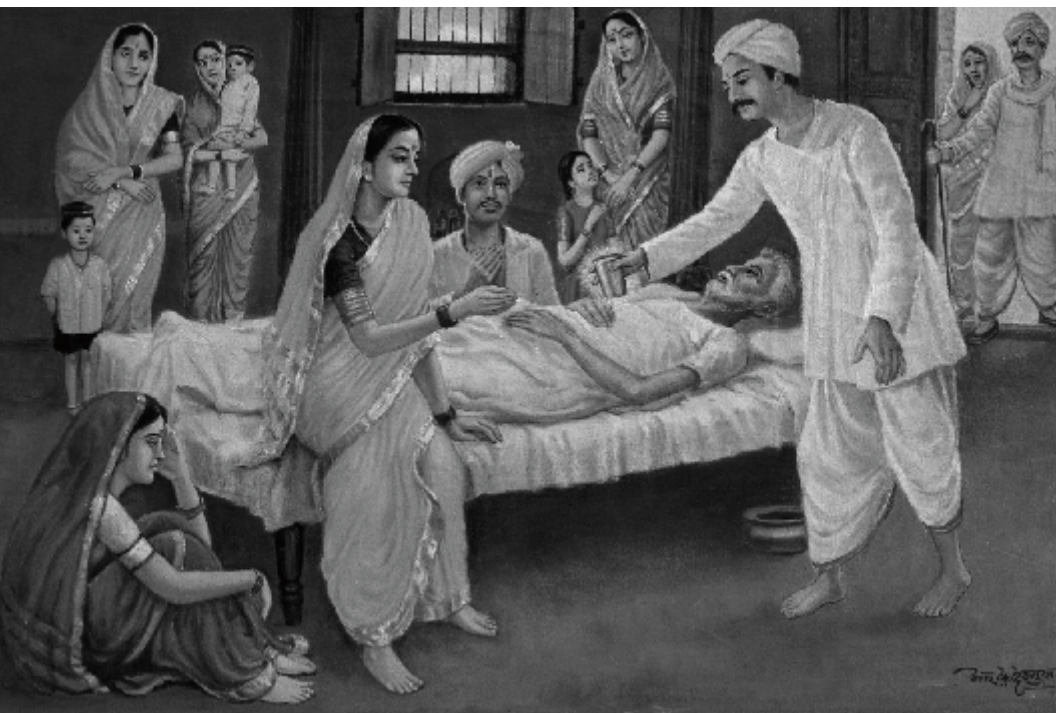


Chapter Three



Bankatlal with his father's permission
And the saint's consent
Gave them a glassful.
Janrao regained
His consciousness
With the first nip
And thereafter sipped it for a week
Stopping all medicines

Chapter 03

Shree Ganeshaya namah.

O Creator of the universe
You have been compassionate to all the oppressed.
You are an ocean of kindness,
Salvation to the suffering.
The Wish fulfilling tree.
Be kind to me. Help me in this discourse ... 1

Devotees from all over
Clustered at Bankat's place
Where the Saint stayed
To have his darshan.
They gathered like flies
Who get together around honey.
And need no invitation ... 2

One early dawn
The saint was sitting in a jubilant mood.
It was morn with a pink glow over the horizon.
Soft was the breeze with birds chirping
And it was a moment of delight ... 3

The elderly sat in their beds
Chanting holy prayers.
As Sun stole up driving darkness away.
Women of the house cleaned their yard's.
Calves ran to the cows for their morning's measure.
It was such a great pleasure ... 4

That pleasant morning
An ascetic came from afar.
His clothes were tattered.
He looked like a beggar
With a poor chance to be allowed access
The rich and influential surrounding the seer.
It was a tough affair ... 5

He wore a loin cloth
And a kerchief around his head.
He had a small bag of things
To offer to Shree Gajanan.
He quietly sat in a corner
Waiting for his turn to see the pious saint
And fulfill a promise ... 6

Hearing of the saint
He came from Kashi to offer him a packet of heroin.
This was for a favor
Gained by the Saint's blessing.
Heroin he chose as the gift
As this he liked finest.
And he thought was the best ... 7

If people knew he had heroin
They would never let him in.
His thoughts were understood
By Saint Gajanan
Who asked the devotees to let him in.
He was happy that the saint knew things.
They do know the past, present and future ... 8

He rightly expected
The Saint to know the purpose of his visit
To the town of Shegaon.
'Pull out your gift
Said Saint Gajanan,
'I have been waiting for three months.
Let us now open it here' ... 9

Overwhelmed with joy
The ascetic bowed again and again.
'Why do you now hesitate?
Why did you not think straight
When you promised me a packet
Of an unconventional object?'
The ascetic was sly.
Thus followed his reply ... 10

'I give this to you with a simple appeal.
As my remembrance
Please do accept this little gift for life time.
God and saints never reject a request' ... 11

'You are the incarnation of God Shivshankar.
At Anjani's request
You became her son without bothering about the species
You were requested
To be born in' ... 12

The saint thought it over a while.
He then agreed to the appeal
The ascetic filled heroin
In the Saint's pipe
And offered it to him for a smoke.
This is how he started smoking
But never became addicted to it ... 13

Like the lotus leaf in a pond
He stayed dry amidst water.
The visitor stayed a while
And left for Rameshwar on his journey ... 14

Some time the Saint recited Vedic hymns.
Sometimes he kept silent.
He sang classical musical notes
Or chanted his favorite classical quotes.
'Gan gan ganat bote'
Was his favorite chant ... 15

He wandered aimlessly
Through woods as per his whim.
Sometimes he slept longer.
Appeared clumsy for no reason.
He entered households
Without the owner's permission ... 16

Janrao Deshmukh, a prosperous man
From the town of Shegaon
Was breathing his last.
The doctors declared it as a hopeless case
And summoned the relatives
To be at his death bed ... 17

They prayed God
And made vows and pledges
If Janrao is back on his toes.
It did not seem to work.
They approached Bankat with a request
To give them water sanctified
By the touch of the saint's feet ... 18

Bankatlal with his father's permission
And the saint's consent gave them a glassful.
Janrao regained his consciousness
With the first sip and thereafter sipped it for a week
Stopping all medicines ... 19

He recovered his health.
Free from all suffering,
Walked to Bhavaniram's house
For the sacred sight of the Saint supreme.
That holy water had the effect of heavenly nectar.
Saints are Gods incarnate ... 20

Does this mean that no one would die
In the town of Shegaon
As long as the Saint remained?
Saints don't prevent deaths.

They don't work against nature.
They can avoid a disaster,
Unnatural or accidental ... 21

Saint Dnyaneshwar once
Prevented the death of Shree Satchitanand
Due to an accident at Naivase.
But the person had to depart
From another place named Alandi
At the appointed time ... 22

To speak of death, It has three forms.
Natural, self inflicted and accidental.
None can avoid the natural.
The others can be averted
By purity and proper medication ... 23

The doctor however has to be clever.
Death accidental and unnatural
Is the wrath of God.
Be pious and religious.
Pray to saints and deities
To evade untimely calamity ... 24

The intensity of faith in Almighty
Is the essence of preventing death
In the third category.
The saint you adore should not be fake.
Saffron clothes do not a sage make ... 25

He should be pious and free from the six sins*.
One should surrender to none else than him ... 26

Deshmukh celebrated his revival
By feeding hundreds at the residence
Of Bankatlal seth,
Where the saint stayed.
News of Deshmukh's survival reached every where

* Lust, anger, avarice, temptation, ego, jealousy are the six sins
known as 'Shadripu' (Six enemies)

People gathered at the Saint's
From far and near ... 27

To avoid such incidents
The saint became strict and indifferent.
Yet the true devotees knew his temperament
And were not scared,
Like the child devotee Pralhad
Who was not afraid of Narasimha's
Fierce appearance at all ... 28

A tigress may appear ferocious to people
But not to her cubs playing in her lap.
Real devotees thus were not alarmed
By the stern countenance
Of saint Gajanan ... 29

Now the story of Vithoba Ghatol
Who named himself as kalyan
Working for Gajanan Maharaj.
Kalyan was the name of the devotee
Who helped Samarth Ramdas.
Vithoba boasted that the saint
Always depended on him for his daily routine ... 30

A lump of earth may absorb
Fragrance of musk when they are together.
Acacia bush may acquire
Sandal wood perfume when they grow near.
That lump is not musk,
And acacia no sandal wood
Whatever their proximity be ... 31

Alongside sugarcane breeds cactus.
Along jasmine grow stinking shrubs.
Saints and the fallen live together.
Diamond and pebbles are found together.
A pebble is worthless
Compared to a diamond.

It remains a piece of rock,
To be trodden upon ... 32

Vithoba took advantage
Of his closeness to the Saint.
And boasted himself
To be the sacred bull of Shiva.
Gajanan Maharaj by divine vision
Knew of Vithoba's boast
And decided to teach him a lesson
With the following incident ... 33

A group of visitors came to Shegaon
To look respectfully at the Saint.
He was asleep and no one
Would dare him awake.
They told Vithoba that they were in a rush
And would like a darshan
Of Shree Gajanan Maharaj ... 34

Vithoba felt important
And woke up Shree Gajanan
The darshan went well
But it invoked the rage of the sage.
He took baton and hit Vithoba on the head ... 35

'You rascal, You have started a business here.
If I tolerate you I will be at fault
In the kingdom of God.
You deserve punishment.'
Gajanan Maharaj said ... 36

Don't reckon liquor
As sugarcane juice.
Never ever consume
A drop of poison.
Don't let a thief come near you,
And let him not try
To befriend you ever ... 37

Saint Gajanan knocked him down,
Making him run and not return.
This is the way real saints behave
Not like other hypocrites
Falling prey to quacks
Misguiding people at large.
This is an antisocial act
And should never be encouraged ... 38

Saints never encourage such elements
And weed them out of society.
A chaste lady would never like
To stay in a call girl's vicinity.
Gold ornaments would never compare
To trinkets made of tin.
Saints may accept sinners
But would never give them importance ... 39

Saints do realize that each one suffers
From the sins committed
In the previous life.
Mother earth allows cactus and milk bush
To grow along with jasmine
Each one of a different kind ... 40

Jasmine bush is protected
Cactus is burnt as fire wood
Milk bush is hung at the door
To attract insects.
Saints likewise evaluate people.
Know each individual
Offer him protection
In spite of the variations ... 41

Vithoba was fortunate
He could get to touch saint's feet.
But he failed to understand
The greatness of the saint.

If he had realized it,
It would have been
A divine providence.
And obtained him salvation ... 42

Sitting under the wish fulfilling tree
He asked for a pebble instead of jewel,
To Kamdhenu, the celestial cow
He asked just a coconut shell.
No one should do thus
In the company of saints.
Let your mind be vigilant,
Alert day and night ... 43

Let these hymns
Praising Shree Gajanan
Save the devotees
In this mundane world ... 44