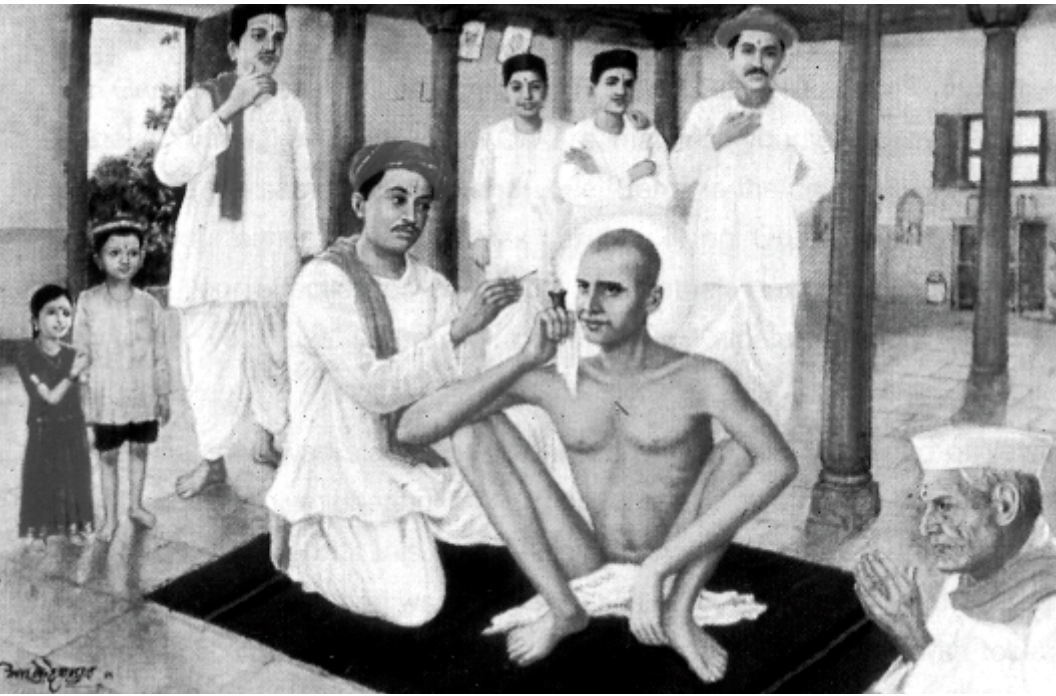


# Chapter Four



The saint flashed a smile  
And picked up his pipe.  
He asked Bankatlal  
To get a match stick  
And hold it over the tobacco.  
Bankatlal did it  
And was surprised to see  
The pipe burning bright

## Chapter 04

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Shree Ganeshaya namah.

Almighty, Omniscient, Protector of all,  
Adorned by many names  
Nilkanth, Gangadhar, Mahakal  
Bless me Trimbakeshwar, Omkar.  
You and God Vishnu are one.  
Water by any other name  
Tastes nectarine ... 1

You both are one and the only entity.  
Devotees may call you  
By various names  
You bless every one  
Who perceives you as one  
A mother never differentiates  
Amongst her children ... 2

I am just an innocent child  
Bless me with a kind smile  
To fulfill my dreams  
Under the wish fulfilling tree \* ... 3

It was Akshaya Tritiya  
A festival day  
Third of Vaishakh  
Falling in the month of May.

The day is very precious  
For Vidharbha people  
Where they offer a pitcher of water  
To their ancestors ... 4

The saint was having fun  
With neighborhood children  
At the residence of Bankatlal  
When he asked one of the boys  
To fill tobacco in his pipe  
And get some light for it to ignite.  
The pipe was filled  
But there was no fire in sight ... 5

Not yet at Bankatlal's  
Who suggested them Janakiram.  
Janakiram was a goldsmith there.  
All goldsmiths ignite fire in the morning.  
It's essential for their routine.  
The children went to the goldsmith  
And asked him for an ignited piece ... 6

Janakiram was furious  
He refused to give fire on a day so precious  
As Akshaya Tritiya auspicious.  
The children said, 'Don't be superstitious  
We require it to light  
The pipe of a Saint pious' ... 7

Janakiram turned down the request.  
'I don't recognize him as a saint.  
He has no caste or creed  
He eats from anyones's hands,  
Smokes tobacco and heroin.  
He remains bare drinks dirty water  
And behaves crazily ... 8

Bankatlal is crazy too, to go after him.  
If he is a saint, He can start a fire for himself

With his supernatural powers  
As did Jallandar  
Who used to ignite fire  
For his smoking pipe ... 9

Don't stand here.  
Better go away.  
You won't get any flame  
For that lunatic saint  
I don't care at all.'  
The children returned  
And told the Saint  
Of the entire conversation ... 10

The Saint flashed a smile  
And picked up his pipe.  
He asked Bankatlal  
To get a match stick  
And hold it over the tobacco.  
Bankatlal did it  
And was surprised to see  
The pipe burning bright ... 11

This is what happened  
With the Saint's grace.  
At Janakiram's place  
It was something else.  
He hosted a feast  
On this festival day.  
For guests and relatives  
All the way ... 12

Tamarind curry is essential  
For Akshayatritiya  
As neem leaves chutney  
For Gudi Padwa  
Guests saw worms in the curry.  
They felt nauseous  
And left the place in a hurry ... 13

Jankiram was disturbed.  
How could this be?  
The tamarind was fresh  
And the seeds worm free.  
It occurred to him  
That it was his blunder  
In refusing fire  
For the pipe of the seer ... 14

'It is because of his ire  
The feast went haywire.  
Saint Gajanan is as pure  
As waters of Ganges.  
I talked lowly of him  
O! What a disgrace.  
He is a king amongst all rulers  
I called him a beggar ... 15

He is a seer  
Knowing past, present and future.'  
Janakiram hurried to Bankat's place  
Realizing his mistake  
And fell prostrate  
In front of the saint.  
He begged pardon  
Of Saint Shree Gajanan ... 16

'I beg to be pardoned,'  
Jankiram said, 'I failed to understand  
That you are the Deity  
In our Shegaon city.  
My mind is now clear  
And I earn any punishment  
You think I deserve' ... 17

'Bring in the curry.  
Where are the worms?'  
They all looked in,  
The preparation was clear.

It was a surprise.  
People around saw the miracle  
And bowed down to the seer ... 18

On a hot summer day  
In the month of Jeshtha.  
Chandu Mukin, a devotee  
Was amongst people  
Who surrounded the saint.  
They offered him flowers  
Sandal wood paste,  
Mangoes and pears ... 19

He said he wanted them not  
Except the two cannolis  
Kept in the earthen pot  
At the house of Mukin.  
Chandu Mukin was shocked  
As, in his recollection  
There was nothing left  
From last month's preparation ... 20

He told the saint  
There was nothing left  
From the Akshaya Tritiya lot.  
If you so like, I will ask my wife  
To fry a few fresh ones.  
The Saint said, No  
I want only those in the pot ... 21

'Go search for them and bring the pieces to me.'  
The devotees too  
Said the same thing.  
Chandu went home and told his wife.  
'There is nothing left  
Let me make them fresh.' said she ... 22

'Search for them in the earthen pots  
Stacked in the corner.'

Then she remembered of two pieces  
Lying unnoticed in an earthen jug.  
'They are stale, may be with mildew.  
I don't think they'll do'... 23

Chandu and his wife were amazed to notice  
That they were fresh.  
Chandu took them to the saint.  
To the surprise of all  
He ate them as did Shree Rama  
Shabari's offerings ... 24

In the village of Chincholi near Shegaon  
Lived a Brahmin named Madhao.  
He was sixty.  
Looked weak for his age.  
He had misused his youth  
In mundane pleasures ... 25

No force on earth  
Can change the destiny of man.  
Madhao lost his wife and children  
And was now alone in the clan.  
He lost interest in living  
Sold all his property  
And regretted that in his youth  
He never remembered Divinity ... 26

He begged pardon of God  
Again and again and asked for His blessings  
To save him from this pain.  
Full of repentance  
He came to saint Gajanan,  
Squatted at his door  
Chanting God's name ... 27

The Saint watched him for a day  
And said, 'Whatever you are doing  
Is not appropriate.

It is like getting a doctor  
After the patient's death.  
Or tying nuptial knot  
At an older age.  
Things should be done at the proper time' ... 28

Don't start digging a well  
When the house is on fire.  
For fruitful results do things in time.  
You toiled all the while  
For folks that left you alone.  
You wasted time on goals material  
Forgetting those that are perpetual ... 29

You have to accept results.  
There is no escape.  
Now be reasonable  
Come back to your senses.  
Devotees present advised him too  
But he ignored them all  
And kept chanting the name of God  
At the entrance of the hall ... 30

As night approached and it was pitch dark  
Shree Gajanan tried a trick.  
He changed himself into the God of death  
And rushed to Madhao  
To stop him breathe.  
Madhao was scared.  
His heart thumped weird ... 31

He started running away  
The Saint revealed himself  
And loudly said,  
'Is this how much strong you are?  
I have shown you just a glimpse  
Of the house of death.  
You are its fare.  
You can't run away from there' ... 32



'Spare me from that hell  
And from this earthly life too!  
Said Madhao,  
'This is my last request to you.  
You have shown me the sight of hell.  
Don't send me there.  
Please give me heavenly bliss ... 33

I am fully aware of my sins  
But I know if you wish  
You can rid me of them all.  
I am fortunate to be at your feet  
Because of some good deeds of past.  
How could some one  
Who meets a saint  
Ever go to hell?' ... 34

'Keep singing the name of God  
Your death is not very far.  
Yet if you still want to live  
I will extend your life span.'  
To this Madhao said, 'No, I have enough.'  
'So be it!' said the saint  
You will not be born again.' ... 35

Thus went the secret talk, Hard to describe.  
Madhao stopped breathing.  
People around started guessing  
That it was because of his fasting.  
Madhao died at the feet of the Saint  
And finally escaped  
The cycle of birth and death ... 36

Once the Maharaj expressed a desire  
To listen to Vedic scriptures  
Sung by learned Brahmin priests.  
He asked devotees to get them there.  
They said such scholars are not available  
Anywhere near ... 37

'Make arrangements for the recital  
And await their arrival.'  
Happy were the devotees.  
They collected one hundred Rupees.  
In preparation for the Vedic celebration.  
A team of learned Brahmins  
Arrived the next noon ... 38

They delivered the Vedas  
For the Saint and were offered dakshina  
Before they went.  
God fulfills saint's desire.  
With such a recital Bankatlal's family  
Celebrates this day every year ... 39

Let this prayer show  
The path of devotion  
To the readers.  
Thus ends Chapter four ... 40