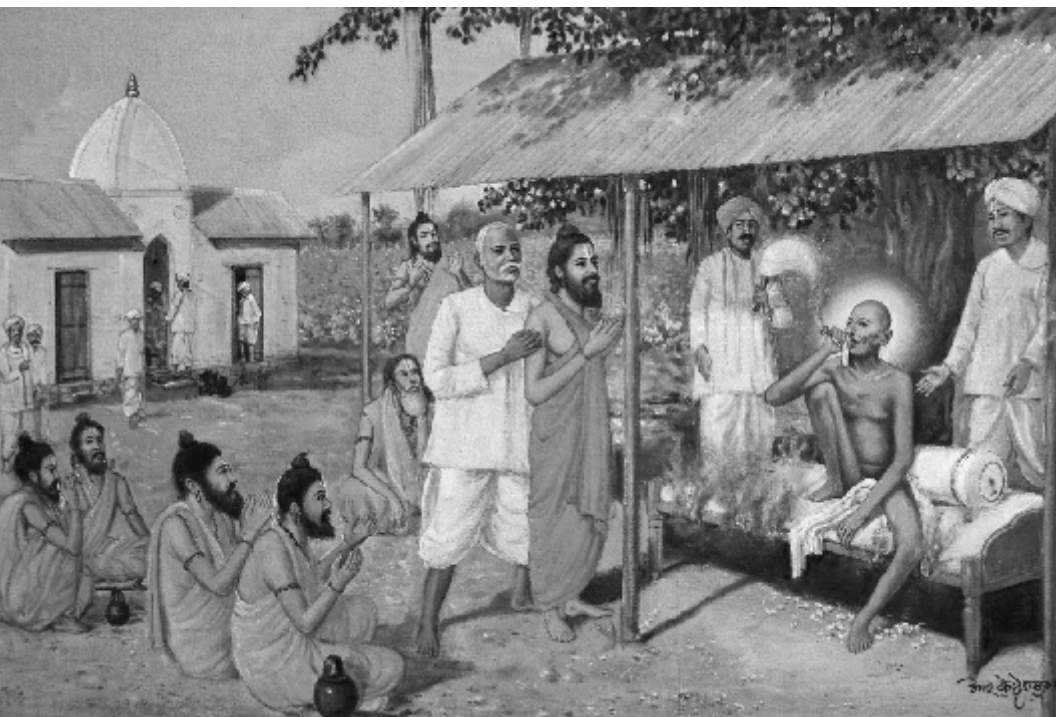


# Chapter Eight



In a little while the whole cot was in flames.  
Bhaskar requested the saint to leave the cot.

He cautioned that it was of teakwood make  
And would require water for putting out the blaze.  
Said the saint, 'Don't get water to quench the fire.

Let Brahmagiri come and sit with me here.'  
'Brahmagiri, you know Geeta with its meaning.  
Now is the time for you to prove its essence

## Chapter 08

Shree Ganeshay namah

O beloved son of Vasudeo and Devaki!  
Protector of the Goap and Gopi's  
Annihilator of demons, please bless me.  
I am aware that devotion and penance  
Are required to gain your favor  
But I am unable to offer these.  
Your praises are in Sanskrit, new to me ... 1

I cannot decipher those words. I am dumb.  
How can a frog get honey out of a lotus bulb?  
I am penniless and cannot obtain your favor  
By feeding a batch of the poor.  
I cannot visit shrines and holy places  
To acquire your kind grace  
Because of my health and fading eyesight.  
I seem to be helpless on all sides ... 2

It is clear that hopes and dreams of the poor  
Are never fulfilled.  
Even then your blessings fetch delight.  
I am aware you don't have to be rich to get it.  
When clouds pour down water  
Lakes and rivers get their fill in full.  
I look forward to the showers of happiness.  
A drop of nectar removes all sickness ... 3

In the last chapter we talked of a family feud  
Between the houses of Patil and Deshmukh.

Such unhealthy rivalry brews tension.  
Tuberculosis of body and social friction spell disaster  
Defeating efforts to ease the situation.  
The event here was triggered by a mahar's refusal  
To obey the orders of Khanderao,  
The highest authority in Shegaon ... 4

Marya Mahar, the mail carrier stayed near the lake.  
He enjoyed a special privilege at Deshmukh's place.  
With taunts and uncouth filthy words  
He declined to execute Khanderao's work.  
He was warned to behave himself  
More so as Khandu was head of the place.  
Marya disregarded the admonition  
And teased Khandu with obscene gesticulations ... 5

The cause of this altercation was plain.  
Patil had some mail to send to Akola police station.  
He asked Marya to take it to the destination.  
Marya refused saying I am Deshmukh's man  
I don't take orders from you, understand.  
He ridiculed Patil infuriating him a lot  
Resulting in a blow by a stick on his arm.  
That hard force had fractured his hand ... 6

Patil sent the mail with someone else.  
Relatives of Marya took him to Deshmukh's place.  
This gave Deshmukhs a chance to harass Patil.  
They took Marya to the police station in a bid  
To lodge a complaint about the happening.  
All tensions in society  
Are blown up the community to an enormity.  
A complaint was registered by the authority ... 7

Orders were issued to arrest Khanderao.  
The news spread like wildfire in Shegaon.  
Patil developed a lot of fear  
And worried about the impending danger.

He prayed to God Almighty  
To save him from arrest and indignity.  
For a man of his status, humiliation is worse than death.  
His brothers too looked worried and helpless ... 8

Then it suddenly occurred to Khandu Patil  
That he better see the saint and seek his help  
As no one else can save him from this mishap.  
His brothers went to Akola to seek legal advice  
Khandu Patil went straight to the saint at night.  
He bowed down to Maharaj and told the story.  
'I thrashed him as he refused to do Government duty.  
Deshmukhs are using this event to put me in difficulty ... 9

They are trying to get me arrested.  
None else except you can help me at this stage.  
May be the police will take me tomorrow.  
I would like to kill myself before I go.  
I am a man of dignity  
And the insult of arrest is like death to me.  
I accept I was violent in that situation  
But the whole thing is blown out of proportion ... 10

Please save me O kind saint from this contempt.  
In the episode of Jayadrath in Mahabharat  
Arjun was ready to burn himself for dignity  
God saved him and protected his honor.  
God also saved the respect and honor of Droupadi  
By providing her saris at the right hour.  
My self-respect is being stripped here like Droupadi' ... 11

Khandu's eyes were tearful when he begged for blessings.  
His brothers were worried over the arrest impending.  
Maharaj hugged Khandu Patil and said,  
'A man of responsibility has to face such a fate  
And has to be ready for it.  
Such things happen due to selfishness and sinful thoughts.  
You and Deshmukh belong to the same caste  
Yet selfishness has torn you apart ... 12

The enmity between Kaurav and Pandav  
In the epic of Mahabharat developed due to self-interest.  
Pandav were legally right  
Thus almighty was on their side  
Kaurav were defeated so you don't have to be afraid.  
Deshmukh will ultimately fail ... 13

Eventually Khandu was declared as not guilty.  
Blessing of saints cannot be deemed paltry.  
Patil brothers got closer to the saint  
After this challenging occurrence.  
Who would not like to sip nectar  
The heavenly life giving elixir?  
A few days later Patils took the Saint  
To stay in their family ... 14

At their place came some Telangi Brahmins  
Orthodox learned and well-versed in Vedic prayers  
In spite of this greed for money tinged their behavior.  
They had come with the hope of getting some here.  
Maharaj was sleeping when they came in.  
They started to sing the Vedic hymns.  
The intention was to awaken the saint  
And attract his attention towards them ... 15

The recitation involved a mistake  
Which the Brahmins did not correct  
Maharaj was upset. He got up and said,  
'You are damaging the greatness of Vedic hymns.  
They are no tools of business.  
They have lessons to teach.  
Show some respect to your gear  
Which indicates that you are Vedic seers.  
Now I recite the words and you repeat ... 16

Don't misguide innocent believers.'  
Saying so he repeated the chapter  
With not a single mistake in the text.  
The pronunciation was clear in all respect.

It appeared as if Sage Vashistha himself was singing  
Those powerful prayers to the ruler of all beings.  
The Brahmins felt ashamed and hung their faces.  
It was like holding a candle  
Against the sun's radiant grace ... 17

The Brahmins had come with an impression  
That Saint Gajanan was a crazy someone  
But found him to be a learned giant  
And were certain that four Vedas were in his person.  
They thought of the Saint as God incarnate  
He must be a Brahmin without attachment.  
Because of good deeds of previous birth  
They were fortunate to have his darshan on earth ... 18

The saint told Khandu to give them a Rupee each.  
They departed happily with this deed.  
Maharaj like a true saint  
Disliked too much of attachment  
To life and people of the town  
And decided to shift out on his own.  
He moved to a garden to the north of Shegaon  
Under the cool dark shade of a neem tree. 19

There was a temple of Lord Shiva in the garden  
Krishnaji, the youngest brother owned this one.  
The saint said to Krishnaji that he was there  
To stay in the vicinity of Lord Shiv Shankar.  
If this is a place He likes, it also is the place for me.  
Please get a tiny shed built here for me.  
Very soon it became a place of pilgrimage  
Town where king stays becomes capital of the state... 20

Bhaskar and Tukaram Kokate stayed with the saint  
To offer him routine care and comfort to a great extent.  
Krishnaji supervised the food preparations  
And took meals after Maharaj had done.  
About twenty ascetics once came to the garden  
They had heard about Saint Shree Gajanan

They told Krishnaji they were on pilgrimage  
To Rameshwar with holy waters of Ganges ... 21

'We are disciples of Shree Brahmagiri  
Who is fortunately with us on this journey  
We travelled afoot to holy places like Gangotri  
Kedar, Hinglaj, Girnar, Dakor and Jamanotri.  
God works as a slave in Brahmagiri's house  
Good deeds of your past have brought him here now.  
All we want is a shirapuri meal and few puffs of heroin.  
We will be here for three days  
And then go on our routine ... 22

Do not miss the chance of serving our class  
Instead of that crazy man lying across.  
It is like kicking a cow and feeding a jackass.  
We are ascetics who have renounced the world  
We are masters of Vedas. Come listen to our words.  
'We will make Shirapuri tomorrow.' Said Krishnaji,  
'Let it be just bhakri and besan today as a proxy.  
There is no problem about heroin puffs as I see.'... 23

It was noon time. The lunch was over by the well.  
They sat in the shade with people as evening fell.  
Facing Mahant Brahmagiri and Shegaon's saint.  
Brahmagiri read the Geeta and  
Conveyed the gist of a hymn.  
Saying the soul is eternal and no device can split it.  
Brahmagiri was a fraud with no spiritual attainments  
And the people were not impressed by his sermons.  
They could see that he was playing with the words ... 24

People got up and went to the darshan of their saint.  
'We heard the philosophy. It was phony.  
We see the reality in you.' They said.  
The ascetics who were now smoking heroin  
Were irritated by this remark to a great extent.  
A spark from the pipe of the saint

Fell on his cot and slowly spread.  
Smoke started coming out of the bed ... 25

In a little while the whole cot was in flames.  
Bhaskar requested the saint to leave the cot.  
He cautioned that it was of teakwood make  
And would require water for putting out the blaze.  
Said the saint, 'Don't get water to quench the fire.  
Let Brahmagiri come and sit with me here.'  
'Brahmagiri, you know Geeta with its meaning.  
Now is the time for you to prove its essence ... 26

Prove that fire won't burn Brahma.  
You have given a discourse for the last hour.  
You shouldn't be scared of sitting with me here.'  
'Bhaskar, go and bring him here with due respect  
And make him sit here to prove the aspect.'  
Bhaskar was a well-built man. With these orders  
He caught hold of Brahmagiri to bring him there.  
The saint did not shift a bit from the fire ... 27

In Bhagwat, Prahlad .. Son of Kayadhu  
Was made to stand on burning fire.  
The saint enacted the same scene  
In Krishna Patil's garden here.  
When Bhaskar caught hold of Brahmagiri  
He prayed to Bhaskar  
'Don't take me to the burning cot.  
I failed to recognize the authority of the Master ... 28

Bhaskar dragged Brahmagiri to Maharaj who said,  
'Prove the statement which says,  
Fire doesn't burn it.'  
Brahmagiri got scared and replied,  
'I became an ascetic for good food and an easy life.  
I fruitlessly tried to learn Geeta verse  
And called you crazy without any remorse.  
I regret the misdemeanor and beg to be excused.' ... 29



People from Shegaon begged of the saint  
To leave the burning cot for their sake.  
They were frantically afraid  
Of seeing him engulfed in the flames.  
Brahmagiri hung his face in shame.  
He had nothing to express.  
To honor people's sentiments  
The saint alighted from that burning bed ... 30

The cot then collapsed in a moment.  
People threw water to put out the blaze.  
And save just a part of it  
As an evidence of the event.  
Brahmagiri fell prostrate before Maharaj  
And purified himself from all his faults.  
With waters of Ganges touching impurity  
How can things remain dirty? ... 31

At midnight the saint advised Brahmagiri  
'Shun hypocrisy. A saint has to forego worldly pleasures.  
One should be learned himself before preaching to  
others.  
Learning words without understanding them  
Or preaching the spirit behind them is worthless.  
Understand the spirit behind what you learn.  
Machindra, Jalandar, Gorakh, Gahini and Dyaneshwar  
All enjoyed great authority in all spheres ... 32

Shree Shankaracharya attained self realization.  
Eknath, a family man achieved salvation.  
Swami Samarth, a brahmachari accomplished the goal.  
Remember these sages and stop wandering for shirapuri.  
It would be a worthless waste of time for everybody.'  
Brahmagiri quietly listened to his advice  
And left the place early morning with disciples.  
Next day people gathered to see the burnt cot ... 33

We hope this treatise will liberate  
The readers from the material attachments.